

# The Psychic Bridge

by

Jane Sherwood

The Psychic Book Club

*'Once more, then, I call upon God, at the beginning of my discourse, and beg him to be our saviour out of a strange and unwanted enquiry, and to bring us to probability.'*

Plato in 'The Timæus'

## FOREWORD

Probability, not proof, is sought.

This is an account of a series of experiments and experiences occurring over a period of five years during which I was trying various approaches to the problems of psychic research.

I came to the subject with no preconceived notions but with a strong determination to follow the evidence I should find wherever it might lead and to finish the course whatever it might cost. I found in myself an impossibility of accepting the testimony of others and so was forced to experiment and experience for myself. The experiments often failed, but even in their failure there was illumination; the experiences were often arduous and distressing, but they always furthered development and added something to knowledge, I found, in fact, that in this search knowledge could only be equated with experience. 'Know, for thou else couldst not believe.' My experiences built up a gradually strengthening conviction of survival after death, and in the process much useful material was gathered wherewith to fashion theories on the related nature of matter and life.

Evidence of many kinds relating to the question of personal survival has been collected, studied, analysed and assessed for years by such bodies as the Society for Psychical Research. The occurrence of supernormal physical phenomena has been doubtfully admitted, but while investigators can discount the apparent miracles of a darkened séance room and bound and tranced Mediums by hypotheses of fraud, unreliability of sense data as evidence, and the like, they have signally failed to carry conviction.

The S.P.R. has collected evidence which goes to show that keen and subtle supermundane intelligences have been at work for years passing to earth through a group of automatists carefully planned communications which were designed to establish beyond question the fact of their survival as personal entities. Communications given through several mediums have formed intricate puzzles only to be solved by combining the scripts. Their interpretation has often been a long and arduous task requiring a high degree of scholarship. These cases of cross-correspondences have been subjected to searching analysis, and many theories have been advanced to account for them. In the last resort the sceptic is forced back on the operation of telepathy between Mediums as his only escape from the conviction that they are the work of surviving personalities. As he cannot as yet give a reasonable account of telepathy he is not in much better case for invoking it.

Evidential communications, that is, matter given through a Medium, which would appear to have been known only to a deceased person, can also be discounted by the possibility of telepathic reading of the sitter's mind or of some other mind on earth, and, even where it is certain that the knowledge was never in any other conscious mind, it can still be supposed to emanate from the unconscious and to have been

seized on thence by the Medium.

General acceptance of the probability of survival, though it may have been brought a little nearer by the combined weight of all this evidence, is still a long way off. Proof is demanded, and it seems that there may be in the nature of things an impossibility of proof, the working of a kind of Exclusion Principle. Most of the evidence submitted rests on an assumption of the possibility of transmission of thought from disembodied sources, and so perhaps is inevitably open to disproof by the same possibility of transmission of thought between embodied minds, i.e. telepathy. If disembodied thought exists it probably obeys the same laws and is capable of the same functions as embodied thought, and so, all thought being existent in the same set of conditions, there is an impossibility of proving its origin to be here or there.

If, then, practical reason brings us to this deadlock it is perhaps time for speculative reason to go ahead and by the exercise of its peculiar faculty of faith to survey new country. Suppose that, by collecting data from such a survey, striving to understand their import, connecting them with one another and working back by degrees to a connection with the known and tried, we are able to trace at least a probable route into this new country? That is the hope which actuated the experiences detailed in this book. They begin with a humble and very amateur tentativeness and gather confidence as the journey is made. It is as though, adventuring into the unknown, the atmosphere of mist and illusion thins and shreds away to show glimpses of authentic landscapes; firm ground is felt under foot, and here and there are landmarks which set the course for further exploration.

If the information thus obtained, which purports to be a careful and accurate account of conditions in this unknown country, does shape into a coherence with the tested theories of modern thought, if it shows a logical development and growth of the proper nature of things, then we have at least a shadowing forth of probability. Dream-stuff, wish-fulfillment, and hopeful imaginings are not usually characterized by any framework of coherence, nor by any but the aeriest connection with a workaday world. There are hints in much of the information given to me of a severely logical process, a physical process; one might almost say a purely material process, in the development of being after it leaves its present form. There is a significant denial throughout of any theory of dualism. Matter remains the same actuality of being, but matter on an ascending scale of dimensional values. Terrestrial matter thins out into a mystery under scientific investigation, and one is left with the impression that there is probably only the smallest hiatus between this mystery and the first intimations of matter in another sphere.

The experiments described here were carried out over a period of six years. After the first difficulties of making contact were over a receptive, albeit enquiring, attitude was adopted, and a system of question and answer developed. I was directed to the reading of certain books which should familiarize my mind with notions that were necessary before I could hope to grasp the full import of what was to be conveyed to

me. Even then there were occasions when the information was so unexpected as to come with a kind of shock and to be extremely difficult to assimilate. I have indicated this in the text, but since I could give only a selection of the communications received it may be taken that these shocks and the consequent process of adjustment were far more frequent than I have shown.

Throughout the happy associations which have developed it will be apparent that the subject-matter has been the *raison d'être* of the process and that proofs of identity have not been sought for nor considered of importance. My communicators have been willing to sink their identities and to trust to the interest and value of the information they could pass to me. I have been aware all along that they have been sadly constrained by my ignorance and the impossibility of breaking down the rigid categories of thought which are habitual to us. Thus all that has been given is likely to be given in better form, developed and augmented, as one becomes able to grasp the more difficult concepts, and to arrive at a way of intuitive mental activity which does to a certain extent transcend the categories of time, space, and order.

So only a tentative beginning has as yet been made in the collecting of significant data, and this has only been possible by making the initial assumption that real contact is to be made between embodied and disembodied minds. Having made that assumption, one can go on to receive descriptions, record information, and make any connections that have probability. The process of synthesis is conditioned by the mental equipment of the receiving mind, and unless the subject-matter thus obtained is examined by experts many of the more significant implications are bound to be missed. But the business of the channel of communication is to pass the information on. Inadequate attempts to assess it are only too likely to obscure its value.

## BOOK ONE

*ANDREW*

### CHAPTER I

The puzzle set by death - The law of conservation of energy defeated - Survival and the persistence of personality - Unconscious contacts possible; conscious contacts by the development of the beyond-body being - The note of frustration in modern thought - The missing clues - Are they in the hands of those who have gone on? - Scientific sanction a necessity for general acceptance - Probabilities as basis of experiment - A message and a decision.

Stubbornly my mind reviewed the facts. There they were; an array of them whose objective reality not the most hardened materialist could deny. There had been Andrew, the most virile and energetic of men, his young and healthy body supercharged with life; there had been his letters, full of ardour and vital with his loving, optimistic personality. Then a silence - a shattered body somewhere in France, and the rest - oh, well, simply gone, they would have one believe. Each cell and molecule

growing cold, disintegrating, and yielding up its elements to the mould; matter, energy, fields of force, how did they account for the sum of power, of lovely subtle form which made up a human being? Granted that every shred of matter could be traced to its home in the earth again, could that matter carry away the whole sum of energy of a man? What about conservation of energy? It didn't seem to work here.

I saw Andrew wielding an axe, felt the wind of the stroke and heard the crash of the blow that cleft the oak; thought of him as he used to tear down the football field concentrating the full weight of his thirteen stone in a kick that carried nearly the length of the field; thought of the patient processes of thought, the steady output of mental energy of which he was capable, recalled his flashing fun and the irresistible contagion of his gaiety. Where was it all? Conservation of energy - it simply didn't work. Well, what next? He was not, because you couldn't count that broken body out in France, and I shied at the blasphemy of the rest – 'for God took him', which was to confound the Almighty with a German shell or its factory-driven maker, or with the inspirer of the policy which made use of such things. No, God had not taken him. To whatever resignation dope in religion you subscribed, it would not cover that. Man had taken him - lunatic, fear-driven man.

I waited for the anger and dismay of this conviction to pass and then wearily tried again to grasp this impossible equation. Take the sum of a man, subtract his shell of matter driven by chemical energy, and the answer is a cipher.  $\text{Man} - \text{Chemical Energy} = 0$ . Nonsense: reason revolted and declared the equation false.

Religion collected from the mould a thin wraith, a soul, and bore it off to some attenuated heaven where it led a blameless paradisaal life shorn of all its weaknesses and failings, of all its hunger for good earthly joys and satisfactions. Rather sudden, that. I thought, almost with a chuckle, of Andrew's probable reactions to the saintly life. He would want work, and plenty of it, human satisfaction, and plenty of that too. He would need to get his teeth into things, to organize, to shoulder responsibility. And if I knew him at all he would be yearning over those left behind and would find no rest while they sorrowed. Could all the ethereal joys of heaven make him forgetful of lost hopes and broken ambitions cut off before their flowering? It would have to be a very distant heaven and a very different. Andrew, and anyway, I didn't accept the probability of sudden changes like that in human beings. No, if he persisted at all, he persisted in much the same form and character. After all, what was to change him? A sudden shock, pain, bewilderment at a new order of things? These would work no radical change in a man's make-up. I reflected on the years of experience which went to modify any trait in character, on the long slowness of 'Growth in Grace', as my Puritan parents would call it. I thought of Andrew's faults. In my eyes he had very few, but I was not fool enough to think that in the testing of everyday married life we should either of us have proved flawless. No, if he persisted, it was as a personality practically unchanged and therefore no likely denizen of a bland and bodiless heaven.

If he persisted, then he, Andrew, must have real existence in this real world I was exploring in thought. Why, what was the room and the firelight and the table at which I wrote? They had faded out into nothingness, meaning had gone out of them, and I was out in the great universe of real being searching for Andrew, and, what was more, convinced that he was there. That meant that the long years of beating in vain on the blank wall of death were over for me. It wasn't a blank wall reaching from earth to sky and blocking out all hope for evermore. As I groped it thinned out into a fog, a dark ocean of unknowing, but in it walked the lost and sorrowing forms of men.

## §2

That gripped me, because I knew that he would be sorrowing. Why, would even I have gone on my shining way regardless if he had been left behind, broken and alone? What if the strong tide of grief that shook me was not my own alone, but his too? I panicked at this and almost wished that he might be safe in some remote heaven. He was perhaps groping in this same fog for me. The pang of this was unbearable. We were doubling our sorrow; two energies of suffering were acting simultaneously on both of us.

Could any effort of mine find him? God, how I had tried! Felt for him, spoken to him, reached out in an agony of longing, waited in suspense of being for response in any form. And there was nothing, so that I was drawn under and drowned in hopeless grief again. The conviction grew that this had been his frustration and despair as well as my own.

If I admitted this possibility, was I to sit down in utter hopelessness, or was there, humanly speaking, any possible way of piercing this wall of separation, now worn so thin? Mediums claimed the power to speak with the dead, even to see them. What was this power, how was it exerted, and had they a God-given monopoly of it? Was it a genuine phenomenon at all, or must it always be fraud, self-deception; a form of hysteria? But one should not sneer without knowledge, I thought. Yet how to investigate these claims? Could one make the bold assumption that, whatever their powers might be, they were powers common to us all but differing in degree of development for each?

What a piece of work is man . . .', and my old argument cropped up again. Man minus chemical energy equals - - ? I wanted to put 'Man' for the answer, but hesitated. Something must be lost with the chemical shell, if it was only the peculiar quality which must for ever go with a body of flesh and blood. 'Bodyness' I coined, and tried to visualize the beyond-body being which must be incorporated in each of us. I also was more than the sum of my chemical energies. To make contact with that kind of being one must in some sense learn to use the corresponding body in oneself. Could some way be found to put the fleshly being by so that the voices of these others might become audible to the inward ear and their thought pass into the inward mind? Surely I had been assuming that their emotions could be felt in spite

of the shrouding flesh. The process I needed to understand was a method of clearing the understanding, of recording in some definite fashion what was at present only to be dimly felt, of forcing the flesh to make audible the tones of a voice no longer able to use its old clumsy medium.

Thus I fumbled, aware of the flimsiness of my argument, strongly suspicious that my judgment was dictated by wishful thinking, floundering among half-understood concepts and stray echoes of popular pseudo-science. I confounded my inadequate education, yet saw that a rigorous scientific training resulted more often than not in a bigotry of material exclusiveness as intolerant as the religious bigotry it replaced. Modern science, philosophy, and ethics all echoed the same note of frustration. 'Here we are at the end of a path', they seemed to say; 'a good and proper path, ruled straight by logic, paved with good intentions, and fenced with the most conscientious honesty, and yet it leads nowhere.' What next? All that could be done was to mutter platitudes about human limitations and invoke the 'brute given'. One might liken it to a game played with half the pieces missing. There could be no outcome while we denied the existence of those additional pieces. However often we dealt these out and played our hand, they would refuse to give a decisive result.

I thought of all the keen intellects, the trained minds, that had actually made this transition into the unknown. If they could only pass back accurate observations, some theory of the change itself, they must surely find for us the link between that state of being and this. If these fine intellects were still in existence they would surely be as active in understanding their present environment as they had been in elucidating the material mysteries of this sphere. Moreover, their added experience would enable them to make the necessary comparisons with their old knowledge and to carry the analysis of energy on to a further stage of being. Then where were they, these men of genius and goodwill? Did they know of our predicament and realize the ghastly insanities to which mankind was descending and from which their knowledge might still save us? They must surely be as anxious to reach us as we were to have evidence of their existence. What was this insuperable barrier which defeated their efforts and ours?

I thought I knew my world with its implicit, one might almost say its abject, faith in science. There were murmurs to be heard, perhaps, hints here and there that men were awake to other values not included in a scientific methodology. But for the ordinary man the scientific genius had become the High Priest of Truth, his every word sacrosanct and not to be questioned by the laity. In the name of science the ordinary man was, asked to accept far more baffling and inscrutable mysteries than any religious faith presented to him, and in the name of science he accepted them unhesitatingly. If knowledge of this other world was to find general acceptance it must be linked with science, given scientific form, it must carry scientific authority. No ethical, philosophical, or moral sanction would suffice nowadays..

Scientists everywhere were exceedingly shy of anything that bore the label

‘Spiritualism’, too shy honestly to investigate its claims. But if by its means exact knowledge could be obtained from scientists who had passed over, couched in scientific terms, would they heed this? One day, I said to myself, this particular miracle will happen. It is overdue now. A scientist in the next world will get into touch with his counterpart here on earth. They will compare notes, and then nothing can prevent the searching out of the mystery. If contacts with the dead are made at all, it is only a matter of time before this particular contact is made. Thou the two halves of this age-long puzzle will be put together at last, and there will lie in shining completeness so that even the wayfaring man may read his title clear to the certainty of survival.

I came back from these daydreams to the mere probabilities I thought I had established. I would turn these assumptions into a basis for experiment. I should have to lay aside the fear of self-deception, take the risk with my eyes open, read and study the experiences of others and train myself to share them if it proved that I had the ability. At the worst it would be a psychological experiment; at the best I might arrive at some form of objective reality.

### §3

I had reached this decision when an odd circumstance befell. I was spending part of a summer holiday with a friend of my younger days. We saw each other but seldom and were neither of us energetic correspondents. Her mother was with us, and I found that she was an enthusiastic Spiritualist. My friend and I discussed her mother’s faith and I tried to push the discussion into more speculative regions. But my friend was guarded, and for that time refused to follow my lead.

Later she returned to the subject with some embarrassment. “I have been a long while hesitating,” she said, “before delivering to you a message which came some months ago at a séance to which I had escorted Mother. I was not supposed to be taking part and sat out of the circle. The Medium was in trance, and at the end of the sitting she insisted that there was a message for me from a soldier. I protested that I had no friends in the Forces. She urged that the message was important, and that it was not for me personally but for a friend whom I should soon be meeting. As you know, you and I had neither met nor written for two years, so that you were not in my mind and I was at a loss to think of any friend to whom it might apply.”

The message was clear enough. It was from a soldier who wished to make contact with his wife and to assure her that he was often with her. It included details which made it completely applicable to my circumstances and showed a clear knowledge of all that had befallen me since Andrew’s death.

My friend had written down the details immediately and now handed me the paper. I took it from her, excused myself, and sat alone in my room. At first any critical examination of the message was impossible; the thing came too near home and shook me into a state of dazed acceptance: My theorizing had probably been



actuated by repressed emotion, and at this intimate and poignant response I trembled. It was as though, fumbling blindfold in that fog, a hand had suddenly clasped mine to assure me that I was not searching alone.

I tried first to assess the significance of the message. It gave clear proof of first-hand information about my doings and contained a reassurance on intimate points where I had doubted Andrew's approval. It was entirely typical of him and, if I could trust it, of immense-importance to my peace of mind. True, my friend had a general knowledge of my doing but the long gap in our intercourse made it extremely unlikely that She had given me a thought, and so had conveyed knowledge to the Medium by telepathic means. I was entirely unknown to the Medium and to the other sitters. Certainly the internal evidence was in favour of authenticity.

I had still to speculate by what means Andrew had come to use this very chance connection or had been aware that it was a possible one. He had known my friend, but would have no reason to connect her with Spiritualism, because neither of us had given it a thought in those far-off days. How came he to know so surely that after that long interval we should renew our friendship? I checked on that - the advance had come, not from her, but from me. I had suddenly found myself thinking of her, had guiltily realized my neglect to write and had been impelled to renew the correspondence. I had asked her to meet me soon, and from this had come plans for a joint holiday. Well, was all this coincidence, or a deliberate impressing of my mind by Andrew? Had he got that communication through to her and then set to work by influencing my mind to bring his own prophecy true? I reviewed our common friends and realized that this was literally the only one among them with any contact with Spiritualist circles, absolutely the only channel through which any such message could have reached me.

This began to wear the air of a deliberate attempt to communicate, perhaps the last of many such efforts. It was possible to read into the course of events an organized effort, thorough and patient, which was entirely characteristic of the man. I pondered the sequence of events as I knew them, but realized I knew nothing and had no right to assume anything about Andrew's part in all this; I could string together these things to make a fair show of probability, but they tantalized me because so obviously were only one aspect of a related whole. The other side, Andrew's side, I could only guess at.

I was still fighting a losing battle against the sceptical, everyday part of my mind. I reminded myself that so strong a desire to believe must invalidate judgment. But I had to consider, not certainties, but possibilities, if only out of loyalty to Andrew. If I was fooled, or fooled myself, no one was the loser but myself; if I neglected to make the attempt to respond, I failed him. I turned on common sense and saw it for a mere rationalization of mental cowardice. I would assume that the message was genuine, would honour his efforts and set to work to prove whether contact with him was possible.

Thus I pledged myself to a strange and fateful journey of exploration into queer byways of human experience. It proved to be a detour away from accepted paths, at times a difficult and dangerous one, but always one which in interest and adventure excelled the safe highway.

## CHAPTER II

Exploring the recognized means of communication – Spiritualist material, guides, periodicals, literature – Spiritualist theory in brief - Spiritualist meetings – Mediums – Testimony at second or third hand unsatisfactory – First attempts at automatic writing. Failure – Attempts to develop clairvoyance; results discounted – Conviction of ‘aloneness’ – Account of a psychometric séance – Experiments with a planchette – Success.

My private speculations were one thing, but I lacked the means of testing them. I needed first to explore the existing means of communication claimed by recognized Spiritualist circles. I began to attend Spiritualist meetings, to take in their periodicals and to read their literature. I was left with a fine confused mass of claims and assumptions which were not easy to sort or reduce to probabilities. For some time judgment had to be suspended while this extraordinary material was collected. There was evident in this the growth of a structure of sober theory rising among a confusion of scaffolding which masked and travestied its lines. Credulity, fantastic dream matter, marvel-mongering, along with the type of mind most pathetically easy to dupe by these, had reared this inconsequential surround. One had to cut a way through a jungle of haphazard construction before the solid strength of the building rising within became apparent. I was repelled by the growths of the jungle, but soon became aware that some logical theory hid behind all the hopeful imaginings.

The fantastic element was at first my chief stumbling-block. I heard much talk of Red Indian Guides, Child Guides, Egyptian and Chinese Guides, but seldom or never of English Guides. Almost analogous, I thought, to the musical world, where an English name is no advertisement. But why these fantastic people should inspire so much unquestioning faith and produce such complacency in their Mediums was odd to me. I pondered this as an indication of a childlike love of the weird and outlandish, or considered the possibility that some good reason for this type of Guide being almost universal might exist in conditions of which I was as yet ignorant. Many of these persons were said to have lived in far-distant days and to have reached great wisdom. Some spoke through their Mediums in broken English or in the accents of childhood. The messages given by them were often of appalling banality, trivial and platitudinous. On the other hand, they were uniformly kind and probably helpful in effect. Communications varied from the kind which advised the sitter to wear blue because it matched the aura to others of a high and serious ethical standard.

Spiritualist periodicals were of several kinds, highbrow and earnest, popular and sensational, or frankly crude, with a direct appeal to superstition and morbidity. In them all a good deal of space was given to the recording of séance-room miracles, of 'apports' and 'materialization'. Front-page news sometimes featured messages from erstwhile famous people who had lately died. One was saddened by these. They were hardly on the level of intelligence one associated with their alleged authors. I had to admit that I knew nothing of the difficulties of the process involved, which might well defeat the transmission in characteristic style for which one looked. There were long articles on esoteric mysteries in the better class of paper and variations on theosophic doctrines were discussed. The correspondence columns reflected much credulity and muddled thinking. Terms were used in wild confusion, and most of the letters were couched in the strange jargon to which I was becoming accustomed.

Spiritualist literature was bewildering. A substantial theory was evident, but a lush emotional atmosphere characterized most of these attempts to picture the life of the blessed in their various spheres. There was more than a hint of Mr. Chadband in the oratory which accompanied the description. Jostling this was the unmistakable influence of Eastern esotericism. Gleaming marble temples built in ancient symbolic form and served by Oriental priestesses were confused with the observances of a kind of glorified Church of England. Descriptions of towns had the same fairy-tale quality of gorgeous pageantry surprisingly invaded by visitations from angelic beings of higher spheres. It seemed a perfervid hotch-potch of mystery and imagination gleaned from every variety of romantic and esoteric literature, past and present. These books left me faintly hostile and suspicious. There was none of the drastic attempt to understand the conditions of this new life and their connections with earth of which I was in search. One wanted bread and was given, not a stone, but a custard-pie. Later I was more fortunate and came upon a series of books which made the attempt to frame a coherent theory. The picture here presented was of a series of planes or levels of being, the ascent of which was made as one became progressively capable of living in the higher conditions. This notion of an ascending series of lives satisfied my expectation of a gradual process of growth and development. I felt that one needed to build a substantial ladder to heaven and not to rely on the sudden growth of wings to transport one thither.

The evidence adduced here went to show that at least on the lower of these planes material environment took a form very similar to that of earth and that life went on in a very similar way. Physical bodies persisted and they remained for their owners as substantial as our own. I gathered that the form of matter on each plane thinned out as one ascended and the descriptions of higher planes grew correspondingly vague, possibly because of the lack of evidence from such exalted spheres. There were significant references to differences in time and space sensations which were perhaps clues to dimensional variations and promised a connection with scientific thought. There was matter here which demanded a hearing, a sense of probability if not the definite promise of proof.

Spiritualist meetings were of many kinds. At the best type of gathering a prominent place was given to the study and exposition of the Bible as a record of little understood psychic phenomena, and attention was paid to any account of psychic experience in the lives of prophet, poet, or ancient seer. The person of the Christ was presented from an unusual angle, but a strong tendency was apparent to link the Spiritualist point of view with that of orthodox Christianity. The speakers at meetings gave evidence of earnest and careful thinking and impressed one with their obvious sincerity.

The climax and meaning of all these gatherings, whether of this type or of the less sophisticated kind, was undoubtedly the half-hour given to mediumistic communications. The Medium was the magnetic centre of the gathering. A fearful intentness was felt as the messages were given, and the strained expectancy of the whole congregation made an overwhelming sum of emotion strongly impregnated with the sorrow and hope of eager and anxious to be singled out for a message.

The Mediums with whom I came in contact were of several kinds. Some impressed one as being of fine fibre with the power to receive and transmit images of great strength and beauty. This power was not of necessity confined to those of better education. One in particular I recall, a woman whose natural instinct would be to call one 'Dearie', yet who gave her messages in the form of most beautiful and symbolic pictures in each case appropriate and helpful to her sitters. There were others, of course, who, with closed eyes and strained attention, appeared only able to transmit wearisome platitudes and who in their private utterances gave painful exhibitions of spite and self-advertisement. Of all the messages, predictions, and warnings given by them in the names of their Guides, very few were accompanied by clear evidence as to the identity of the sender. Names they were intensely shy of, sometimes giving a tentative Christian name but never venturing on a surname. There existed a legend that names were particularly hard to give correctly. No message was ever received by me from Andrew under these public conditions. I got a conviction that he would not attempt to speak to me thus, so soon I decided to try private sittings. A full account of all those I attended would be wearisome and not to my purpose, so I shall select the more significant incidents from them.

I was told many strange things in the course of these sittings. They often consisted for me in repeated efforts to recall little-known and distant relatives who purported to be anxious to give me messages. The method was something like this. The Medium would ask: "Did you once know, a woman named Anne or Annie?" I search my memory and bring up vague recollections of a second cousin by marriage and reply cautiously: "Well, yes, I did, but it is a long while ago." The Medium then gives a hazy description which I hesitatingly accept. I am then given a message alleged to be from Annie, who certainly would not know me now if we met in the flesh and can hardly be supposed to retain the slightest interest in me. I am surprised to find how many of my long-dead relatives still think it worth while to wish to communicate

with me. They are often described as wearing the clothes of their period, and though I have to admit the possibility of this, it gives me unease in my 'organ of probability' to think of ladies in chignons and men in high hats perambulating the planes of heaven.

As to Andrew, I am told that he is sometimes present, and at last a message of some import comes which I find it possible to consider genuine. On this occasion there is a condition of charged emotion which affects me strangely. There is no mistaking the difference in atmosphere between this and the usual sittings. The Medium does not seem to be affected by it, but my temples throb with a sensation of heavy pressure, I am cold and trembling and go away from the sitting exhausted. During this sitting I find myself catching the echoes of a voice. Words are addressed to me and I am constrained to answer them mentally; questions as to the reasons and aims of my quest are asked, and I reply asking for enlightenment and help. Then the Medium takes up the word and I am left to ponder on what seems to be a momentous experience. The Medium does not amplify nor continue the message I think I have obtained for myself, and so I have to face the old nagging problem again. Did I create this half-understood situation out of my desire and were all those physical sensations just so much hysteria? Or, conversely, was these genuine, and was the Medium not to be relied on, seeing that she appeared to have missed all this? As my experiences continued, this uncertainty factor was always present, a drag and hindrance to my thought, yet not to be dismissed for fear of the credulity born of desire. It was always just not strong enough to prevent the continuance of the experiment, but strong enough to prevent the growth of a settled conviction. Very much water was to flow under the bridge before I could count on certainty.

On another occasion a message was given which troubled me much. The Medium described a man who might well have been Andrew and said: "He is showing me a rope which is knotted twice; it has a knot tied over a knot. He is, loosening the upper knot and when that is untied it will be easy to free the other. He says that it will be like that with you and that he is helping you to untie the first knot." This had for me unmistakable references to difficulties in my life which I had serious scruples about removing for myself. In fact, the message introduced into my thought an element of mischief which it was imperative to refuse entry into act, and which should never have been admitted into consciousness. On this occasion I had no impression of the power and presence which had given significance to the other sitting, and the dangerous tendency of the message gave me pause. After-consideration suggested that this was a very good example of the 'telepathic message' There was conflict in my own mind which had been read and exteriorized by the sensitive mind of the Medium, who was probably quite unaware of the true source of the mental image she had passed on.

I felt that I was getting nowhere, and worse than nowhere, blindly groping through this fudge of irrelevant triviality. The chances of authenticity were so negligible that I

began to realize that to pursue my quest by these means was hopeless. I needed to find a Medium of sterner fibre, relentlessly determined to scrutinize all she received and to reject what was in the least doubtful. There might be such Mediums, but they were hardly to be found among those who used their powers professionally, so I stood small chance of finding one. I concluded that it was hopeless to expect to find a Medium who would collaborate with me in my search, but I began to have a modest hope that it might be possible to develop mediumistic power myself.

Lacking this, all information had to be accepted or refused on hearsay value, and not on a single testimony and report but on testimony transmitted at second or third hand. It seemed essential to get a little nearer to the source of the evidence; in other words, only through one's own mediumship would it be possible to form a judgment. The risks would then be reduced to two only, self-deception, or the unreliability of the intelligence with which one communicated. It became my object to reduce the risks thus. The first would guard against by vigilance and self-scrutiny, and the second I must perforce take. If I got any response I could not possibly accept as the work of my unconscious mind my main point would be gained, I should have experimental proof of the existence of intelligence no longer on this plane of being, and to obtain this in the form of actual experience would make mere belief into matter of knowledge.

### §3

By now I had gathered some knowledge of the devices which might be used to train mediumistic power. In several communications got through a Medium I had been urged to develop the ability to take automatic writing, and though I believed that I had heard and followed mentally the spoken word on at least one occasion, I realized that this might be a very uncertain and dangerous method and that writing would inspire me with more confidence. It would also give better opportunity of re-perusal and scrutiny of the output. It was sometimes maintained that this writing could actually be produced by unconscious means. In that case, surely evidence of its origin would be afforded by content and style if it was honestly dealt with. Obviously one must first develop the power and then scrutinize the results. Prejudging them would get me no further. There were two methods, of beginning: one was to sit quietly with pencil and paper and wait for impressions to come into the mind and to record them immediately. Words, thoughts, chance expressions were all to be recorded and afterwards one attempted to construe these into a message. This way, I thought, was giving the unconscious a free pass into expression. I thought uneasily of knots and double knots and had mighty little faith in the process.. The other way was to sit with pencil poised and wait for automatic movement as though the pencil should move of its own volition. This sounded very thrilling but somehow extremely improbable. The practical question of how a disembodied entity could move so many grammes of wood and lead would take some solving. However, the project had taken such hold of me that any and all methods must be tried and I could deal with

problems of origin afterwards. So I set to work.

I began sitting alone in a quiet room. My mood was sceptical in self-defence, but acutely expectant for all that. I had gathered that it was advisable to empty the mind of all content and lay it bare for the reception of impressions. I conscientiously attempted this but was far from satisfied with my efforts. I had a quick darting habit of mind whose activity was difficult to lay aside. To maintain a blank in consciousness for any length of time is a discipline that requires much practice. My attempts usually finished in a concentration on the hope that I might feel again that strong sense of Andrew's presence and that the miracle of a direct communication would be achieved. But a long traffic with Mediums had put him at a great distance, and here I remained consciously alone in a void which I felt held nothing sentient.

I tried sitting with pencil poised in a none too steady hand. The pencil occasionally quivered and I was aware that I had not initiated the movement. Once or twice it traced a shaky line which waved obliquely across the page and which I thought might easily have formed into words. But nothing intelligible appeared. Tiring of protracted unsuccess in this method, I tried again to clear my mind and to record haphazard the words or phrases that came unbidden into it. Perhaps a letter, perhaps a word would start into consciousness, and hopefully I wrote it down. Sometimes a phrase or half-sentence was recorded like this but nothing of any significance came this way. The method did not please me; it was useless for my purpose, which required a clear interchange of thought. Even if results had been forthcoming they must always be suspect because of the risk of self-production.

I grew discouraged and abandoned my efforts to obtain writing. It occurred to me to try to develop clairvoyance instead. One thing might help the other, and I could return to the writing method again if I had any success in this direction. The attempt to 'see' was also beset with difficulties. Attention was distracted by the persistent return of memory pictures, and when these were banished patterns and colours of flickering light would play on the curtain of the closed eyelids. Then it was necessary to still the procession of thoughts and everyday images and the old difficulty recurred.

Such forms as I saw in these experiments were aimless and disc A startlingly clear image would flash into view with complete conviction of actuality. There was no possibility of mistaking it for a memory even if its content had been recognizable, which it never was. Sometimes it would be a person, sometimes a landscape, but always that trust in its authenticity accompanied it strongly. I recall the figure of a man, a square-built, middle-aged man, one of a group more vaguely seen, but his face and form were quite unknown to me and his appearance conveyed no meaning or message. On another occasion I had a horrifying vision of a woman in a most deadly state of terror. I sensed her agony of fear and then had to watch as she threw back her head and opened her mouth in a wordless scream, the quality of which was conveyed to me acutely, though no sound came. It was long before I could throw off

the distress of this vision, but again there was no recognition of features and no clue to the meaning of her act.

Then there was the peculiar joy I derived from a clear, pellucid impression of a mountainous landscape with white peaks outlined against a vivid sky and the meadows in the foreground starred with flowers. So keen was the happiness associated with this image that I held it in view as long as I could, and was even able to bring it back into consciousness after it faded. In this effort to 'see' the picture again I had a good instance of the difference between this kind of vision and a mere memory return. At first I could obtain only the memorized repetition, but this lacked all feeling-tone, and so I continued to strive after a repetition of the original experience, which eventually came back accompanied by all its previous satisfaction.

All these experiences were interesting, but I had to conclude that they had a purely psychological significance. At any rate, while this kind of hypothesis would cover the facts, I had no right to invest them with any other significance. I looked up 'Hypnagogic Hallucinations' - delicious phrase - and decided that they had better be dignified with that title. I was the more willing to discount them because again they were of no use to me as a method. I had somehow to escape from all these failures and find a more hopeful way of breaking through. Naturally, I brooded much over my possible incapacity, but while this was not certainly proved I intended to go on.

I was so baffled by the conviction of 'aloneness' that went with all these early experiments. I knew there was no one at the other end of my line, so to say, and was astonished and hurt by the silence and complete lack of response. This sounds naive to a degree, but it illustrates the strength of my expectancy. I managed to squeeze out of the situation the negative consolation that failure at least proved that I was not likely to invent a response on account of that expectancy and desire. This comforted me in a wry fashion and I felt more secure against the ever-present danger of auto-suggestion.

#### §4

I was living near a large seaside town, and one day it occurred to me to go in search of a Spiritualist church. I was directed up innumerable squalid backways and finally shewn the way to my goal by a collarless individual in the remains of a white shirt buttoned in one place only, with a crystal stud which blinked at me with a sinister air and sniggered at my question and turned to watch me across the road with amused indolence. Ruffled and nearly disquieted enough to give up the attempt, native obstinacy prevailed, and I found the church at last up a hidden alleyway. I made my way in and was reassured by a sunlit and cheerful interior, masses of flowers on a rostrum and a steady sound of humming from the rear which indicated the presence of the caretaker. I made enquiry and was told that a séance would be held that afternoon, and I decided to stay in and attend it. All the details of this séance are very clearly in mind because it had far-reaching results which were quite unforeseen by me at the time. In fact, my disagreeable search had left me in a far from receptive



mood, and I had resolved to secrete my purse if there was any darkness mixed up with the proceedings.

There were ten people present. They varied greatly in type, from the poorish housewife to a couple who proved to be a doctor and his wife. The Medium worked by means of psychometry: that is, she handled some personal belonging of each of the sitters as she gave her messages. I did not understand the inwardness of this proceeding, and, being tired and discouraged by my own failures, was in a sceptical mood in which the tray full of purses, rings, and brooches fingered by the stout, unmodish woman with her eyes shut and lips intently pursed struck me as merely grotesque. My turn was long in coming, so I had time to marvel at the aptness of the messages the Medium gave. How did she divine the Catholic faith of the quiet gentleman to whom she imparted a rather appealing vision of an ecclesiastical interior filled with flowers and saints? He wore no emblem that I could see, but he acknowledged his faith and seemed glad of her communication. Another, a determined-looking business man, she evidently put down as an investigator far from convinced of the authenticity of her messages. The same queer intuition was evident in the opening words of her communication to me, for she gave my occupation correctly at once. The rest was not particularly convincing as evidence for survival, but it contained a pretty message from an aunt recently dead and a long and cheering prophecy about the sunlit path of my future and the helping hands held out from the spirit world to aid me over what she described as a rough and stony pathway. Then I was told that there was one present who desired to help and guide me. I wondered if I was at last to make the connection I needed, but was completely put off by the subsequent description. I got an impression of a tall person in a white robe, an end of which he was holding across his face as though for a disguise. He was amused at some reference to his nose, which was described as long and beaklike, epithets he corrected to 'aristocratic'. Thus the Medium, who added that she thought he was an Egyptian, and that he was anxious to help me to read hieroglyphics and to understand all the mysteries of his ancient land. This was just the kind of fantastic guise in which I had least sympathy with Spiritualism, and though I liked the sense of humour evinced by my friend in the white robe, I declined the proffered guidance and came, away not much cheered.

Soon after this I made the acquaintance of a woman who was a table Medium: that is, she took messages by the tipping of a table which thus indicated the letters of the alphabet. She realized that I was interested and asked me to attend a sitting. I did so, and was amazed at the power with which the table was rocked and the speed at which a message could be put together. In, talk with her afterwards I told her something of my efforts and failures and she suggested lending me a planchette. She brought the toy into the room and showed me how to use it. A flat, triangular piece of polished wood about the size of an outspread hand had a hole for the insertion of a pencil at its apex. It ran on two small wheels fitted underneath the other corners. The hand was placed gently palm downwards on the board and any movement was

registered by the pencil as it moved over a sheet of paper. I remembered how my own poised pencil had shown signs of independent activity and thought that this device might be a help in overcoming the inertia of the heavy human hand. She placed it on her table and put her hand upon its surface, and with a slight creak of its wheels it moved up the table and stopped. I thought that pressure must unconsciously have been brought to bear upon it, and tried the thing myself. It was uncanny to feel the determined jerk with which it responded as it began to move about

I had heard of these gadgets before as adjuncts to a parlour game and had a vague theory of some magnetic influence emanating from the hand. My own hand often elicited sparks from my clothing, so that I was able for the nonce to believe in a purely mechanical cause. I took the thing home with me, and that evening, as soon as I was alone, I took a large sheet of paper, drew on it a circle around which I placed the letters of the alphabet and started to experiment. One adjusted the pencil and set it at the centre, put one's hand gently on the rest, and waited for it to show signs of independent activity. Almost at once it stirred and began to walk across the paper, and as it reached a letter I noted it down and replaced the pencil at the centre. I was intrigued and curious to a degree, though I took myself to task for taking the game seriously.

The succession of letters recorded that first evening failed to make words of any significance, but on succeeding evenings I tried again, sometimes getting series which chanced to make words, but these only stray and meaningless. Then one evening, on scanning the record, I noticed that one set of letters, three of them, recurred several times. They made nothing in themselves, but the thought persisted that they might be initials. 'G.F.S.' meant nothing to me, and I could not find anyone in my memory, to whom they might apply. When next I used the planchette these letters recurred twice more and I became increasingly puzzled and uncomfortable, because I felt that there was a significance in them that I was failing to find. I put the pencil again to the centre, and this time it walked determinedly out of the circle and wobbled uncertainly about on the white paper outside. This had never happened before, and with the utmost care lest in any way I should deflect its course I relaxed my hold of the wood until my hand scarcely touched it. The pencil moved into a series of recognizable letters. They made a name, a signature – 'G. F. Scott' - and finished with a bold stroke.

Curiously, hardly a doubt assailed me that an actual human entity was responsible for that signature. I had my response at last, and from an unknown hand. Experience has that indubitable seal of certainty about it, quite impossible to convey, but completely efficacious in removing all doubts. I knew my search was over, and after the years of lonely experimenting the shock of success halted me, wordless. And there was more than this. I felt the impact of an emotion, a surprise and joy that exceeded my own. For a while I could do nothing but sit back and wait for the

realization of all this to quieten and steady. Then I took another sheet of paper, and, reaching for the planchette, set it free to write what it would. Writing came slowly at first, and with anxious care I steadied and relaxed my hand on the board, feeling the letters forming underneath though I had to move the frame aside to read them. The writing was large and sprawling, but soon it became easily legible, and the stupid and stiff little ivory wheels creaked and stuck under the strenuous effort to force them into faster action. Again and again came a flood of relief and joy which stopped the busy pencil and seemed to fill the room where I sat, no longer alone.

### CHAPTER III

Planchette gives way to pencil - Scott's experiences - He describes the transition plane of being - The other side of a séance; the 'Egyptian' - Manipulating a planchette; establishing contact - Automatic writing by transmission of thought-control - The process discussed - Experimenters must take risks.

I was aware from the first of a well-marked, robust personality and of a knowledge and ability far transcending my own. Vivid impressions of the personality and even of the appearance of this stranger were conveyed to me in more subtle ways than by words. As he unfolded it to me, I found a mind stored with strange and varied memories, the fruits of a wide and adventurous life. Moreover, his vocabulary, his often startling turns of expression, even the construction of his sentences when one came to look closely at them, were strange to me. His writing exceeded in power, flexibility, and richness anything I had ever been capable of producing. In fact, his influence will probably be obvious in much that follows.

In order to fit this experience into the usual psychological theory I should need to claim all this as my own, a mere outflow from the unconscious mind. It would be necessary to assume that a sudden and extraordinary mental development had taken place, a kind of unprecedented 'late flowering' of the mind. It would certainly be difficult to find in my own very ordinary experience of life any germ which could have produced the richly textured memories which were gradually opened to me, and which surprised and delighted me with their unexpectedness. It was significant that whenever I began to think out the theory of self-origin I had to encounter some anger and reproach from my communicant. On the whole, it was less of a strain on credulity to accept Scott as a man than as a figment of my unconscious mind; I found that in any case I lacked the effrontery to claim all this as my own.

At first I asked questions which could be answered by a single word, but the answers soon began to expand into statements which filled out my tentative questionings. We were both puzzled about each other, and when my first curiosity was appeased the process was reversed, and in my turn I answered the questions which formed under my hand. But all this was slow and clumsy work, and one evening, after a specially strenuous burst of writing, one of the ivory wheels broke off, and the poor planchette

sat down on its side for good and all.

Next morning I was sitting at my desk considering a letter I had just received. My pencil was in my hand and I was idly tapping the back of the envelope when I felt the pencil pulling away from me. I eased my hand and lifted the wrist, and the pencil moved easily into writing. 'Hard luck on poor Mary', I read. This was a direct reference to the contents of my letter and to the reply I was meditating, and it proved to me that Scott was beginning to read my thought even when it was not specifically directed to him. I was illogically surprised that he should be here in this room, some distance from our usual Working Place, so strongly did the non-existent barriers of walls and doors hold actuality for me. Now I was to become aware of his presence at all times of the day and in any environment. But at the moment when he first seized my pencil I was filled with delight at the ease and certainty of this way of talking to each other. It was the ideal medium for my purpose.

We began to compare notes, but before telling of that the full story of the strange chance which had led to our association should be told. Scott had been killed in a motor smash some Months previously. This had come upon him in a mood of dry distaste for living and almost, at his own volition. He had an intensely alert and curious mind, and had searched contemporary thought in vain for any reasonable theory of life which should make the living of it worth while to him. He was past the age of adventure, though his youth had been lived in stirring war conditions when life had been rich and acceptable enough. At the end he was alone, his occupation ended, and his mind free to rove the unsettled, questing world of thought and to hurt and bruise itself against the negations which shut it in. His creed had slipped into a paralysing Nihilism, in which he regarded life as nothing but a chance aggregation of atoms and death as their mere scattering to the void. This was the death of all effort, the end of all creative thought. It sapped his strength and annulled his will. Finally, even the zest for life itself had sunk under it. Careless of risk, he had invited the catastrophe which ended it, only to find that the wall of death into which he rode opened like a gateway into life again.

My pencil wrote on, covering page after page, as Scott continued the account of his existence since that last glimpse of a grey road and high hedges had been shattered into oblivion. I give his narrative in his own words:

"My last thought was of the boys who had been run down in my mad career. I swerved, but was uncertain whether had succeeded in avoiding them. The grey road rose too swiftly to meet me and a shattering blow put me out . . . I am anxious to make this an accurate account but there is here a nightmare-like interlude. Black oblivion would be suddenly rent by searing agony tearing through my hazy consciousness like a sword - thrust and dying out again in a merciful blank. Immeasurable time seemed to pass before I came to myself without the accompaniment of pain. Then I opened my eyes with a slight shock of surprise, because somewhere in my mind was the conviction that I could neither move nor

see, but on this occasion the nightmare had lifted and I opened unbandaged eyes. I raised a hand to feel my head and was reassured. The last half-hour terminating in the crash had retreated into a misty past and I lay and contemplated the small distant views memory offered of roadsides reeling past, grey skies, and spring blur of hedgerows.

“I came to the end several times before my mind would face it. Rather would it take me through the senseless journey again and again. But at last I had to face it and relive the shock of that sickening blow. I lay back while this emotion ebbed and then, impatient of such self-inflicted misery, tried to realize what had happened. I attempted to collect my thoughts, but they tore through my mind with such uncontrollable speed that it took some time to catch at any coherent idea. There had been an accident in which I had been knocked out; that fact seemed to be central to the whirling rush of them. I ought, then, to be in bed somewhere, perhaps in a hospital. Soon I should wake up from what was evidently a nightmare and find myself there.

“But here I was nonplussed, and felt again at my head. No bandage, no injury, no bed. I peered around for evidence of my whereabouts and was baffled by a misty shroud of opaqueness which might have been a dense sea fog. Moreover, I was actually lying there entirely, uncovered, yet not in the least chilled or uncomfortable. It seemed quite a happy and natural thing to be thus, and I was free from pain and surprisingly free, too, from any real concern over my plight. I was only perplexed because the connection with all the past mental content of my mind refused to be made. I had been, and I was but between the two states lay an enigmatic gap. But sleep soon came upon me again and lulled even this hazy perplexity to rest.

“I slept and awoke several times before the suggestion that I was actually ‘dead’ occurred to me, and even then it was some time before I forced myself to entertain it. So certain had I been of the annihilation of the self that even this shadowy form of life was an astonishing reversal of theory. True, the cheerful earth had vanished with a completeness that staggered me in conjunction with the undoubted fact of my own very vital continuance. For I was more than merely alive in an earth sense: I was thrillingly, tensely alive, with all my being accentuated, keyed up and emotionally charged as never before. I tested and savoured this quivering being, cabined no longer in dull constraining flesh but flowing from me as though I was the centre of a power-house of life. My body was actual, yet weight and solidity had gone, movement no longer lifted inertial mass but was the thing it moved. Marvelling, I began to give heed to the many questions pricking through my brain.

“Snatching at, the flying thoughts, I tried to reconstruct the actual case. Somewhere - I could guess at the place, knowing where I had crashed - somewhere my body, still thought of as myself, was lying smashed and helpless and to all appearance dead. It would be, in a cheerful hospital ward perhaps, and there must be people about. Then I had slipped out of that and was here, yet *here* was actually *there*, since I had not

moved. Could I by any chance see into that lost world? Confused glimpses of it had visited me during the intervals of awareness, but now it seemed too far, and was too fantastic an effort to try to superimpose it on this nothingness. There must be friends there, relatives too, near to me, within touch, yet for ever now beyond my calling. They looked at the broken body on the bed and thought - - ? I wondered to what blissful heaven of their own imagining they had consigned me, when I was still there in their midst. Great billows of emotion assailed me; sorrow flooded into me from all around, and I wept.

“My thoughts were out of hand and the whirling flurry of them flung now one, now another, uppermost This queer business of living, the grim joke it was to find myself thus, the Nihilist confuted by his own obstinate persistence in living - the fatuity of all my neat theories. This solitude, opportunity to rethink the whole thing if only this whirl of thought would die down. Efforts to catch at some coherence, flashing pictures of my life, twisted purposes, inconclusive aims, conflicting desires locking into stultification. People and things, injuries received and given, the foolish, the cruel, the wasteful in my life, all hurtling at me from this maelstrom, producing remorse and self-pity in alternations of misery.

‘When this grew insupportable I would wander my empty world deeply sunk in self-communion. Then the lightness of my body, the easing of the bonds of flesh and escape from its solid-seeming gave a sudden realization of release from all this which mitigated the remorseful brooding of my days. My world was featureless, meaningless, and unreal. It was a foggy, flat arena of consciousness, vaguely girt with higher land but with small scope of vision. All its outlines had a shifting, blurred character more dreamlike than a dream. There were here brooding presences, invisible, intangible, which pervaded space with their emotions and influences, some lovely, some sad, some loathsome. I wandered, avoiding some, drawn towards others, and by degrees becoming aware of the earth origin of these influences. Though I was hidden from the earth its inhabitants were all about me, unconsciously going about their daily commonplaces in ignorance of the presence of this weird world so close to them and into which they might so easily slip.

## §2

“I wondered whether in all this world, where the double web of existence was so strangely interwoven, there was one soul who could be hailed from out my solitude. Were ‘Mediums’ and ‘Sensitives’ aware of this other world? If any of their claims were genuine it should be possible to make contact with such people. I should have denied them anything but a stronger power of self-delusion than the generality in my old, days, but I saw that attitude now as a subtle self-flattery. Perhaps I could find a Medium, attract her attention and so draw near to some human warmth again. I reflected that such plied a trade, however, and ruefully contemplated myself as ‘Guide’ giving quaint messages from lost friends. It was obvious that I could not act in this capacity in my present state, even if I had any stomach for such dealings. I

began to recall what I knew of Spiritualistic doctrines. They taught that one passed into this land of shadows for an interim, a space for self-examination and re-integration. I should not be here for long, perhaps.

“Meanwhile I wandered, travelling easily over the featureless land, avoiding parts that seemed heavy with noisome earth influences and finding an air of happiness and light in others. With no guide and no direction I wandered, scarcely to be called unhappy now, but in a suspension of hope and being. The lightness and effortless management of my body was still a novel delight to me, and there was strong satisfaction in the fact that I was still a living conscious being. In the absence of any objective reality I, my past and possible future, became my whole scope of being. But it was not long before I emerged from this phase of complete self-absorption.

“I had moved a long way and a good deal of time seemed to have elapsed when I found and followed a particular trail that pleased me. The scene itself varied not at all, but there was a sense of a familiar presence, of something akin to me here. I had quite decided that these gusts of influence by which I was so often assailed were the emanations of personalities from the world I had left. So I followed the almost perceptible trail of this presence until it stopped. Here there were other and alien influences, and only keen interest held me to the spot. Then, startlingly, my soundless world was invaded by a voice. Words like these came out spasmodically:

“Now, perhaps. . . . The next. . . . No Almost the last at this rate: I wish I could see the tray better. . . . Now surely, No Well, patience. Queer she is with her dreadful accent, but a dear kind soul, I think. That’s remarkable. Whatever can there be in those things to give her a clue to their owner’s character? . . . Will she spot that what I have given her was Andrew’s, or will she miss the connection? What a weird business, but she is making some marvellous hits. Now. . . . Yes, mine at last.’

“Following this came a queer, excited medley of thought, for I realized by its content that what I was almost audibly hearing was thought, the running commentary on passing events that goes on in any mind during its, waking hours. But miraculously I was able to understand these thoughts, to follow them easily, and this brought such a feeling of intimacy that I was fascinated. I judged it to be a woman, and she was listening intently to a voice whose words were blown through her consciousness to me in a queer echo. Then, undertow to actual words and surface thought, I began to catch another current. It told me the conditions of the scene that was passing through there. This was a séance, and there were a handful of people sitting in a dull little room. She gave me this picture in her thought, which was all mixed up with an uncomfortable sense of her surroundings. So I saw my opportunity if only I could force my thought on the Medium.

“With all my might I willed myself into her mind, gave her a mental picture of myself, or tried hard to do so, and implored her to speak of me to you. Can you place all this? Do you remember the ‘Egyptian’ who offered to guide and help you? This was the fantastic guise in which she dressed my presentment of myself, and not my

doing at all, though, funnily enough, there was a foundation in my past history for the thought of the robe, and I suppose that a training in the pseudo-esoteric school of mediumship did the rest. Her description of my face, with its salient, feature, did amuse me, as she told you, but the whole was distorted by her notion of Egyptian local colour. Hieroglyphics, indeed! What tries to give her was the thought that I could and would help you to understand all this, because I felt that tense desire to understand straining through all your thought. So I followed you home, determined in spite of your amused disclaimer to get through to your conscious mind and to make myself fully known to you.

“Meanwhile, my own painful sense of wasted opportunities was at work to produce the determination in some way to-pass through a convincing testament to earth. I realized so clearly that my own lack of a cohering faith in the indestructibility of life had reduced me to impotence, and I saw in this same philosophy of negation a reason for the deathward tendency of the age. Implicit reliance on the iron doctrines of determinism could have no other outcome in human affairs. Once I could pierce your consciousness, make you hear my voice and follow my thought I would concert with you on ways of presenting a reasoned proof to counter this belief in death with a logical foundation for belief in life. But I was nonplussed often. After leaving that séance your thought faded out and was lost to me, though I had no difficulty in following your actual presence.

“I began to realize how this thing worked. In times of excitement or heightened being you glowed into clear view and your thought came strongly to me. On occasion, then, you were lit up for me, and not only your immediate thought and relations to other people but also the deeper currents of your mind. The repressed and dangerously powerful tides of sorrow, doubt, and anxiety were painfully clear to me at times, and I saw in these undercurrents striking similarities to the vexed turmoil of my own hidden life. I read in them, too, the signs of overstrain, but the strength of my purpose was proof against any compunction. I was determined to make you the channel of my communications with the world and to use you as my own confidant and friend when I could reach your understanding.

### §3

“I lost no time in working in the nebulous currents that set towards me from your mind. I impressed your thought, kept you constant to your purpose and directed your ways to the finding of a means of breaking down the barrier. How you angered me at times! I accused you of sheer obtuseness. So near you would get to my thought and so nearly you would carry out my intentions, and then the essential part would be missed and the occasion lost. But at last my chance came.

“I had done some thinking since this began and I concluded that this process must be reciprocal. Your thought reached me, so mine must reach you, even though you were unaware of its source. Thought ruled body, so why should not my strongly directed thought affect your control of your body? You gave me the chance to prove



this theory when you began fooling about with that planchette. It was clear to me that I could, not move a physical object that was invisible and non-existent to me, but in desperation I tried. To the confusion of my theory it worked. My thought seemed to move that clumsy contrivance, though I failed to fit a theory to the process. But it worked, thank God it worked, and once I realized your scheme of a circular alphabet I was on to it and had good hopes of making myself intelligible. Realize that I could not see those letters in any way, except as a dim reflection in your thought, and then you made the conditions nearly impossible by conscientiously refusing to look at them lest you had any hand in directing the thing.

“But I got my initials through, and I rather plume myself on that achievement because it had to be a visualization of the circle and a hit-or-miss line of direction for the letter I wanted. By a series of lucky efforts I repeated them, and at last arrested your attention. I sweated over the strain to make you realize that they were not to be disregarded nor scoffed at, and at last you took them seriously. But can you picture my disgust when an easier way suggested itself? What a fool I had been to labour with that wretched circle when a more direct method was open. Of course, if I could push the pencil in one direction, by an extra effort of will I could surely make it form letters, or at least behave in such a way as to startle you and wake you up to my presence.

“The rest you know. With a strong exercise of will I directed your pencil into the form of letters and wrote my name. We both savoured that moment of triumph, and from then on the process of improving our methods was simple. I had grown deadly tired of pushing that clumsy toy when at last it collapsed. The notion that it would be far easier to push a human hand about came next. You know, your startled laugh when I wrote on your envelope was lovely. I fairly glowed over it. It was the method we needed. Speed soon came, and for me perfect ease of working. I have only to think my writing, not to do it myself. I think it as being done and your hand automatically reproduces it. You will confess that the style differs completely from your own, and from what I can see of it in the record of your thought it would compare fairly well with any script of mine left on earth. There is no magic or nonsense about this process, it is sheer thought transmission.”

Scott's writing ceased and we paused. There were several questions in my mind about the process by which I took his writing, and I began to formulate them. My fear throughout had been lest the little understood trickery of the unconscious should produce a false response of its own which I should be unable to discriminate from an authentic one. As soon as my pencil began to move more freely I found myself aware in advance of the words which followed on paper, anticipating the salient word or phrase as one does in recording one's own thought. This had shaken my faith considerably. Certainly an odd turn of phrase or unfamiliar word would now and then appear to reassure me, but in spite of the characteristic handwriting and its contrast with my own, the doubt remained. Scott followed my thought and

answered it.

“Let us understand the process and the conditions under which it acts. I am near to you, but not touching your hand nor attempting to push a pencil I can neither see nor feel. I just assume that it is there in your hand and that you have the paper before you, and I picture this blank sheet and your pencil travelling over it. Then I write mentally: that is, I do all that writing involves in imagination and your mind follows my thought track. It motivates your hand exactly as I think the operation. What does it feel like to you?”

I reminded him how my pencil had pulled away from me on that first occasion. It appeared to work independently of my volition. I did not will it to write his words, and however hard I tried I could not deliberately reproduce his writing. If I tried it would be a very slow and clumsy business, whereas actually the pencil raced over the paper in his script as quickly as I could write it myself. Then one had also to remember that only the point of my pencil was in contact with the paper because I kept my wrist raised to take it. It is by no means easy to write legibly like this when one usually writes with the support of the wrist resting on the paper. But doubts were still lingering.

Scott continued:

“I think the words on to paper, and naturally I think of them as being written in my script. That thought must be faithfully imposed on your brain which as faithfully guides your hand to its performance. Yet although your brain is the intermediary, your will is not involved, nor are you originating the thought. Hence the feeling of automatism. Naturally enough, you register the advance thinking that one always does when writing, thought going a fair way in advance of the written word.

“It is as though I transfer the will to motorize certain muscles in *my* body which produce writing, to the corresponding motor centres in *your* brain which then produces actions resulting in writing of the same type as my own.”

That cleared up the actual process, but got us no nearer the mystery of how it was that Scott's thought could be so easily impressed on my brain. I was getting a little nervous about this, and wondered if it was wise to allow such a control to operate for long. My doubt could not be hidden, and Scott pounced on it at once.

“You forget that in the beginning it was your thought that could be so easily impressed on my brain and that it is an entirely mutual process. We are in equal danger of having our wills sapped and weakened. Joking apart, I think it is sheer nonsense to be nervous. It is simply the power of thought over body that belongs perhaps to a later stage of existence. You would be surprised at the easy response of my body to any thought.”

This seemed to me a risky mixture of telepathy and hypnotism, but experimenters must take risks and only experience could show the effects of such an association. I privately resolved to hold my own, forgetting that my thought could be read, and I

sensed a wicked chuckle from Scott. His sense of humour was inconvenient at times, but I caught the contagion of his laugh and it relieved the tense earnestness of my more habitual mood.

## CHAPTER IV

Further developments - Reflected expression - Direct speech established by slow degrees - Transmission of emotions – Theory - Positive and negative aspects - The ‘noumenal’ aspect of a human being - What are the emotions? - The whole man functions always - Emotive vibrations - Need for period of reintegration.

Developments crowded on us after this. I have spoken of Scott’s laugh. It was through this that I first got an impression of his facial expression, because when we laughed together my face took on his expression and so taught me exactly what he was like. One has constantly a consciousness of one’s own face which is somehow oddly at variance with the face one sees in the mirror. This would appear to be an inner appreciation of expression and personality; a kind of visualization of the *persona*. It is a weird experience to feel the lineaments and expression of another’s face reflected on the features. Yet what I was getting was not a facsimile of Scott’s actual features but his own consciousness of his appearance. It was easily understood as a special case of this same thought transmission, but was none the less an odd and unexpected aspect of it. I could gauge his mood and understand the meaning of his written words the better for this reflection, just as one adds to the contents of a conversation the commentary of changing expressions on the face of a companion. I found this a more effective way of seeing than my eyes could have given me because it was less a record of overt expression than of meaning.

I have spoken too of the anticipation of words which occurred in writing. As I could follow his thought in this way he would sometimes tease me by testing to see how far ahead I had guessed, or would alter the sentence rapidly to avoid the words I was expecting. Then, out of a combination of this trick of reading his thought and the other of reflected facial expression, came the power to communicate directly by speech. Obviously, if my face took his expression my lips also could be moved to speak his words. I left my tongue and lips free, and with practice it became possible to form the words as he said them. Moreover, I caught along with the words his accent and the vibrant and masculine quality of his voice. Once or twice we practised aloud and, allowing for the different range of tones in a woman’s voice, I felt his speech would have been recognizable to anyone who had known him. Thus writing was partially superseded by speech, but the transmission of this required much more expenditure of effort on both sides, and I was correspondingly tired and strained by its exercise. We went back at intervals to the slower method of writing for rest. The spoken method grew more trustworthy, almost mechanical, after a while, but it was not an easy process to establish. I took it by allowing my lips to move in an inaudible whisper, in which they were ordered automatically by the spoken word as Scott

pronounced it himself. Hearing words mentally as they run through the consciousness requires great concentration, and the more mechanical reception obviated this close attention. It was a distinct gain in ease of working.

## §2

Transmission of thought was one thing, but as a corollary there was transmission of emotions. I had experienced this when that first glow of joy was shared by us, and soon I could interpret the meaning of other exchanges. But the interchange of emotions has apparently a positive and a negative side, a transmission in one kind and a reception in another. Emotion is sent out as evidence of a certain kind of meaning, the propulsion outward of what I feel towards you. It is received as a physical sensation to which the meaning has to be re-attached, unless speech interprets this meaning. Some change in the level of life, in the being, some emission of a wave of power set free by the upsurging of meaning from that being, flows out as a physical vibration which is consciously felt as the body of the recipient takes it in. Joy, perhaps, is given out by one of us, and received by the other as a delicate vibration thrilling through the body as clear and delicious as fresh morning sunshine. Fear is a choking fog, a heavy muffling of sensation, or, when it is acute, a cold, death-like thrill. Disgust is a nausea, anger a burning, searing pain; resentment a sharp stab. Sorrow is a quivering agony which pervades the whole frame.

These emotions are not necessary in the guise of their appropriate meaning, but are felt as the direct physical sensations I have tried to describe. Moreover, some of these are received locally and one learns to know their distinctive signs. Impatience, for instance, is felt as a throbbing band round the throat, and embarrassment in the familiar guise of a hot flush. There is evidently a distinction between the sharing of thought and the sharing of emotion. Thought transfers instantaneously in its true form and is known simultaneously to both of us. An emotion can be felt by one in relation to a circumstance not shared by the other, and the physical vibrations set free by that emotion will reach the other before the thought-index to, its meaning is supplied. An example will make this clearer. I am immersed in activity and have forgotten Scott's presence. He is immersed in his own thoughts and has forgotten me. He recalls some incident from his past which kindles anger in him, and I feel a searing pain which has no connection with my thought or present experience. It stops my work, and Scott gets the reflection of my hurt and realizes what he has done. In the same way my emotions shake him and my anger or impatience harm him.

All these experiences were shared by us, discussed and analysed because we felt that they gave an accurate indication of the real nature and effects of the various emotions. Scott summed up many discussions thus:

"The cardinal fact that emerges is that emotion travels as a distinct vibration because the receipt of it in a sensory fashion is sufficient proof of that to us. We both know from first-hand experience exactly how these emotion-vibrations affect us. My body

is acutely sensitive to them and the presence of any human being is felt by me as the sum of their emotional output. If I happen to be present when you are in company with others I get a bewildering complex of them, varying with the wealth and worth of the person concerned. Some people are dead to me; I can detect no quiver of feeling at all. They would appear to be non-existent in this world, what of its body is in them being hopelessly sunk in the flesh. Others are alive in their different degrees. By these emanations of personality I can gauge their real reactions to you or to each other, though their actual thoughts are hidden from me. There have been unhappy times when you have had to encounter hostility and I have registered some of the anger that has been directed towards you. It has been extremely painful for me and you have been acutely distressed, though you have not felt the full physical effects of these harmful vibrations as I have done. Your body has had to take them in, nevertheless, and it has responded to its hidden pain by the emission of sharp stabs of resentment in its turn. The resentful word is merely an index to the receipt of a real physical hurt to the inner body.

“This throws a queer light on the interchange of emotions in human affairs, does it not?

“They are strictly physical in their origin and effects and must work under exact physical laws. The unconscious dualism of our thinking, in which we detach our emotions from us, as though they were a set of immaterial parallel experiences neither given nor received by our bodies, is obviously untenable. The emotional life must play a great part, the great hidden part in all human life and affairs. This is the submerged part of the iceberg, the conscious intellectual processes merely the one-ninth above water. Words are the mere powdering of frost upon its summit. The great reality of being is this submerged total of emotional being, and I am becoming convinced that the vanity of the conscious brain alone gives it pre-eminence in modern thought. In reality this is the blind slave of the feeling, and only functions in accord with its imperious needs. Its findings are superficial rationalizations of the hidden desires and motives of the real being.

“But we wander from your question. You were wondering, firstly, how it comes that you feel these vibrations so plainly from me, and, secondly, why you do not receive them in the same way from those you meet in your own sphere.

“I warn you that it will be impossible fully to answer either question at this stage, but I will hazard a theory which is borne out by the facts as we know them. The question of the make-up of this second body and how it comes to pass out of the earth body at death must be left until we are able to link it properly with scientific fact. We are both determined to leave no stone unturned to effect this connection, but it is obviously far too soon to build any theory about it. So please accept the undoubted fact that I am here in full possession of memory and personality. You will one day be in like case. Your earth body is invisible to me along with all the other matter of the world to which it belongs, but your subsequent form is at times to be seen glowing

faintly, not quite dimmed by its interpenetrating clay. I, like you, was insensitive to the physical effects of anger, love, and other emotions. I had to wait for them to issue in tones, words, expressions; I thought that I responded in my behaviour only to these. I was, of course, wrong in so thinking, because the hidden interplay of emotions was always the largest part of every situation in life. But now I can make no such mistake; I must take not only the expressed meaning but the full impact of the vibrations that accompany it and are its real expression. This body must register them as physical facts.

“Just as an earthly body dulls the receipt of these emotional vibrations, so it clogs their emission. I am not clogged with an earth body, so the waves of emotion I send out are keener and more penetrating in their effect. You do not get their full force even then, because your earth tissue protects the more sensitive body within. We make the repression of emotion into a creed, especially we English; but it is immeasurably more difficult to deny emotion now, I find, because it is accentuated both in meaning and in physical accompaniment. I am aware of the silly convention that denies a man the expression of any emotion except in certain recognized situations. This looks more foolish to me now, inasmuch as it becomes clear that a man’s greatness, his weight and quality, are to be justly measured only by this same power of emotion. I have to know this in contradiction to all my training on earth by the testimony of actual experience, and could you feel the weight and impact of a man of more than ordinary power in this sphere you would realize how sure a measure it is, I do not marvel overmuch at the volcano of suppressed power exploding and rending the whole fabric of being in the case of many who have great reserves of emotional power. They are too fully charged for safety and our code of behaviour denies them even a legitimate outlet.”

### §3

“I think this answers both your questions, but I see more emerging into your mind and I am equally anxious to follow up the argument. Doctors and psychologists have realized that one’s emotional states have a direct bearing on the state of one’s health. But the emotions are not phenomena expressed by the self and reacting on the body, as though body and self were two entities. Even the localizing of emotional centres in the ductless glands which are thus made responsible in their functioning for the correct balance, necessary to health does not, I think, cover the case. As I read my own experience, *the whole man functions always*, whether in sensory, emotional, or intellectual activity. It is as correct to examine the state of a man’s emotional body as it is to examine his nervous system or his digestive tract. Here the analysts are on the right track and consequently their methods work empirically, though their theories are in crude shape for lack of the facts with which we could supply them. The real point at issue is the transmission of these emotional vibrations which are an emanation from the whole person. In your sphere a man is characterized by a certain set of features, expression, complexion; and type of body. This is his presentment to

your senses, and you recognize and assess him by it, but here I feel and gauge a man by his emotional output, and in that consists his real presence in this sphere. These emanations must operate on people on earth, even though they lack direct awareness of them. It is no sentimental humbug to say that human beings suffer if they have to live in an atmosphere of hostility. We know that the delicate inner body can be literally blasted by anger and hate. Christ's dictum that he who hates his brother is a murderer has physical justification. Is it too much to suppose that the real facts were known to him? We do begin to recognize that the only atmosphere in which men can live healthily is that of love, and that has a significance that I should like to guess at even though it drags in more advanced problems.

"Some of these vibrations are definitely harmful; they cause actual pain which must mean injury of tissues. I take it that they are negative vibrations, discordant, inharmonious rhythms which jar and disorganize. Others are as certainly lovely and helpful. It is as though these finer, keener vibrations penetrate the body, easing it, harmonizing it and overruling all its jangled rhythms. Our experience makes it easy to believe that love is as necessary to healthy growth as sunlight; in fact, I should say that the trite analogy is perfectly accurate, love doing for one body what sunlight does for the other. We talk of vibrations in a somewhat loose fashion as yet, but I am becoming convinced that an important body of theory will spring from this kind of data. For the moment this oversimplified form of speech must suffice.

"Psycho-analysis has taught us this much, that a mind full of conflict must strain body and brain of the victim. Certain unpleasant emotions do give rise to physical symptoms of discomfort even on earth, but the full extent of the malaise must be experienced in this second body. Almost any strong emotion shakes my body to pieces now, and where there is a conflict of emotions I am shaken and agonized as in an illness. The pain your body reflects when I am angry, worried, or sorrowful is only a part of the disease which I have to endure. So all the repressions, complexes and tangles in the being have to be borne now in this accented and conscious form. There is justification in this even for the deathbed repentance if it resolves some of the troubles of the mind and gives the sufferer peace at last."

We paused here as the onerous nature of this information was appreciated. I remembered to have read in Spiritualist literature that suicides and people in acute mental distress often stayed for some time in a shadowy borderland until their troubles were healed. Scott's explanation showed the necessity for this in a reasonable light, not as a punishment for the breaking of some semi-artificial social law, but as an interim for the working out and cure of what in the new body was a bodily disease, an illness in the sensitive body of the emotions. He continued:

"Judging by the acuteness of the sensations of which this body is capable and supposing that the process of development produces next an even more sensitive body, I should say that this halt for healing to be completed is merciful. If suffering of this kind were to be endured in a yet more sensitized frame it would be well-nigh

insupportable. There is no more suffering in an earth sense, my physical body is incapable of sustaining harm. I can only cause my own suffering by bringing into consciousness my inner disharmony.

“Given time to live out their earth life, most men achieve a resolution of conflict. Peace and serenity come with age, and the man goes quietly to his change untroubled by aching desires and clashing motives. But when these strains have all but disintegrated the inner body, and the man is swept into the next world before he has found healing and peace, that process has to be accomplished here. He must await the reintegration which comes with fuller self-knowledge, the facing and understanding of his own problems and the peace which comes to a man when he is healed and entire again. I think it is amply proved that a full and healthy earth life is the right preparation for the ascending series of lives which follow. It builds an all-important foundation for what comes after.

“Sudden violent death, unnatural transplanting before the flowering time, must hinder proper development here. Think of the ghastly problems which must have called for solution here when war sent thousands of unprepared young souls into this phase of being, with sins of violence and cruelty on their conscience and with the thwarting of all their earthly hopes to add bitterness to their remorse.”

Scott ceased. I did not know his full story, but the stirring of my own sorrow was augmented by his, and for the time we wrote no more.

## CHAPTER V

Contact with Andrew at last - He describes the aftermath of war - Formation of a War Youth Community - The inner history of the first message - Organization of communications with earth - Return to the near earth plane - Effects of war as seen in 1916 - The crowning importance of the earth phase.

I had told Scott about Andrew's message. He thought it was probably genuine, and advised me to continue efforts to get in touch with him.

“You have to remember,” said Scott, “that he has been in this new world a long time and has friends, occupations, and interests that fill his time. It was some time before you got his message and he may have despaired of a response. I take it that he will try again, probably at intervals and we must be on the look-out to take any message that comes. Meanwhile, I think that we should try to reach his thought”

Of late we had been getting intimations of messages coming from other sources. We could not trace them to the hand of anyone known to either of us, and often they were solitary instances, fragments of writing that were not repeated. We resolved to make regular efforts to find Andrew and to make him understand that I could take his writing. Twenty years was a long time, and it might not be easy to reach him, nor for him to reach me. Even so, we persevered.



By sitting quietly and gathering oneself for the effort it was possible to lift one's thought, to feel that it was reaching up and seeking in higher levels of consciousness. Then followed the attempt to send out the thought, not in verbal form but as a thought form. It was often very difficult to get the initial lift in consciousness. At other times there seemed less downward pull and thought went up freely. Staying quietly for response one day, I was certain of the impulse to write, and taking my pen it began to form the well-known neat handwriting on the paper. To measure the effect of seeing this writing again one has to relate it to the years of war when his letters were the crisis and meaning of each day, and also, alas, to the times that followed when I looked for them in vain. In dreams I so often found the thin envelope on the mat and recognized the long-despaired-of handwriting. Andrew had been posted as missing in 1916, and failing to get any confirmation of his death there had always been the lingering hope that one day the familiar writing would be seen again. But the end of the war had finished that vain hope. Now, twenty years after, I saw it again; no vaguely similar writing, but the very same, repeating every trick of style and not to be distinguished from that of his old letters when I put the two side by side.

Communication did not become easy at first, and we sometimes had to stop because there was confusion in the messages, but gradually the contact strengthened and became more accurate. The story of twenty years and more had to be told by both of us, and we went on to cover many sheets of paper and to write for hour after hour. I found him altered by twenty years' experience of conditions strange to me; he found a correspondingly great change in me. We both had to take stock of these altered personalities in each other, and so by degrees we grew into a new friendship and intimacy. In a sense it was reassuring to find these differences; had one created his communications out of desire and memory he would certainly have reappeared as the youthful Andrew of 1916.

Of his life since those last ghastly days on the Somme he said:

"As a result of so many of an age coming through together we naturally remained in association. Many of us felt the deprivation of education and training due to the war, and we resolved to supply this lack. We set on foot a kind of War Youth Movement in which aspirants to knowledge and specialists in many branches of learning got together to found a kind of University. You remember how many decent fellows there were in our regiment, for instance, and of course there were countless others. We were able to add experience to ourselves as we needed, because all the older people - that is, those who had finished their course naturally on earth - were dead keen on helping. So we have made this our life ever since."

I was naturally curious to know the inner history of that first message received through my friend. In his reply to my question Andrew gave me an interesting account of the other side of a séance. He said:

"I worried about you all the time at first. You were so unfit to tackle life alone, I

thought, and were certain to come to grief unless you were advised and helped by someone more practical than yourself. I had hoped to reach you directly, but soon found that I couldn't make you understand me, though I knew only too well how you were grieving. For years I gave it up because there was great difficulty in finding you. Then the matter got more urgent and I made another attempt. I couldn't tell whether you were in touch with any of your old friends, but had to assume that you might be. There was a chance that in your own district some Spiritualist gatherings might be held which would provide a means of getting a message through to you. I knew some people here who were acting as Guides and I made enquiries among them. They knew the names of the places and of some of the people with whom they came in contact. What is the matter? Why are you so doubtful? I can't go on. . . ."

Andrew came to an abrupt stop and I had to apologize and explain. "I am so ignorant of the procedure on your side," I said, "And did not realize that the Guides would have information about those who sat with their Mediums. I thought I must have got that wrong and was suddenly stricken by doubt. Do please explain."

"Yes, I can give you the name of the Medium who took my message. She was a Mrs. H., and her Guide knew some of the people she visited. They included the familiar surname of your friend, someone living in your district, so I took a chance on that. You did not realize how much of the Medium's concerns the Guide would know about, and that was the doubt that stopped us? But, of course, the Guides make known their connections, place of meeting, and people likely to be present, and then those who want to communicate with friends come together. This is on our side, you understand, and the Guide gives what messages he can induce the Medium to accept. It's as much an organized affair here as it is for you. How else do you think any connections could possibly be made? They wouldn't happen just haphazard. You people have such hazy ideas about conditions here. Do, please, think it out.

"To go on with my story. I went several times with this Guide before I got my chance. At that particular meeting I hadn't much hope, for there were crowds of people there all waiting to get things through. But when I found that M. herself was there I knew the name had not misled me, and struggled very hard to get my word taken. She was most reluctant to take it, but at last she let the Medium give it and I could only hope that somehow it might reach you."

The reproach of hazy thinking was well merited. I had not realized that organization must be necessary on that side as well as on this before communication could be established. Nor had it occurred to me that locality would play an important part. Yet I had myself suffered from the unreasonable demands and expectations of others in this respect. For instance, this was proposed to me once as a test of Mediumship: "You say that you are a Medium; well, I once knew a man named Chalkley, a sergeant in our regiment. He died in 1921. Ask him this question." Then followed a question which none but the man himself could answer. Naturally, no answer forthcoming. My Guide did not know the man and had no means tracing him. Yet

the fact that it was impossible to comply with a totally unreasonable request like this was taken as final proof that the whole thing was a myth.

Andrew's explanation gave me a reasonable idea of how the thing worked, and now I could appreciate the possibility of many genuine messages getting through. I blamed myself for neglecting to clear up the confusion in thought sooner. He went on to tell me how he had waited for some response to his message, having no means of telling why it was delayed in reaching me. He seems to have known when I actually got it.

"I knew no more about it until after you had got my message and were trying to find me. But of course you had to get over the shock and make up your mind that it was genuine. I had a hunch that you were trying writing, as I had hoped you would do, and was keen to get something through to you. I began to get a series of clear pictures of you, and knew by this that our thoughts were approaching each other. Whenever I was free and quiet I came here and experimented. The trouble was that we so seldom coincided as to time. It is extremely difficult to know about your time, but of late I have been able to follow your usual working hours and can sometimes be free to talk to you then. It is important to have a definite time of day for this, then one can hope to make contact.

"Of course it took you a long time to develop the power to take writing, and though I was trying to get it to you, Scott got in touch with you first. I was very worried because I think I was on the verge of finding out how you were going to work. You can imagine how that planchette business confused me, because I did not know anything about such gadgets. By the time I had got the hang of the thing Scott had got your attention and I couldn't break through. As I have said, I was very worried because I didn't know him then. You took a big risk when you threw yourself open to any kind of response and worked alone at it like that. I came often to find your thought, but it was very difficult to sort out what was happening. As soon as you began to believe that you could take other writing and to wait and hope for mine, I succeeded in getting it to you. But muddles and confusion are left behind now, thank goodness. Scott has helped you to develop and so all is well. Isn't this lovely? Worth waiting all these years for. We can talk together so easily, and what it means to me to have found you again I don't know how to put into words."

I asked Andrew what he meant by 'coming to find my thought', and he replied

"This is where I come when I want to find you. I sit here with my eyes closed and search for your thought, for impressions of you. Just now I got a clear picture of S--'s little face turned up to yours and heard what you said to her as though I were in the same room with you both. Marvellous to have found you."

I was curious about the possibility of coming back to this near-earth plane, almost hoping that Andrew would be able to do so to give me a greater feeling of nearness and intimacy. He said:

"The process of coming back is difficult and has a kind of taboo attached to it. Some

do it to get near to loved ones and others to be nearer for work with a Medium. "Those who work as Guides have their own special ways of doing these things. One has to lower one's vibration - something like going into a trance, or being drugged and finding oneself again in the misty, half-alive state. It produces nausea sometimes and is very bad to bear after one has been here a long time. I tried it once or twice, but I am sure it is not advisable, and now it has become practically impossible to me. As we can find and talk to each other like this, it is unnecessary to use such desperate measures."

Andrew did not often hark back to the days when separation was still a new and bitter sorrow, but occasionally one got a glimpse of them.

"I was in a most unenviable state, as you can imagine. I resented coming and yet was fain to be glad that I was out of that hell. I was worried stiff about the others and about you and my people. I wanted my wife, my home, my ordinary life, and not all the beauty of this world made up for the denial of them. I was haunted by you and knew that you were sorrowing out of measure, and I only got my cure in hard work for others. I found some of my own people after a while; but they lived such different lives that I needed more than they could give me, so we began this venture and here we still are. It is only when I am in touch with you that I am at all sorrowful about it now. The society of all these men, to many of whom I have strong attachments, has been a solid kind of consolation. Then there is different way of looking at it here. You are all bound to come some day, and it is so obvious that one must not go on wearying for earth. I have much less need of philosophy now that I have found you and know that all is well with you. I cannot pull you through into this life, but meanwhile we both have our work to do and can wait with a fair show of patience. After all, what is time to you and me?"

## §2

I had often speculated about the kind of occupation Andrew would choose in conditions where choice was freer than on earth. He had a strong social sense and was popular and at his ease with a multitude of people. He had that stable objective type of mind which is habitually self-forgetful and which cannot but be a source of strength to weaker folk. When he came to tell me about his life since we parted, it was clear that he had found a service which gave full scope to his love of organization and responsibility, and would make full use of the strength of character which I had had reason to value so highly. We talked often of his work, which obviously absorbed him to the exclusion of nearly all other considerations.

"When we began this work," he said, "there was a motley enough crowd of fellows gathered here, all at different stages and most of them both unhappy and unhealthy, as you can guess they might well be after the demoralizing effects of years of war. War conditions had damped back their proper growth, and the things they had done and suffered had warped their consciences. Many of them had deserted their own high moral standards and had gone downhill fast. The other side of the strain of

enduring impossible horrors is the relapse into abject self-indulgence and between these things men become sorry wrecks.

“This, in terms of the new life, meant great emotional upheavals and mortal pain and sorrow to endure in physical terms now. The full trouble usually took some time to declare itself, and was not cleared up by their stay in the transition plane. They had to work it out in these far more responsive bodies, and a bad job it was for most of them. Those who were fit helped the others; in fact, we all helped each other, fit or not. An understanding of the tangles that were causing all this suffering was the beginning of the treatment, and then by sympathetic suggestion one could do a little more. We just muddled through it at first and made shocking mistakes. It was only too human to blame what one could not understand, and so to add resentment to the evil already working there. But to see in physical terms the effects of one’s own emotions is an education, and so by observation and discussion we began to work out the rules. It wasn’t really surprising to find that they agreed with the Gospels, was it? Practically, we found that the only cure for any of these troubles was love and understanding, and given these most of us responded quickly and our ills cleared up.

“So we began to realize that this was a science in itself, this business of curing the sick minds of men. You must realize that psycho-analysis was very little talked of in our day and that we knew nothing of its technique. We thought first of religious sources of help, and tried the effect of following the advice of a padre who was with us. The old religious devices - repentance, confession, knowledge of forgiveness of sins - worked well for some people; for those at least who were able to adopt them wholeheartedly. But for the more sophisticated type other means were needed. These last were our most difficult cases. The more simple souls would in any case soon recover, but it was the educated man with his mind cut loose from the axioms of religious faith who was so difficult to help. You see, when you have spent all your life on earth denying and refusing all spiritual truth, it comes upon you with a rush here and your mental state is not at all enviable.

“We found records here which opened our eyes to the dire physical consequences of evil emotions. They must be the same on earth only the clumsy flesh hides their effects. But for us they are stark daily facts. We learnt how each typical emotion had its appropriate effect both on the giver and the receiver. There were curative processes to antidote some of the worst disorders, but only emotional cures touch emotional diseases.

“To cut a long story short, I have trained for this work and am responsible for the ‘health’ of the establishment. There is a religious head and he and I work together. You see now why I must be constantly on tap and can never be free nor call my time my own. So if I ask you to take any message from one of my friends here to his people, please believe that it is part of his cure and is important.”

I asked Andrew whether cures were effected once and for all after people reached that plane of being, and he explained that many deeply seated troubles were not

accessible to consciousness until growth of personality had reached a higher stage. He said:

“Many of these troubles won’t come up until they are more advanced; but they do keep coming up, especially when there are many trauma of childhood and early youth. These attract their like into oblivion, we find, so that when one is released a whole crowd of similar experiences come to light at the same time. You begin to see that this profession of mine corresponds somewhat to medicine. A physician here has no easy recourse to bottles of intriguing physic when his skill is at fault. He has to study, understand, and cure with patience and sympathy the mental stress and disorders of his patients, and there is no end to the subject, because no two cases are alike. Can you imagine that I am very happy in this work and that it fills my time with an absorbing interest? I know that you understand how it is that I cannot be constantly with you. I am relying on your knowledge of me in the past as well as on your sympathy with what I am doing now.”

### §3

War had again broken out between England and Germany. When I had to tell Andrew of it, he at first refused to believe that it was possible. I found that his horror and detestation of war was as strong as my own, and that he had an even stronger case against it because of his knowledge of its continuing evil effects. He wrote:

“Don’t expect me to be coherent or to measure words. We were told that the Great War was to end all wars and in that faith we willingly endured all the filth and horror of those days. Many had to live through far worse experiences than mine; in fact, I had what we should have called a cushy time except at the last. I think of that hell of useless suffering, and have been thinking of it ever since I knew of this. It avails little to say that all is well with us now and that we are happy and free of all trouble. Discourage that kind of cheap optimism. It is false. What of our homes, our wives, and the children who should have been ours? Do you think there is any compensation for these? Life-experience for ever lacks completion for normal men if they have been denied paternity. For those of us to whom children were dear, whose hopes and dreams were so wrapped up in the desire for home and family, nothing here compensates. We have been defrauded of our true maturity and we are deeply conscious of our loss. Forgive me if I say that even reunion with our wives cannot mean so much. You see, the earth phase has that crowning importance and its special experiences cannot be repeated here. Apart from our irreparable loss as individuals, there is the loss to the race. There are terrible problems of far-reaching import mixed up with this interference with the returning life. Where are our children now? We say often to each other, with a kind of bravado, ‘Back to earth? No fear!’ and then one catches the underthought, still so strong, of regret and longing for what is hopelessly lost to us.

“There are certain aspects of war that are too deeply criminal to be appreciated until one comes here. If some of these blind, well-meaning fools who make wars or allow

them to happen, and who will sacrifice thousands of immature youngsters to their academical statecraft and war strategy, had had a hand in clearing up the mess here after the last war they would have a better appreciation of what they are doing.

“You are trying to tell me what? That if we had had the son we longed for he would have been just the age to be conscripted for this beastly war? And that other fathers who gave their own lives then will have to dread the same fate for their sons? God help us, then, for I can’t measure the effect of this to us here. I hadn’t got to that further horror. I must stop. Can’t stand this; it turns me literally sick and helpless. I must calm down and think too, in case there is anything we can get going here as a counter-agency.”

Later in the day, I had another message: “Don’t expect to hear from me for a while. I have been very busy. We may be able to bring some power to bear if we concert on measures for influencing thought. I will try to find you, but don’t be concerned if I do not do so. Good-bye, dear.”

The writing stopped and for some time I got no more from Andrew. The conception that influence from this finer life might be deliberately directed on to our troubled affairs was by no means strange to me. I knew from experience how strongly thought could be impressed, and was prepared to find that it might have its due effect even on those who were quite unconscious of the origin of the influence by which they were moved.

## BOOK TWO

### *‘MORE THINGS IN HEAVEN AND EARTH’*

#### CHAPTER VI

Discipline in honesty - A strange writing - It ceases but is resumed from a higher plane - The difficulty of making accurate statements - Hard facts instead of pleasant tales - Questions about the intermediate plane - Scott amplifies his account - Another communication giving an account of the transition from earth to other planes of being - Waking in a new world - Life as light - The heavens, human beings - Adjustment to a new life - Life and light; auras.

In recounting the establishment of contact with Andrew I have neglected other developments which were proceeding at the same time. Scott was with me often, and we had ample time to test the intimacy that results when two minds are fully open to each other’s view. It was at first sharp discipline in honesty. Not the smallest quibble or prevarication passed without censure. Every vagrant thought had to be acknowledged and accounted for. Eventually we settled down into a steady association with confidence on each side, but some difficult efforts at adjustment came first. Scott had a keenly critical mind and would not pass shoddy thinking or the least shade of insincerity. How much of the second-rate was habitual to my thought I was to discover with some chagrin.

We were never happier than when we were at work trying to elucidate some of the mysteries to which Scott's experience gave clues, and one day we were deep in discussion and had reached subjects which went far beyond present experience; in fact, the argument had begun to degenerate into mere speculation. I was very familiar with his writing and had come to expect it, but on this occasion my pen began to behave strangely. A quiet comment was penned in a different script; a thin, sloping hand which was quite strange to us. We continued with our subject, receiving much help and information, for it soon became evident that this stranger could draw on far more wisdom and experience than had previously at our disposal. We did not break off then to identify our helper, and indeed it was some time before we were told his name. After this he constantly took a hand in our discussions. We came to know him as an older and more experienced soul and to regard him as a very loving guardian and guide to us both. His patience and understanding never failed us, and our association in the work has remained a close and happy one.

There was a break in these communications for a long time during which we watched in vain for the thin, sloping writing. Eventually, when it was resumed, we were told that our friend had passed into a different condition of living. He had at first been uncertain of his power to communicate from there, but as soon as he became used to the new conditions he found that he was able to keep in touch with our thought but had difficulty in making us know it. During this interval I always knew when my attention was desired or when I was being warned against danger by the receipt of a peculiar signal. It puzzled me for months. It came with so much appositeness and was always accompanied by the thought, 'Watch this' or 'Warning', that I could not be content to regard it as a purely fortuitous physical occurrence. It was a simple enough thing, just a sharp click heard close to my ear, but it was difficult to locate exactly in any spot in the head. I tried the usual explanations, in physical terms - connection with the Eustachian tubes, sign of strain and so on, but its persistence under any conditions and its apt connection with events made these explanations unconvincing. Later the affair was explained thus:

"I sent thought to you often to warn you or to beseech your attention, but was seldom heeded or else my message was confused with currents of thought setting towards you from another quarter. I had long realized that your body reflected movement and sensation from us if we directed it towards you with intention. So I sent a thought-signal to you to catch your attention and to renew our contact. It is a very simple device, but sufficiently arresting to penetrate your consciousness."

Thus reassured, I went for pen and paper whenever the signal was given, and obtained much valuable advice and warning when any difficulty threatened.

We were anxious to know from every possible source how the transition from earth was effected, and we asked our friend to tell us of life on these planes as he had experienced it. His interest was more truly centred in the larger questions at which we were working, but later, when he knew that this informal account was in



preparation, he gave us the following communication:

“I have not spoken of my own experiences often except in response to any special perplexity of yours. It is possible to give a bald and oversimplified account of them in very general terms, but to attempt accurate statements of experiences so difficult of expression in earth terms has always given me pause.

“I have followed your excursions into Spiritualist literature with a good deal of interest and considerable disquiet. The attempt to translate our experiences into your terms is foredoomed to failure. To succeed, one would need to invent other terms to describe occasions quite foreign to your thought. So we may get very little done at a time if you desire accuracy. I want to present what I can get through to your comprehension as clearly as possible, but a certain over-simplification is the only way of transmitting truths so difficult. If you are quite sure that you prefer these difficult truths, and even grim truths, to the pretty fairy tales which are current, I will make the attempt gladly. First, will you bear with me if I correct an item in your previous account which I think gives a wrong impression?”

“Please do,” I replied. “We wish above all to conform closely to the actual facts, though they may be difficult of understanding for us.” So he continued:

“It concerns the account you have given of the transition to the intermediate plane. The waking in that plane was for me so dreamlike, and unreal that I did not for long realize what had happened, nor could I have put together any coherent thought. Scott says that he began to piece together his memory of the smash and of the ensuing experience, and I have wondered whether he may not have slept for longer than he thinks. But there is the mark of great intellectual power in all that he says, and so that restless mind of his may have got to work on the actual location of the terrain in which he found himself and so have made important discoveries. He appears to think that this terrain is superimposed on earth space and thus is inhabited by the psychic being of those on earth. If this is so I fancy we may have here the prototype of Kant’s noumenal world as against the mere world of phenomena which you inhabit.

“You see, it must be the same world but without any semblance of material actuality. It is occupied entirely by the mental and emotional projections of men’s personalities and has the miasmatic emanations of earth’s emotions for atmosphere. In a sense, this is the real world, the one in which you on earth have real being, the cheerful earth turned inside out and viewed from the reverse side. I feel that his thoughtful experience of it is immensely valuable. Can we persuade him to give us a yet more detailed account of it?”

## §2

Scott replied to this:

“I will endeavour to do so, though I have not cared to dwell on its features because of the blankness and sometime-misery of a sojourn there. I feel that I have given you

some impression of the emanations of personality which people this strange place. I am persuaded that the thought and emotion of generations of dwellers on earth linger here in its peculiar atmosphere. There are some places that retain a spirit of ancient horror, as though the awful emotions they had known had left dread echoes lingering there. As these are cursed, so some others are blessed and happy.

“Do you remember the hallow down by the stream which you shunned and dreaded even though there seemed no sensible reason for avoiding it? It was very bad. It held some record of ancient crime which affected me strongly and brought back visual impressions of long-past tragedy. I noticed how ill at ease you were, although I tried to keep the actual images from you. There is in conditions like these a basis for most of the tales of hauntings and ghosts. Such a place might well impose a grisly thought-form on the sensitive imagination. But let us leave these conjectures and speak of my experiences.

It is extremely difficult to describe the material setting of all this. I have tried before and have failed. In a sense it has none, since nothing is solid or actual to touch or sight. It holds together in its misty seeming only so long as one does not come up with it. Then it dissolves into a bodiless mirage, faint and far, and one's senses seek beyond, building up for their own relief the semblance of distant hills, valleys, and plains. But all is insubstantial and shifting, illusion suffused with a brooding suspension of being. Only one's own consciousness is real, and that seems at times to thin out and mingle with the mist dissolving into a dreamlike trance which holds within itself and is the vast vague world it inhabits.

“I am so struck by the prescience of the Ancients. Hades, the place of the shade, they knew and described. All their references to it show an intuitive appreciation of its sad and wraithlike character. The Hebrews had the same concept in their Sheol, place of darkness. The ‘Valley of the Shadow of Death’, perhaps, but full also of the shadows of life. They erred only in the limitations of their vision, which stopped short at this interim phase of being and could not envisage the fuller life which lies beyond it. We moderns are the fools, duped by our implicit reliance on the senses, which in their complete reign over the mind allow actuality to nothing they cannot record. Well, here is the actuality that the senses fail to record, this shadowy other side of life, so close to earth and so unsuspected by it.”

Scott's writing ceased and no more came through that evening. On the following one, the interrupted narrative of our other friend's experiences was taken up again.

“I will go on from the time when I found myself awake in that transition state and tell you how I experienced the next change. I remember that I thought myself weak and ill after a long sickness and had carried over this habit of thought. But I rose from my rest feeling marvellously refreshed and happy, and I appeared to wander for awhile. I was nonplussed by the something-nothing texture of this queer world and unable to read any meaning into it. The brooding silence drugged me into unconsciousness, and for a long period, I think, because when next I woke I was

quite altered in body, no longer frail and weak but vigorous and ready for anything, as though I had suddenly stepped back into youth. This delighted me, and yet I was daunted by my condition and wondered why I was condemned to wait here so long. It was not that I knew certainly of any further stage of being awaiting me, but there was the feeling of expectation, the waiting for something happen which I think Scott will agree is a feature of the place.

“This time I was not inclined to sleep. I was wide awake, quietly comprehending my state and content to sink into myself. Thought turned inward, and it moved, too, at a surprising rate. It raced over the record of a whole long lifetime, which it lit up with a searchlight that spared no blunders, sins, or weaknesses, but impartially illumined all, as one holds up an old, finished garment to the sunshine and notes with dismay its rents and stains. This clear blaze of recollection showed me the honest shape and cut of the thing too, and I reviewed it as though I had no special responsibility for it but to give a strict account of it to myself and to understand clearly in what it had failed and in what succeeded. I was saddened enough and humbled by what I saw, and then, with a sigh of acceptance, because I had passed beyond mending aught of it, I turned to other thoughts.

“Dimly I had known in those months of failing health that my friends had urged on me the consolations of religion. My habit of thought remained faithful to the creed of a lifetime; I had long put by the formal exercise of religious rites. Now the whole religious outlook had to be rethought in the light of this extraordinary experience. Naturally one had pondered on the meaning of death. Latterly I had inclined to the view that personality was quietly swallowed up in some great aggregate of being, to be returned to earth in other forms. So, though personal immortality was not perhaps to be hoped for, I, like all reasonable men, could not believe that the life that left the body could utterly perish out of the universe. Now it was clear that I was still intact as a person, though my present state was not enviable. Should I quietly fade out of this ‘place of the shade’? Had I committed some sin for which this was the punishment? Or was this indeed only the prelude to some wonderful after-life?

“All these thoughts went at a great pace through, my mind, richly gathering with them a manifold content of detailed memory, and repeating themselves endlessly until the mind grew weary and tossed them all aside. I slept again, and so bade farewell to that sad place, awaking next in the lovely air on a sunny hillside. The interlude became a misty phantasm, and but for the importance of its thought-processes might have had no more actuality than a dream. How the change took place I do not know, nor whether I passed out of another outworn body and left it behind as I supposed I had done on earth.

“I could almost have thought at first that I was back in the world again, so happily familiar it all looked to my eyes which were greedy for the light and loveliness. But at last my mind began to assert control. It was no longer the passive recipient of hurrying thoughts which were a mere horde of undisciplined images without reason

or coherence. I could think again, and before I could find the desire to move or to explore the scene I had to produce some order in the crowd of implosions and memories I had brought with me. I was not a methodical thinker rather did I incline to mysticism, so I had no pressing intent to make of all these a logical train of events strictly answering to their names as cause and effect. I waited and let them flow into accord.

“The lovely and dreadful import of the whole of our journey from cradle to grave and through the valley of the shadow, to arrive naked; and reborn into this larger life, engrossed my mind and sang its themes of life triumphant on its journey upward, until I was in an ecstasy of love and worship of the whole of which I was a rejoicing part. ‘Joy cometh in the morning’, carolled, itself through my mind; it could never have been meant for earth, that phrase, but for this morning of the new world.”

### §3

“It seemed a long time since people had played any part in my life. The sense of their presence had faded out of my consciousness during a long illness, and since its close I had been solitary. I had no desire to find companions, and now my eyes were filled with beauty and I could think of nothing but its more than earthly joy. As I lay there on the hillside I left behind all sorrowful musing and abandoned myself to the sheer rapture of satisfied senses. This was no earthly beauty. There was a light on things, and a light in them, so that everything proclaimed itself a vivid part of life. Grass, trees, and flowers were so lighted inwardly by their own beauty that the soul gasped at the miracle of a being so perfect I was utterly content. From, all these glorious living things there streamed a light of their own. Colour and fragrance were not a tincture of their substance as on earth, but were the very life that they had in such abundance as to shed it forth upon the lovely air.

“The air itself had a light within it, a sense of being life in itself, and as one breathed it the last choking fumes of earth were banished from the body’s recollection as it breathed in deeply this its new life. I thought of all the hackneyed similes we use on earth - air like wine, and so on - but here they become absolute statements. The air is wine, the sunshine is life. The transient gleams of meaning which substance reflects on earth had become the actual being of things. One perceived them by way of their meaning, and saw less by sight than by understanding.

“On earth the sky is a kind of containing dome, it’s blue in daylight and purple at night closing in the earth and veiling the vast spaces beyond. Sun, moon, and stars are reminders of these spaces, but in relation to the earth they attain a near and intimate character of their own, disguising from us thus the appalling distances of cosmic space they travel. Now I am almost at a loss to describe the heavens as I saw them from my hillside. The air itself was light, and that light radiated from no one direction. It was a glowing, universal fact, bathing everything in its soft radiance so that the sharp shadows and dark edges which define objects on earth were missing. Each thing glowed or sparkled with its own light and was lighted as well with the soft

circumambient splendour. The sky as I looked upward was like a vast pearl, gleaming and glowing with opalescent colours. There was a suggestion of unfathomable depths of space as the shimmering colours parted their transparencies to show the infinite abyss.

“I was awakened from my absorption by the sound of voices. If the loveliness of tree and bush, flower and grass, had held me spellbound, my first sight of fellow-beings gave me more food for rejoicing. Here was another form of life, a more complex and bewildering one, which also emanated its own lovely qualities of being in visible rays. These people were more than alive; life streamed from them, palpitating with their emotions, lit and splendid with their joy and waxing and waning with its intensity. Here, again, bodies were not defined by shadows, and the softer outlines were glorious with the outflowing life. Their forms were so much more illumined by the essential personality that I trembled at their approach and felt like an interloper from a lower sphere in the company of gods. They came towards me, greeted me, and reassured me. I had been feeling like a strayed mortal in heaven until they came; now I had to realize myself as one of them, and was glad to go with them and learn of them something of the conditions of my new life.

“I speedily grew used to my new form. The body has wonderful lightness and resilience, and it is as though the thought and desire of speed can move it without any cumbersome machinery of muscular action. This lighter, more vital body, so instinct with pulsating life, is quick to respond to thought and emotion; each passing phase of feeling glows and pulses visibly through it. Life has to be thought of in terms of light, and any and every vital impulse glows through the flesh, irradiating it with colour and meaning.

“The flesh becomes more ethereal and self-revealing as one progresses. As it refines it shows ever more clearly the nature of the being that informs it ‘The light was the life . . .’ is a phrase from St. John’s Gospel. You note his habitual insistence on light. What had he seen in that vision on Patmos? I can think that if he were permitted a glimpse of some fair city here he might well have taken it for the New Jerusalem. But his words, a mere metaphor for earth, are visible fact here. You have heard Spiritualists speak of the aura, and with your characteristic distrust of the fantastic have doubted. Now what I have been telling you amounts to a description of the aura. It is simply the outgoing life, the emission of life in the form of emotion, and as each of us has characteristic patterns and rhythms of emotion, so we must needs give out those patterns in colour and form true to their origin in character. This self-revealing is unavoidable and automatic; it becomes clearer as the second body matures and passes towards its next stage. Now are you a little more resigned to the thought of an aura?”

I was becoming used to this kind of gentle teasing, and learnt my lessons best this way. I replied:

“As an isolated phenomenon I was shy of it, but now you have related it to a theory

of the nature of life, and have shown me how all living things breathe out the life that is in them, I am more satisfied. As a fact, I can reconcile it with some transient impressions of living things that have sometimes startled me but which I was not developed enough to retain.”

Our friend continued:

“Yes, it is present in all living things on earth as well as here. I could spend a long while telling of the rhythmic patterns in vibrating light and colour which are to be seen on the higher plane. I can only guess at the splendour of those beyond, though I have actually seen some of the inhabitants of these other planes who are able to come and go among us. I know your instinct to keep your feet very firmly on the ground and to distrust any perfervid descriptions, so I will refrain. Now I suppose if I can link this up with a theory about the emission of photons of energy in the form of life impulses you may accept it, but that is not my way. You must work that out for yourself

## CHAPTER VII

Novelty in the new world should be a natural outcome of the development of life - Difficult themes - The Time concept; enlarged scope of the ‘now’ - interaction of brain textures a problem for psychology – Space - Dimensional concepts; intuitive reading of spatial values - The fourth dimension - Fundamental form based on the circle and spiral – Incommensurability - Comparison of time values - A new co-efficient? - Action the curvature of matter, but modification due to differing time factor.

The accounts I had read of life on these planes had always left me uneasy. Men, manners, and environment were described as though they were simply earth phenomena idealized. The chances that these descriptions were a kind of glorious daydream the subject-matter of which was drawn from memory and desire were too obvious. Sometimes there would be a bare statement that things were totally different from earth, but this was not amplified in any detail and one never came to grips with these mysterious differences. To be convincing, the developments which should create the novel conditions must grow out of life in its ceaseless effort towards perfection, yet they must be such that on our present experience of life we could hardly forecast them.

The connection that our friend had made between life as it manifested itself here where its activity could only be known by growth or movement, and that state of being where life becomes a visible quantity giving itself off not only in invisible processes of growth but actually in visible rays of energy, was a satisfying and probable one. It carried the essential nature of life on to a different plane and showed it behaving there one remove above its manifestation here, and yet behaving characteristically. Moreover, there were hints in one’s own experience which presaged that vision of living things. One had only to look into the heart of a newly

opened flower to see it alight with its own delicate being. So the apprehension of beauty here had only to be lifted one remove and life to be seen as yet more truly life; developed, but not changed. Now I realized that we were on the verge of more difficult conceptions, but I began to have faith that they also would hinge on to earth experience and prove to be the growth towards perfection of many realities known only in the germ to us here. Here is our next communication:

"I must now attempt to tell you of the more difficult aspect of life here, the ways in which there are sharp differences from earth. All these are to easier express in the language of mysticism than to state in any connection with science. They were apprehended by me in the former way and so I must pass them on to you as best I can. Most of these new conceptions are inherent in some of the terms which defy clear definition on earth. Such words as Time, Space, Dimensions, Distance, and Velocity are used commonly, but although their obvious meaning is perhaps plain, they only give up the surface of their content and keep other and deeper meanings for the time when experience enlarges, in a fuller life.

"I had not been long here before the altered nature of Time became apparent. My consciousness of it was other than it had been. The tugging and straining at consciousness to keep pace with time's insistent claims on earth, the always uneasy sense of the too-fast passage of time and the too-little done in it, the sense of a discrepancy between one's own inner sense of the value of the fleeting moment and that relentlessly registered by a ticking clock, all these had gone. One's mind had ceased to tug and fret against an imposed standard; it was as though now it moved easily in rhythm with the true passage of time. Time the enemy had become Time the friend. How much of this ceaseless pressure on effort is due to the sense of impending old age and helplessness, the inevitable approach of an end, the sense of a final period in the affairs of life, it is difficult to determine. That pressure was now removed; there could be no end, and with all infinity stretching before one there was no need to fight time to wrest every possible atom of value from it.

"This gives a mere fanciful sketch of the change in thought established in one by the altered flow of consciousness. Thought moved more quickly, consciousness had no more drag or weariness, there was a sweet ease of being, a complete change of outlook. How to analyse this is almost beyond me. The despair of the psalmist's 'Time, like an ever-rolling Stream, bears all its sons away', that inescapable sense of 'before, present, after', had weakened. Yours is the moving instant, a mere focus of consciousness for ever travelling from present into future, yet never truly owning the present because it is too momentary to grasp. Now what I would say, only I doubt if you would follow my meaning, is that there was no longer any past; it had all become the present. There was a vast extension of what was felt as the present. What distinguishes the present moment is its power of conferring actuality on that particular part of your experience. Now it seemed to me that I grasped a far larger expanse of actuality than before. My 'living present' had become extended so that it now

incorporated much that I should previously have regarded as the 'dead past'. This magical extension of consciousness is, I think, the real cause of the altered time sense which is so difficult to convey.

"I have suggested that the present included a great deal of the past, and now I want you to enlarge that idea and see that it also impinged on the future. The scope of consciousness had increased in both directions of time. I found that the actual living of the future began before it arrived, not in the ordinary anticipatory forecast of the happenings of the next few minutes of time, but as though it was all gathered and enacted in the same area of consciousness. If you think of the travelling 'Now' as being a restricted focal area, it had become for me a line of a certain length covering what used to be past and future for a short distance in both directions.

"I think I can build on to this a clearer impression, but this is a development that has only lately come to me. Trace the thing through. Your narrow focus of consciousness became first for me a moving line, and now that line has deepened as though in its passage it carried a width of cognition. There is here a definite suggestion of a two-dimensional area of consciousness with a hint also of the full three dimensions of time. I see it for you as a moving searchlight travelling across your field of presentment, then as a long beam of light for me, and now as a lighted space of three dimensions in which I move across my world of experience.

"This is poor. The extension is in an inward sense, the travelling beam having become a moving body of actual experience. I know you saw it and apprehended my exact meaning, but words will not take it. This is perhaps better: you go *into* the beam and it extends into a region of actual space in time. Let that stand, though frankly I know that it is impossible to convey."

## §2

Here we asked our friend to stay to allow us to dwell on that extremely difficult notion. Feeling our difficulty, he continued:

"I haven't been very successful in describing it, I fear. There is a faint foretaste of it in certain mystical experiences when that sense of enlarged consciousness is felt. You were testing that against your way of anticipating the contents of the next few minutes, but, you see, you have to let go of the present and travel into the future in the present for that, whereas I can hold it all in the actuality of the moment. 'Moment' will no longer serve, because this unit of time has increased. Here is another of your experiences which is enlightening. When you go into a day-dream time acquires a different value and a conscious adjustment is necessary when you come back to earth. Your physical brain is a very small part of your thinking equipment. Augmenting it are the developing forms of the other brain tissues you will use after death, but they are already active. How seldom these mechanisms are exactly synchronized or concentrated on the same task is a problem for psychologists. When you slip into a daydream you are giving your physical brain the



slip and using another, which, however, can only work dimly and vaguely because it is hindered by interaction with the physical. Now invest the timeless ease of a daydream with actuality, and that gives you some idea of this larger area of consciousness which it is the business of the second brain to provide and which, when it is set free from the physical, will give you actuality in this larger degree.”

Here again was a development, this time of consciousness, and the fact that it was possible in rare states of mind to get a foretaste of it on earth was the more reassuring. I realized that a mere intellectual understanding of this difference in consciousness with its related effects on the passage of time was likely to be inadequate, yet what could be more logically satisfying? Man has attained to conscious life, that is, at the apex of the present moment he just grasps at an illuminated instant of full consciousness, which is as immediately snatched from him and hurried into the past. Even this lit, moving focus is extinguished by sleep for a third of his earthly life. Now in the next phase of his being the lighted area begins to expand. It throws a beam forward and is no longer cut off sharply from the past. Beyond this, our friend had tried to convey a yet more difficult notion of an expansion in another dimension of consciousness. He had passed the concept to me in a thought-form, but had been unable to express it satisfactorily in words. Yet here was undoubtedly a hint of orderly development along the line of probability. The value of living experience was enhanced by that much added consciousness. It became worth, in terms of living, double and treble what it was before. But there was more to come.

“The state of consciousness has expanded, then, in terms of time, taking in more of the past and of the future. Now let us try to apply this same process of expansion to your notions of space.

“There is no such thing as absolute space. There is only space as it is conceived in consciousness. All space is relative to you and much or little in accord with your size. You live in a three-dimensional world and are a three-dimensional being. So am I, but my consciousness now is extended to take in other dimensions. When you look at a thing you give an estimate of its size and shape in terms of your three dimensions, and for objects which are near to your own size you form a satisfactory three-dimensional concept. This has been built up by unconscious comparison with your body, length of your reach, height in comparison with yourself, and so on. It is not truly a concept of the three-dimensional space in which you live because it fails you directly you deal with objects that are larger than yourself. Of all your senses, only vision helps you then, and that, by its distortion of perspective and its insistence on only one aspect at a time of any object, thwarts your real comprehension of it. When you look out into empty air you do not propose to yourself to know what amount of space it fills. You send a beam of vision through it and trick your mind with any number of visual illusions of foreshortening and misty distances. If you regard an opaque mass, such as a mountain, you can hardly take in

its whole aspect even from one side, and distance and lighting effects will give you quite different impressions of its size and mass on every occasion of observation. Before you can approach this matter of the apprehension of things in terms of four dimensions you must realize how defective is your grasp of even three.

“When I awoke on that hillside I have told you that a state of still wonder held me there, but I could not at that time give you the whole of the experience I was trying to grasp. So many novel powers of vision and understanding began to operate, but sight always claims pre-eminence, so understanding had first to deal with visual impressions. I seized first on that quality of aliveness in everything, and then knew that in addition to this I was seeing things in some fundamentally different way. They were like friends of old who had always held from me tantalizing, half-guessed secrets about themselves; now they were telling me much more than I could take in. As well as the colour, form, and vivid life they presented they carried also a character of spatial value which was a true index of their three-dimensional being. It was not obtained by way of the intellect as a calculation of length, breadth, and height, nor even as a direct appreciation of volume. Their spatial value was inherent in them, as a characteristic read intuitively, just as the eye gathers up an instantaneous impression of form and colour. It was added to them as a meaning which came directly into the immediate apprehension of them.

“When I looked out into those spaces of vital air they told me at once how far they extended. I knew where they were boundless and where they were limited even though my sight did not show me the forests and mountains beyond. When I looked upwards I got an awe-inspiring sense of limitless space. Nearer home, when I noted a tree or rocky hillside, it was immediately known to me in a far more intimate way than on earth. I not only saw it and marked its shape and colour; I knew all about it. Its whole significance came home to me with a poignant reality.

### §3

“But this does not help us with our next and more difficult concept, so let me go on. You live in a scarcely grasped three-dimensional world: we live in a scarcely grasped four-dimensional world. We can each achieve certainty about an object of a dimension less than our true one. You can become completely aware of a two-dimensional object because you can trace and mark every fraction of its surface, see it all at once in one plane, or, if it is too large, map out that plane in sections. We can get our three-dimensional concept as clear as crystal and can easily accommodate it in our minds, but what of the fourth dimension?

“You have told me that there is much loose talk about this, and that certain people are satisfied to say that after death one is simply translated into this fourth dimension of being and that its nature is and must remain a mystery. Scientists regard it as time, and others speak of another dimension, of an internal character such as capacity for growth. So you unconsciously challenge me to produce an account of the matter which shall be more satisfying than these. I have the

experience of these things but need to collect impressions, analyse and compare them, and then have to convey them to you in this language which has far too few symbols to carry my meaning.

“None of the terms you have tried to fit to this conception are adequate in themselves. You have tried time in the sense of the duration of a thing, the length of its world-line. This notion is vaguely apprehended by many people and it may be the only way of presenting the difficult element of time, which is a variable quantity for every experiencing entity, and entirely dependent upon the quality of the consciousness which registers it.

“It has a close relation to the next dimension, which is in truth an internal one. I am at a loss to define this at your present stage. It links up with a whole body of theory which deals with the processes existing in organic entities, the rise in the scale of being through the inorganic to the organic and up to the stage at which the latter arrives at self-consciousness and attains the capacity for exercising the higher activities associated with a human being. On a mechanical view, the human body is composed of atoms exactly similar to their corresponding elements in an inorganic substance, but the fact that its range of activities is so extended is an indication of an extended range of development in these organic atoms themselves.

“Hence the new dimension is an internal measure of the state of being: it is one of degree. It is based on the frequencies exhibited within the atom, only the lowest range of which can as yet be detected by your instruments. Directly any atomic structure exhibits life it means that its atoms have added to their inorganic frequencies a higher range. This process is repeated as the living functions possible to the organism increase in complexity. Thus the power to feel is due to one such development, the power to think to another, and so on.

“Ouspensky is on the right track when he asserts that this dimension measures the differentiation in the atomic structure of a thing and is demonstrated in its power of growth. We have to add to this meaning to account for the repeated stages of development which appear as added powers of being and which eventually build up a super-atomic structure which can withdraw from the material atoms at death. It has achieved the internal development which enables it to free itself from the lower ranges and to cohere and function in its true form independently of matter.

“Planes of being could have no meaning apart from these facts. They are literally measures of degrees of being. I realize that these statements are rather arbitrary and that they need supporting by fuller treatment of the evidence, but I think we must of necessity postpone a detailed account until you are more familiar with our conditions.

“You will notice that we have as yet no mathematical symbol to express this new dimension. These stop short at three dimensions, and when they have to express a fourth it has to connote a length again, the beginning of another series in the same

terms, length of time. I am no mathematician, but I think that we are probably completely fogged here by our habit of thinking in Euclidean figures. The very heavens shout at you that you have mistaken your fundamental form and that it is not a cube but a sphere. It was Ouspensky who showed us that to symbolize time dimensions we could not legitimately use straight lines. The line of time has always a returning quality. Recurrence is a quality of all experience, so that the line of a lifetime is not a straight line beginning at birth and cut off sharply at death, but a circle which does not quite close on itself but lifts off this plane and continues its curve in other circles, all of which lift into the succeeding one to give the spiral as the true symbol of our life.

“This spiral, I know, is important. It quietens my mind at once because I have that other sense of its meaning which stamps it at once as valid. Do you remember when you were very young, three years ago I expect, you once made the astonishing discovery that one knew when a thing was true, that it suddenly passed out of the region of belief and opinion and became knowledge? That was a glimpse of the power to which we are growing.

“But to return - the spiral is writ large in the heavens too. Earth, moon, sun, and stars trace their courses thus in never-ending spirals through space and time. Though you think of the earth as rotating in a circle, your position in space is never repeated. As you perform the diurnal circuit it has become a spiral with the earth's movement along its orbit. So with all the bodies in space; they all adventure for ever along new tracks through cosmic space.

“As to ways of symbolizing dimensions of time, Ouspensky's curve, circle, and spiral are good; but the notion of time as dependent upon states of consciousness is too difficult to be expressed even in symbol. Our added powers of being have some connection with it but need an added description in terms of the new dimension of being, that of degree. You realize that much of this new understanding is present in germ on earth. It is admitted that the present scientific terms are inadequate to describe the full being of even the simplest object. It eludes you by the possession of these other dimensions which are not included in the description.”

The argument was continued thus:

“I propose, then, to go back to the only measured quantity which we have the means of comparing with earth values, I mean time. When first I got in touch with you we took little heed of time and did not work in set hours. Of late, circumstances have tidied us up a little and you have begun to set definite hours for this work. Knowing this, I set up a simple device to measure off time for myself. I recorded your twenty-four hours and took that as my unit, and with very considerable care I subdivided this into hours and minutes. Then, with your help, I began to compare my findings with yours. I was disquieted to find that there were discrepancies, and feared that my standard of twenty-four hours was inaccurate. I checked it from your wireless signal more than once and on each occasion it proved to coincide exactly. Again I

began to compare the shorter intervals.

“I found that I had to accept the fact that these did not coincide. Following up this disconcerting discovery, I checked the discrepancy and found that it was a constant one. Starting to mark off an hour at your hour signal I reached the next hour here twelve minutes sooner than your clock - that is, forty-eight minutes of your time was sixty minutes of mine. My hour had suffered a contraction and was apparently only about five-sixths of yours. \* Yet the dilemma is a very awkward one. On the round of the twenty-four hours we coincide, on one hour we are contracted to five-sixths of your time. I have tested this again and again and not always at the same time of day. You have been quite impatient with me on several occasions when I have broken in on other occupations demanding the time signal; now you realize why I insisted on such accuracy from you. I cannot solve the problem; but I am quite sure of my facts and am very keenly interested in any attempt to interpret them.

\* Comparison of shorter periods of time gave proportionately greater discrepancies, i.e.:

30 mins of earth time equals 22 mins.

15 mins of earth time equals 10 mins

5 mins of earth time equals 3 mins

“We glibly said that the test of a new dimension was incommensurability with the known methods of measuring, and here we would appear to be confronted with the evidence for a new dimension. My chronometer would appear to register time as we experience it, and that is in a way that does not tally with yours. This contraction in time has, of course, a connection with the change in consciousness of which we were talking. Now, I am aware of my mathematical ignorance and I may be talking nonsense, but it seems to me that to get any comparison between our two systems of time measurement, your time has to be multiplied by a new coefficient, and that in this accurate comparison of the duration of measured time periods we have a foundation for the mathematical statement of a new dimension. It has to do with time, and I suspect that the principle of contraction applies as well to space.

“If our conceptions of space were susceptible of comparison we should probably find the same incommensurability, but in this time contraction we can be certain of our facts.

“In the matter of location, we are, I take it, on fairly solid ground. Our space must in some sense coincide with yours, because it varies with yours. Certain areas here have correspondence with certain areas there, so that if you were to be suddenly translated into my plane I should know within a little where to look for you. But in order to compare distances I should need to traverse a measured length exactly with you and be able to locate you accurately both at the beginning and end. That I am still doubtful of being able to do. I am almost convinced that there are discrepancies as in time, but cannot think of any way of recording them. What an adventure this is, and how I wish that we might be able to bring it to a successful conclusion! We have

at least stated our time problem, and may add other findings when we work through a series of hours together.'

Scott had a suggestion here:

"I'm thinking about Eddington's pronouncement that action is the curvature of matter. If this curvature in matter is responsible for the contraction you have observed, does that link up with a difference in the 'action' factor? It should differ between earth and our planes because we have a higher frequency attaching to matter here, and  $\text{Action} = \text{Mass or Energy multiplied by Time}$ .

"The Time factor is different, that is certain, and I think the energy factor too, but, like you, I am not mathematical enough to see how it works."

Our friend replied:

"Too much for me, though it looks like a possible clue, but let us get our facts corrected for a longer unit of time first."

## CHAPTER VIII

Utopias and an unaltered humanity - Super-mundane phases of life co-extensive in time with earth and having their own history - The moral law set afresh as a physical law - Its potency in affairs - Change in the 'brute given' - Fields of force - The body a matrix - Human relationships - Power, good and evil - The cure of the moral wreck - The next plane - Language barrier going - Beauty of form - Maturity at last - Life and love come of age - A plea for objectivism .

So here we abandoned the difficult question of time until more data came to hand and I was allowed to give rein to my curiosity about the social aspects of life.

A new kind of consciousness, a new quality of being, were in question. They should be reflected in a better adjustment between the individuals forming the community and also between the individual and his environment. Hence all social values would be altered. The writing of books on Utopias is always rendered anachronistic because the authors take into their promised land an unaltered humanity. It has no new powers nor is its essential manner of thought and its consciousness modified. So faith in the ideal order depicted in such works is hampered by knowledge of the inherent insufficiency of human nature to support the ideal. Now I felt that faith in a new order would be more possible if one were convinced of the fundamental differences in the human stuff of which it was composed. In the careful exposition our friend had given of the modifications brought about in mind and body one had just this qualification for belief.

Two trains of expectation were influencing me. The one, which I think had been obvious in my thought all along, was a distrust of a state of human affairs which should sweep away at one stroke all the weaknesses and immaturity which men must take over with them into another life. This made for a belief in a mode of life not so far removed from our own.

But opposed to this was a faith and expectation that in this new life there must be certain radical modifications in the state of man himself, in his powers, and in the natural laws of his environment. Here I was now prepared to find that comprehension of a new dimension might well create a state of consciousness the portrayal of which in our language would prove to be very difficult. This difficulty had begun to show itself in our efforts to understand the time problem, and was to recur in the statement of many concepts I felt I had not the imaginative power to grasp. My first distrust of a too-easily won heaven had been dispersed by the accounts Andrew and our other friend had given of the gradual process which was necessary to straighten out the tangles in earth-disordered minds. Though it seemed strange that man should take pain with him into this far less physical kind of life, yet sufficient intimations of mental suffering were felt on earth to make it a feasible development of our life here.

Now what of the less individual aspects of life? Did man as a gregarious animal tend still to form communities and national groups? Here I had no expectation, nor had I read of any surmises about these larger matters. So I began to take our friend's next communication with great interest.

"All attempts to understand the social aspect of our life have to take into account certain factors you have not yet got into focus. Let us start by appreciating the fact that these planes of being have been in existence as long as the solid earth and longer, and that they have as long a history. That appears to startle you, but why should you suppose that they have been recently created, or that being in existence they should not also have woven their own story? We have a legacy of history here as you have on earth, and naturally there has always been a relatedness between the two orders of life. Earth events are very often the offspring of spiritual events; the world of the spirit is continually influenced by the happenings of the earth. Conditions on earth tend to be repeated here, though with a difference, as the protagonists of great movements come here and bring with them the training and ideologies of earth. It is to be remembered that the great ideas which they have propagated on earth have invariably had their origin in powerful movements of thought in these planes. So the inter-related web of destiny is woven between us, and on your side you write your one-sided history books, and on this side we have our mightier records.

"I am not surprised that you are rather startled at this notion. It involves so much more actuality than you have as yet associated with this life of ours. Human souls have always spent far longer on these planes than on the earth itself; the tenure of body on each plane has no set period and no three score years and ten necessarily wears it out. Those who develop quickly may pass on within a few years of their coming; those who mature more slowly may, it seems, spend even centuries here. So these planes of being are really to be thought of as the true home of the human race. The earth, in spite of the importance of its brief episode, is a kind of exile, a

preliminary training for the beginning of another great cycle of living. Here with us is the bulk of living experience both in time and numbers. The extra length of the average life here makes that inevitable. On the next plane there are less people, and as one goes up I am told that the numbers constantly decrease. Beyond here matter becomes far more ethereal and bodies thin out into a visible presence of light and flame. Not everyone is capable of this further development, and at each stage a certain number return to earth and are re-embodied as they attain the final development which they are able to reach.

“No, at this stage I shall resist your enquiries and postpone investigating that great and complicated problem of rebirth. It has so many ramifications that we should have to devote much time to searching them out. For the moment let us continue with our former topic.

“It would be fascinating to trace the parallel developments of history here and on earth, and perhaps some time in the future we may make the attempt. The comparison is illuminating, because the new factors in experience annul the greatness of some famous men and enhance that of others. All your historical personages have to pass through these planes and they add their characteristic quota to our history as they have done to yours. Where there has been true greatness of emotional being it inevitably makes itself felt here again, and this holds good whether the power is good or bad in its effects. But power exerted as evil emotive force destroys itself here and is consumed by the good elements in the body of life. It cannot for long persist or work in its old form; its exercise is intolerable both to its wielder and to his world. The working out of the moral law which is now set anew as a physical law makes the early years on these planes as chequered a story as on earth, even though the grosser forms of evil and suffering are left behind.”

I began to grasp the tremendous revolution in the standard of necessity which must govern life under these altered conditions. There was a complete change in the ‘brute-given’ element which shifted the balance of power in affairs in a way that was difficult to interpret in practical terms. Seeing the direction of my thought, our friend went on:

“You must realize that the basis of power here is no longer physical but emotional. There is an objection here in the very nature of things to the use of force. You can use it, and before you fully understand the conditions you may do so, but if you rouse your enemy’s anger it will sear your own body and you will suffer most in that exchange. The coercion of the ordinary kind of force is thus rendered impotent, or at least too dangerous to be used.

“A new kind of power can now be consciously exercised. I have told you about the aura and have described it as an outflowing of the life. Think of it now as a field of force, which is its true scientific description. When two persons are in contact they create a combined field of force with the interaction of their emotions which varies in intensity and shows the true balance of power between them. The stronger can



draw power from the weaker and either can, by the exercise of strong intent, pull the body of the other towards him. Bodies are very responsive, you see, and this balance has to be maintained in any communion with one's kind. Your physical form has to be thought of as a kind of matrix from which all these succeeding bodies will be created and in which they even now exist in different stages of development. Each has its typical vibration and each gives out its typical form of energy. Attraction lies between these parallel forms of power in each other, like having power over like, and their interaction makes human relations here distractingly complex and beautiful. As life flows to life, and contact is made between two people up and down the whole scale of their possible accord, the mingled auras flow together and pulsate as one, and a powerful field of force is created in which each experiences a heightening of being beyond his single power of living.

“Where a man has power of an evil nature he will spread such suffering around him and will attract such retributive suffering to himself that life will become intolerable to him. He will be abandoned of all and become an isolated misery until he perforce realizes wherein lies his good. He will have to work out his own inner conflicts which here are known to be the root of all anti-social tendencies. When they are resolved he will be sane and happy again.

“This law of suffering as a result of emotional disease is a great regulator of society. You can guess at its immense potency in the amelioration of social conditions because no one willingly courts the hostility of others; it is too painful. He desires above all things to avoid the experiencing of another's anger and to enjoy the flooding forth of that other's goodwill. I cannot stay now to go into the intricate and beautiful working of this principle of our life in its manifold details, but you can see that it results in a shift in human values, not promulgated now as an external moral law, but one that is supported and enforced by everyday experience. You know that fire will burn you and avoid putting your hand into the flame. With just as much conviction and emphasis we avoid anger because we know that it will burn us in just the same actual sense. That is merely the negative aspect of the case. Positively, a happy, loving man is the riches of the community. Wealth can be measured here in this priceless commodity of human love and goodwill alone.

“You are thinking, not of the saint, but of the sinner, I see. Life is indestructible, certainly, but there is a faithful reaping here of what was sown on earth. The criminal is ill and usually he quickly becomes aware of this. The process of reliving the whole of the lifetime in thought, of which I have told you, really involves a much more vital process than thought. One has to live it over again in keen reality, and the effects of one's deeds are experienced as well as the deeds themselves. So if you have wronged a man you must suffer the wrong with him as well as inflict it again. The whole meaning and effect of your deed is laid bare. Thus you become of necessity the prisoner at the bar, the judge and the jury in this dread assize.

“The criminal is unhappy, suffering, and is only too ready to be helped to cure his

disease. Directly the connection between his physical suffering and his attitude to society is proved to him by experience his cure can begin. All this branch of sociology is organized as a very noble art of curative medicine.”

“But our prisons,” I broke in: “is one to invest one’s picture of such places with a constant discharge of baleful emotions, and to think of them as actual physical emanations harmful and destructive to those who must be in daily contact with them? What a mutually destructive atmosphere of fear, hate, lust of power, and anger must gather there! There are too many aspects of our life here which become simply horrifying in the light of what I am learning.”

“Yes, think into your picture of such places what is literally there and doing its beastly work even though you are not able to register it with your senses. There is the actual interchange of evil emotion and the corrosive effect it is certainly having on the unconscious bodies of those immured therein. The sin and misery and blindness of this earth phase of life is appalling to contemplate. We know only too well the ruin that such experiences create because these ruins must come up here for their cure. For the sake of society they have to be cured because no one can suffer alone; his pain will be felt by all those in his vicinity.

“You are thinking now of some of the ghastly wrecks that must have come up here as a result of the grosser social evils of the past. It must indeed have been so, but remember that here life itself is on our side. It is no longer fighting a losing battle against its physical manifestation. There is no death; life is bound to win. Of its own nature it is increasingly good and beautiful. As it becomes more abundant it aids the sufferer. He absorbs healing from his surroundings and he is relieved of pain by the absorption of rays of love and life from those who tend him. The very life within him cries out against the deathly elements which are harming him. Moreover, he is free of blame and can throw off the repressive weight of guilt. A sense of guilt is a grisly illusion which is the strongest ally of evil. Here we know that it is one of the most harmful forms of maya, illusion. Free of this, he mends rapidly. The goodness and lovely potency of life aid it to free itself from the fever and pain of wrong living, which is simply the very force of life turned back on itself in anger and destruction.”

By slow degrees, I thought, these ideas are filtering through to us on earth. But we fall short because the general application of the laws of moral health are still not appreciated. When the full nature of life is better understood, perhaps in the light of its very indestructibility, then the presence and influence of these powerful emotive forces in human affairs will be better assessed and their operation among us realized as fact.

Later, I asked our friend to tell me more about social groups. He continued:

“Nations keep their own customs and languages though thought passes freely and gradually becomes independent of words. There is, of course, a constant stream of people coming up from earth and they bring with them the basic thought and habits

of life. Thus each national group is fed from its own sources, though interchange of population takes place more freely than on earth. The national units become much less defined. Each reproduces from its life on earth a finer characteristic way of living than it could achieve on earth, where so much life force is wasted in silly competition and hostility. National ideals still have much influence, though they are based now on a finer appreciation of true values. The basis of the good life, speaking for a nation, is the possession of a people who are fully alive and capable of development along the specialized lines laid down by their own national culture.

“A people who have become slaves of the machine are in poor case here. They tend to waste the joy and beauty of life in a vain endeavour to recreate the conditions of the life they have left. An artificial need for an elaborate standard of living is often a curse. Where physical desires have overstepped their proper boundaries and have become mental cravings, much suffering is entailed before the desires which belong to earth can be completely shed. Thus any physical need which has outlived its proper use in the physical body may seriously embarrass progress here.

“I think it has been well impressed on you that no one can be thoroughly sound in mind in this phase of being unless he has found full satisfaction on earth of all the instinctive desires that belong to it and has rounded off his days of desire with the dying-down of desire in a peaceful age. These are the kind of citizens we need. All our troubles come from those whose lives have been thwarted, strained, or prematurely cut short.

“You know about our sick; what of our poor? The poor are still with us, though they need lack nothing of the necessities of existence any longer. These are the people for whom the bread of life has been spread in vain and who have starved for want of it. They are the emotionally starved, the puny and undeveloped of all classes of society. We find them in most numbers in those nations who reckon their wealth in the most gold. These poor folk come here deficient in life and poverty-stricken in thought and imagination. They do not know how to feed themselves even here, where their rightful food is at last spread freely before them. They have to be helped, guided, and advised, and it is long before they grow into their rightful stature. The blighting influence of industrialism is felt here very keenly. Nowadays this slavery has been lightened. Even the machine-made entertainment of cinema and wireless help by feeding the imagination and emotion so that the physical body shall house more than a lethargic, half-starved being to pass on to these planes at death.”

## §2

“Now for the next stage of our life here, which will please you less perhaps, because it is less like earth and more like heaven. Here the nations are still less defined, because movement has become more simple - not more simple to explain, as we shall find when I try to tell you what it is like - but more simple to effect. Thus there is much coming and going among us and our sympathies are wider and knowledge of each other fuller. The language barrier begins to be removed because it is so much

easier to pass thought between us. Groups are formed more for the purposes of special interests and occupations than for national reasons, and thus we get aggregates of talent which raise life to a very high level of attainment and which cut across all artificial boundaries of nation and class. Here are brotherhoods of mutual interests making a rich and satisfying communal life. Co-operative activity and close and sympathetic human relationships bring into realization many of the ideals of the world's dreamers. Life is planned on a social order which shall bring satisfaction to all its members and enable each to arrive at full self-development.

"We can be still more independent of elaborate details of living if we please, but what you call the 'lush' side of life has adherents even here. Gleaming palaces and temples and beautiful cities built in elaborate form in natural surroundings of a surpassing loveliness do exist. They satisfy the artistic and creative among us, so they have a legitimate place in life after all. They cannot be anything but beautiful; they are too instinct with meaning. You may yet be sorry for your scorn of that kind of ornate life one day. Much of such gorgeousness remains to us from the past and is mellowed by age and association. I feel that I want to reconcile you to it, because in spite of my own predilection for simple joys I cannot but be stirred by its beauty. Words of description are vain I know only one poet who approached an expression of this unearthly splendour, and that is Shelley. I think he must once have known it well and have carried the unconscious memory of it in his mind all his life, perhaps finding echoes of this hidden memory in the ruined glories of Greece and Rome.

"The people suit their glorious home. They are noble, dignified, happy, and fulfilled. They have the glow and splendour of a wonderful maturity. All the emotional disorders of the lower planes have been disentangled and so the full growth obstructed by them can come quickly to maturity. There is less specialization in human relationships and no sense of possession in even the more intimate relationships.

"The possession of love in oneself implies that one is alive and healthy, and it must flow freely out to others to bless all, and to mingle with the love it seeks and finds in others. Freedom has come fully to it at last and the barriers we set up on earth to protect our special rights of possession in each other are no longer necessary. Life has come of age, you see, and so love can come of age also.

"We spoke before of the enlargement of consciousness and of the increasing scope of the 'Now'. That development is taken a little further. The sequence of states of consciousness flows quietly by, gathering still more of the future into the present. There is a lucid connectedness about the flow of being which alters one's sense of duration and adds beauty to the mere passing of time as it collects to itself the lovely future and passes it into the still lovely past."

"How we must strain and tug at your even flow of thought," I said, "when you have to conform to the jerky, inconsequential instant-to-instant progress of our consciousness."

“Yes, you continually pull me up by questioning what is here when I am dwelling on the subsequent image. If you would be more docile and not attempt to criticize and appraise what you are writing word for word I could get through my thought in far more characteristic form.”

“I am distressed by the trouble I must cause you and sorry that by lack of understanding I have increased it. But please go on and I will practise docility.”

Our friend patiently complied.

“Just a word more about the people here. All material forms have thinned out and have more of light and colour and less of delineation. Appearance has approached still closer to meaning. The two are often widely sundered on earth so that only the dawning spiritual power enables you to read intuitively the meaning which is so nearly hidden by its earthly form. With each lift of being, life makes a fresh conquest of its embodiment and constrains it to approximate more nearly to its own nature. Here the colour and shape of a flower is its own perfect presentment of its essential self. It shines out clearly in the form of light so that a shimmering radiance abides continually over all the beauty of field and woodland. Is the change partly in us or wholly in our environment? Is this glory objectively real or is it that at last our eyes see truly, so that with more sensitive awareness we may possess more of the meaning and joy of all things?

“But that which has life has actual being in its own right and is not merely a chance collection of sense data presented for our interpretation.

As we progress we see things more wholly in terms of their own essential being and less in terms of related patches of colour and delineation of form. I lose myself in the effort to convey this to you and then find that you have an instinctive knowledge of it and are anticipating my description. Whenever I am happy in my efforts to get a true image to you there is that intimation of a dear familiarity and the recognition of something immediately known and loved. It is the standard of comparison whereby you unconsciously test all that I give you. It is in truth the deeply hidden memory which comes up to consciousness in the form of hunger for the beautiful there on earth.”

## CHAPTER IX

Modifications in Time, Space and Density - Movement in a space of one's own - Connection with Relativity Theory? - Need to study data in series - Movement; a telescoped dimension - Theory, faith and patience - Heat and cold; disappearance of molecular motion - Thinning out of matter - Velocity and mass - Modifications within the atom might result in etherealization - Release of energy on transition to new form? - A physicist's world after all? - Further implications.

We came now to subjects which were difficult to formulate almost in proportion to their importance. In our terms, and with reference to our experience, it was hardly

possible to express them accurately. Our friend was very dissatisfied with his efforts and I was not able to grasp the new conceptions with any certainty. Here is one such communication:

"I mentioned differences in our power of movement and must try to explain. On earth, the movement of your body seldom keeps pace with your wish, but here the hiatus between the will to move and the power to move is gradually closing up. The difference is felt on the early plane, where the lightness and resilience of the body make speedy movement a delight. But this is only a surface difference, and directly I begin to try to convey the rest I am up against the dimensional problem in another form.

"Velocity is a matter of distance and time. Now the latter quality has taken on a new disguise and is a stranger to you and so is the former. Even though I cannot prove my assertion, I will venture to say that there is a contraction in space. It has become elastic, compressible, variable. The will and desire operate far more in relation to its proportions. To say baldly that I can be wherever I desire is to give an oversimplified impression. Yet space has in truth become more relative to our consciousness of it. There is a kind of telescoping of near and far which answers roughly to that bald statement I made. The view I see when I am stationary is a plain statement of so much space relative to me. I wish to be elsewhere and begin my movement in that direction. The scene dissolves and reassembles in other forms as I move and I am very speedily where I wish to be. I do not feel that rush through the air you are thinking about. My movement is in a space of my own, which differs from that of the environment, perhaps, because my position in that space of my own is largely a matter of my own will and desire."

"Please stay a moment there. I want to realize the variation in two quantities we always think of as fixed, both time and space, which appear to have become variables in this connection. It is easy to say, but not to grasp. I suppose only experience of the difference could establish a satisfactory concept."

"I do not understand Relativity Theory," said Scott, who was sharing this discussion, "but this might well be an illustration of it. 'Different times in different cosmoses', Ouspensky quotes, and I think if I gathered his meaning aright Einstein predicates variability of space in relation to every differing mass. This is what seems to be experienced by us as though the power of perception had at last caught up with the latest theories."

"It is probably more true to say that your theories are catching up with our experience. I am tempted to think that some of these great scientists have been eavesdropping; that is, they have caught impressions of these things from us and have been able with prodigious labour to express them mathematically. They fit earth phenomena - and this is important - in right of its possession of the unsuspected dimensions which are more appropriate to our planes."

Scott continued:

“It seems to me that a series of related phenomena, such as is offered by the earth and its succeeding planes for observation, should give a far more satisfactory solution of these problems than can possibly be obtained from a consideration of the isolated data from one source. On earth there is only the first of a series for study; the first of a series taken apart from the others tells one little and is apt to present some puzzling anomalies if considered in isolation.”

Our friend replied:

“There is hope, then, that this series will be studied and the necessary comparisons made. There is no possible doubt that knowledge on earth is climbing up to an approach with our experience. I can see this process in the physical, philosophical, and moral sphere as you read your moderns to us. But I want to warn you that an adequate statement of the problem is not feasible at this stage.”

Although I had been busy taking down this writing, I had been pondering and felt that I had as yet a very poor notion as to the actual manner of the movement our friend had described. So I asked him to enlarge on it. He replied:

“Even the actual experience is difficult to describe as a succession of events. Think of the overlapping of these larger areas of consciousness. This gives some of the future of one’s movement to the present. It brings the future towards one as one goes to meet the future. That is to do with the time factor. Now space, as I said, tells me clearly its extent in any direction and it also flows in towards me as I move, if you will accept this approximate description. This aspect of the scene dissolves as I go until the place I am seeking is reached. Do you remember thinking that one of the earlier dimensions might well be telescoped with others when a new one is added to experience? You thought of volume as being a compound notion and wondered whether it would be modified when it had to accommodate another dimension. Length being our first term, it is tempting to wonder whether the case could be stated like that. Actually it is quite bewildering at first, but the early plane gives one experience in a milder form so that one gets used to it by degrees.”

“Is it as though the scene flashes past you like the illusion of a moving landscape from a moving train?” I asked.

“I wondered if you would see it like that. No, the experience is quite other. Directly I begin to note the wayside beauties or to direct my attention to them I slow up to normal walking or even stop if the desire to go on flags. I should perhaps say that I find that I have stopped. I must fix my will on the end of the journey if it is to be done in this extra-locomotive fashion.

“Now watch; from my hillside I take one look across the valley to a house on the other side surrounded by trees. My immediate view shifts slightly, gets vague to me and goes through modifications by way of which it dissolves into this other. The distant house is now large and plain and I am standing at the door, having taken a

dozen steps only. The dissolving of one view into another is not a sudden or startling experience. There is a sense of distance passing, a melting into one another of a panorama of aspects of the landscape but nothing suggestive of extreme speed of motion on one's own part. It is a very dreamlike experience, you think, and one would want to experiment with it a good deal before it began to feel safe? Scott realizes that it has great fascination as a kind of inverse experience of speed. I am most dissatisfied with this description but do not know how to better it. But I see that my Medium is wanting to pin me down to something actual, so perhaps that will help to get it clearer."

"If one were waiting for you at this other house you would not be seen to be coming then, but would suddenly be there?" I asked.

"Yes, but realize that the people there would have premonition of my advance in the ordinary way though they would not see me coming."

"I want to know where your body is in the interim, when you are halfway, for instance."

"It is *in* my body and quite safe. It is where *I* am which is either at my own home or at this other. The space in between is not real space to me except when I am regarding it from one end. Then I know its measurable extent and could walk it in a set time."

"Curiouser and curiouser. This is worse than fantasy; it is sheer miracle. What shall I do about it?"

"My child, you must cultivate a little faith, and if you can't do that, be content to wait and see for yourself."

"I shall not be content until I can fit a theory to these facts," said Scott, "but I'm certain it links up with Relativity Theory. I do regret that I neglected to attempt to understand it while I had the chance."

"Yes," said our friend, "you try for a theory and the Medium shall try for faith and I will pray for patience, shall I?"

## §2

"In all this time," said our friend, "you have allowed me to assure you that once one lifts out of the earth vibration, heat and cold are no longer felt. Don't you think it is quite time you scrutinized that statement?"

"Not so long ago," I replied, "I was accused of lack of docility. So please absolve me and do you scrutinize it for me. It looks rather forbidding. Heat is molecular motion, is it not? Does that imply that you have none of this form of activity?"

"Molecular motion is no longer associated with matter which is now capable of inter-atomic movement alone. At the next remove this in turn disappears and only vibration within the atom remains. That is the physical statement as our scientists



see it. We have no temperature, because there is no molecular motion in our kind of matter. Then I imagine that the thinning-out of matter at the next remove is due to the disappearance of inter-atomic motion. This is, I think, a process of etherealization one would expect from the physical facts, since a great part of the mass of matter is said to be due to motion."

Scott tugged at my hand here and was obviously very excited.

"Stay a minute, please," he said.

"This is surely a most significant connection with physical fact. I remember being particularly struck by that conception of matter. Modern atomic theory stresses the extent of the space within the atom, comparing its infinitesimal constituents to mere specks travelling a universe of unoccupied vacuum. It indicates that the apparent solidity of matter is only due to the velocity with which these minute parts of the atomic system whirl or vibrate in their orbits. The notion that the velocity of the constituents of the atom alone gives it mass is important to the modern theory. So might the solar system appear as a vast spherical solid if its members moved at a comparable speed.

"It has also been stated that if this activity were to be lessened or stopped matter would collapse and disappear. By this theory a modification of the velocities within the atom would result in the thinning out of matter. But any such modification would release an immense store of energy if we are to conclude that energy constants within the organic atom hold as between the interdependent systems represented there. Then the energy released in this modification of velocities perhaps goes into the internal vibratory systems of the new nucleus and electrons, thus giving them the rise in frequencies which has all along been assumed to take place at each remove. We have to postulate some source of energy which shall establish this higher frequency and it may well originate in the shift from one form of matter to another.

"At death there must be some release of energy from the organic atoms as they separate into chemical and super-chemical forms. This is the only remove of which you can observe one aspect, and this aspect demonstrates that there is a disappearance of a certain kind of energy from your sphere of observation which would appear to be balanced by an increase of energy on this side. This transferred energy is now the mass of a new body which has lifted into a scale of frequencies beyond your observation, taking with it the missing values from the mortal structure. So the sum represented by the residue of the mortal body plus this transferred energy, or new body, should give an equation which, when it can be accurately formulated, may express the puzzling facts on both sides."

Scott's outburst brought us to a halt. There was here a most significant series of probabilities which might shape into a coherent theory Our friend added:

"I think I can add something germane to that.

“The primates of which the organic body is composed are based on a physical system of vibrating electrons and nuclei as you are led to believe by physicists. These primates in the living organism differ only from those of the inorganic body in their capacity to develop a higher range of rhythms which are superimposed on and interlocking with the physical range. In this super-activity lies their quality of ‘aliveness’, and in these advanced rhythms all the distinctively human activities take place.

“Imagine a vastly intricate system of spiral, vibratory orbits around a dense vibrating nucleus. This is the physical atomic system with its immense store of energy. Then outside this, interpenetrating it and based upon its pattern of rhythms, is a larger area of activity, acting in such a way as to be capable of forming a new nucleus and of becoming a larger independent primate when the densely active interior portion drops out at death. Add to this a penumbra of more advanced patterns of vibration based on and interlocking with the interior system, ready to come into full development as the physical drops out, and here is the physical and material basis for the life of emotion, thought and intuition, which functions now in co-operation with the physical, but which will draw away from it as an independent and fully active mode of being at death. This is our interpretation of the process, whose stages are thus seen as parts of a perfect system of growth.

“I am well content with that sketch of a theory which gives some hope of establishing an actual link between physical and super-physical activities. It remains now for scientists to detect these super-rhythms in the organic atom, and that seems to me to be the most likely thing to develop out of the wave theory. It will be interesting to live on earth when such a discovery is made and established, because it opens out the most portentous possibilities,” said Scott.

“One wonders whether man is as yet mature enough to handle such power. But years of patient research will be needed before proof of such a process could be obtained, and nothing short of a complete understanding of the nature of life will give that ultimate power over life of which you are thinking.”

## CHAPTER X

Consideration of religious matters - Two possible inferences from the facts - The existence of a Principle of Elemental Being, The Good; and the existence of a Pre-eminent Being at the zenith of the ascending planes of being - The Principle in operation in biology and in history - The Pre-eminent Being as a logical necessity - Our friend sets out the problem - God as known in the Principle must belong to a category of being beyond the human at its highest - The process of immanence at the crux of its interaction with matter produces life - Life as a mode of being becomes independent of its manifestation in matter - The argument for survival will come from a development of physics - God as the Good and as the origin of all meaning - Evidence from super-mundane sources - Life transcendent and Immanent in each sphere has its appropriate scale of

material frequencies - God as a physical factor - Reality is the law - The Christ - The mystery of His origin and nature - Entry of the spiritual into the material world - The Christ in the life after death - His working in the world - Christ and evolution - A glance at other formulations.

When first I became convinced that I was in authentic touch with a person who had passed beyond physical death I had propounded many questions about the central assumptions of religion. It is often taken for granted that release from the body will automatically bring a great enlightenment and that the doubtful and hesitating conclusions which are often all that intellectual honesty permits one to hold here will be confirmed by fuller knowledge. To one brought up in a Christian community a vital issue must needs be, 'What think ye of the Christ?'

In putting questions like these to one with knowledge of life on extra-mundane planes one was hopeful, perhaps, of first-hand experience to eke out our doubtful sources. There were hints in Spiritualistic literature that the Christ Himself came and went among men in the various planes. Some testified to having seen Him. Where in this hierarchy of being, only the lower levels of which seemed to be accessible to knowledge, was His place? Where did one make the transit from the human to the divine in this ascending series? Was the divine, in other words, simply the ultimate development of the human or did it belong to a different category of being? God, was He the highest in a human sense, some Great Ancient of Days who had climbed to a solitary pre-eminence far in advance of the race, where in a lofty, dematerialized zone of power and beauty He existed in ever self-sufficing solitude, the Great I AM, alone and awful both for pity and power? Or was the Supreme Agent an impersonal Principle of Being, immanent in all life, pervading all spheres, but gathering in totality beyond the reach of the onward aspiring sons of men? The one view did not necessarily exclude the other.

It was possible to draw two conclusions. One could be argued from history and the other rested on the information I had been receiving. The first was the existence of an over-ruling Principle in the affairs of men, and in its workings among us I saw it as a law of inevitability related to life as its denial tended to death. This basic Principle, Origin of Life, so elemental in its purity that it and the law of its operation were one, was seen in the patient persistence of the growth of life towards harmony. It was the essential life of all living things, yet it was other than these, since it had pure harmony of being while they were vexed with interacting motivations. Where it was allowed free passage into life it was the great preserver and maintainer of life; where it was denied, the life force turned upon itself and took the way to self-destruction.

Any form of life was therefore an emergent of this Principle and the material in which it manifested. It could never re-attain the purity and formlessness of its origin, but its growth was determined by the measure of its likeness to its original, and its death followed prolonged divergence from that origin.

This Principle of defenceless Being, delicate, aware and for ever vulnerable to the

attacks of less pure forms of life, was yet undefeatable, since to kill it was simply to translate it into other forms where it could no longer be harmed. 'Fear not them that can kill the body.' In so far as any living thing conformed to this law of life and suffering and was content to lose its life to gain it, it was certain of survival and continuance in other forms. Inasmuch as any form of life denied its origin and turned the life within it to an energy of destruction and death, it was doomed. Biologically it became an enemy of life and perished, and in the other sense its emergent life would be poisoned and diminished until survival became doubtful. Since the very nature of life is to take the consequence of awareness, only life that kept the law of life, which is willingness to suffer, was in the direct line of progress and survival.

The argument from evolution had been made clear by such writers as Gerald Heard. Species that took the path of specialization in self-defensive devices, or in ferocity, branched off from the road and took the *cul-de-sac* of specialized form and habits which were proof and cause of their failure. If their biological devices for self-protection succeeded their armour became their grave. They paid for safety by loss of the power to feel and by corresponding loss of awareness and intelligence. Life always measures success by its highest emergent value, and when that value became intelligence it began to discard the forms which specialized in the lower qualities. The emergence and pre-eminence of the human species with its entire absence of defensive biological devices was in contrast to this. Man had refused the physical adaptations calculated to give safety and had followed the lines of an ascending quality of life. He had demanded of life that it should give more and not less of feeling, emotion, perception, passion, beauty. That this development was self-imposed by life, a production of its line of advance towards more fullness of life was proved by its continuance in other forms of being, by the lifting of human life and values on to other planes by the very intensity of the life force thus engendered.

It was true that the deathward tendency was always to be seen contending with life. Too often individuals and nations took the *cul-de-sac*, refused suffering, made themselves strong in force and ferocity, sold their birthright of suffering for dangerous safety and power. Yet every empire founded in force and embodying ideals which were treacherous to the special quality of human life was denied of life and came to ruin. All that survived from each of such colossal follies were the elements in virtue of which it had remained faithful to life. Babylon, Egypt, Greece, and Rome rolled up their great Empires. Their pride and power had left only a dusty name in history. But the wisdom of Egypt, the art of Greece, the law of Rome remained to enrich the races that followed. The human story endorsed the dictum that love is the fulfilling of the law, and the cumulative effects of the working of this law were written plainly in the story of men and of nations.

The second inference rested upon the testimony of these others. It assumed the accuracy of their accounts of the ascent of life through its refining forms. It was valid

for them and for me, who accepted their testimony. The series of ascending lives was physically a matter of continually increasing frequency of vibration. It was not that matter was ever dispensed with in this ascension but that it went through an infinity of refinement. In the hierarchy of being thus created there must logically exist a pre-eminence. At its apex - what? One or more Beings who had out-distanced all other created life and had attained the nearest approximation in their emergent quality of life to the Creative Principle which was beginning and end, their origin and their goal?

Here, then, were two conclusions: an Elemental Purity of Goodness as fundamental Principle of Being, and the existence of a pre-eminent Firstborn of Days who was nearest to His origin in the purity of being and most able to take and use the power of life in excelsis.

So much, I thought, could fairly be deduced from my earthly aspect of experience, but it was to be expected that for these others, my friends, the province of knowledge would be increased in two ways. Their power of apprehending actuality would be greater in proportion to their sphere of being, and the nature of their life and environment would increase their scope of observation and comparison. So both in capacity and experience they would have enlarged opportunities for apprehending reality. As the subjects our friend discussed with us increased in difficulty and began to verge on the incomprehensible, these questions about ultimate realities came into the forefront of our thought. The content of my thought was known indeed, I had felt throughout that it was largely guided and inspired by our friend, and in the following communication he attempted to convey something of his interpretation of the problems.

## §2

The Principle of Elemental Purity of Being best known to us in the conception of Creative Love is certain.

In its mode of ingression into the actual it takes always the way of life, of love and of suffering.

It manifests itself as growth towards beauty, goodness, and joy.

It is betrayed by its own whenever life takes to itself evil form, and its redemptive nature is seen patiently at work to overcome evil with good, to harmonize conflicting forms of life and continually to lift all that lives to higher levels of being.

It is certain on logical grounds that there must exist in the ascendant of these planes a Pre-eminent Being, the human raised as near as it can yet go towards the divine.

But still we are not certain that our search has found out God. To satisfy us He has to belong to another category of being beyond the human, however far it is produced in the direction of the Principle of Pure Being.

The imposition of meaning upon matter whereby life is created and formed to

develop under the law requires an origin apart from matter.

If the Highest is of earth origin He cannot satisfy this condition. The order in the world, its process from chaos to harmony, requires an origin apart from the possibilities inherent in matter.

The law that regulates life in relation to harmony and in that relation decrees its preservation: the reverse of this law which decrees that any form of inharmonious energy or life shall be self-destructive: these require more justification than they obtain from the qualities inherent in matter. They demand an origin outside the world of matter.

Any such origin must, however, be related to matter as the cause of its development in organic form.

It must have potency to relate itself to matter.

Therefore we argue that it must be represented at the zenith of the scale of frequencies of which matter is, or will become capable;

That in this imposition of ordered vibratory systems on chaos the process of embodying meaning has proceeded by large and coarse vibrations passing continually into more complex systems, which have in their interaction produced finer frequencies by way of a process akin to polarization and the emerging of rhythmic patterns which have given rise to new units of frequency ;

That at each lift into a higher range of frequencies matter has become more responsive to the imposition of meaning;

That meaning has thus been deliberately imposed upon chaos which has by degrees taken form under its influence;

That the forms emerging from this continuing union of chaos and meaning are modified both as to meaning and form because of their character as emergents;

That ever thus increasing in richness and complexity, meaning has been diversified by matter and matter has been trained and tamed by meaning until the crux of the process, when the interaction has produced life;

That life may be thought of as the emerging of a set of overtones in the vibratory systems possible to matter which have acquired independence of the vibratory systems upon which they were imposed.

Creativity having thus issued in organic entities with possibilities of richer experience, worked through these responsive creatures to produce new series of vibrations in matter, which became the mediums of feeling, perception, and cognition.

These expressed meaning in themselves because they were the consequents of a long interaction between matter and meaning. They prehended meaning from their perception of the objective world, they gathered it by direct intuition, a process still

nearer to the meaning vibrations it was absorbing.

Matter in human form now represented activity on many series of frequencies, each functioning with different dimensional values. Matter can only be disintegrated in the lowest of these series when once it has attained real being in the overtones which represent a higher dimension.

So the matter which is physical disintegrates at death.

The series imposed upon it cannot thus be disintegrated because it has real being in other dimensions.

It continues to have visible existence in its next lowest terms of frequency, which are in turn outworn and disintegrate to set free a higher series and so on seriatim.

When this process has been carried on to the production of a Being nearest of all to the meaning of the Creative Love which is his origin he is still a recipient and expression of the meaning to which he grows, and not its originator.

So beyond this system of ascending being we must look for its origin. God is thought of as the origin and source of all meaning in the Platonic sense. He is the Good, Highest and Purest of the Forms which manifest in actuality.

There is an objection here which must be met lest we incur the charge of anthropomorphism.

We have postulated a Source of Meaning and a Power to impose meaning upon chaos.

These activities are possible to man.

Are we therefore making God in our own image?

It is clear that any form of life of which we can have knowledge must be emergent and therefore removed in nature from both of the sources of its origin. Men think meaning into matter both as creators, modifiers and interpreters of its nature, but this creative power of thought and its purposeful activity relating to the future is only an example of an emergent quality from the higher levels of being. Men are not able to impose their meaning upon matter except by the employment of intermediate material devices. Their activity partakes of the nature of its origin inasmuch as it has purpose and attempts to embody meaning, but it is limited by its employment of matter which is not yet capable of sending out the creative urge in a pure form. The will to create meaning is partly frustrated and always modified by the necessity of using material tools for its impression on actuality. So also your conception of meaning, power to convey it, and possibility of embodying it in matter can only approach to reality as an emergent approaches its origin. In part it will have an intuitive knowledge of its origin, in part it will know and express out of illusion, because of the admixture which must alter the nature of the secondary existent.

God must be thought of as being able to send out meaning in terms of pure

Elemental Goodness far beyond any possible manifestation which results from the interaction of this meaning with the evolving forms of the actual emergent creation.

He is the Primary Existent, and Sole in that capacity. He is in and of all possible worlds. They exist in Him and by Him; yet in nothing actual in any world, can He be seen in His pure essence.

### §3

We have dealt to the best of our poor ability with the process and the meaning. Now let us gather up the evidence from our additional experience of this creative energy.

Life emanating from all organic sources is seen as light, and felt as a radiation of emotional influences. This form of vital light passes from the visible to the invisible spectrum in each plane. That is to say that the emission of life in the form of light is graded in ascending series representing the range of frequencies possible to matter in that plane.

The sources of light indicating the presence and activity of life are twofold, the particular and the universal. The particular sources are in everything that has life. The universal pervades space and has its source above but not from any one part of the heavens. It streams down to be absorbed by its creatures. They are thus fed with the life appropriate to their stage of being. It is felt as light, as joy, and as a radiant well-being. Thus individual life is fed by the direct absorption of life in its appropriate form. On each plane this holds good, but rising in the scale of purity, joy, and love.

This is Immanence in a visible form and the substance of the God in whom we live and move and have our being.

This transcendent source of life thus has as many ranges of frequencies as there are planes of being. The utmost of these must be the purest source of the whole, which thus ranges in quality down through the spheres to earth, where it is no longer visible and can only be known through its activities.

Thus we see and know God as Transcendent and yet Immanent, as a Principle of Creative Love which is life in its purest form and as a beneficent Power and Presence modified in agreement with the form of matter on each plane.

The vision is clearer, the substance is finer, the meaning is plainer as the ascent is made.

Transcendent in the Principle; Immanent in the actual; pure in the Principle, yet varying in degree so as to agree with the actual; modified as an emergent in the actual and essential to the actual, we believe in a Transcendent God beyond this category of being, immanent in all these His creatures and an Activity of Being flooding down through all worlds.

God has become a physical factor in this scheme of things. Even at its highest remove from the mundane, reality is thus under the law. At the utmost stretch of



thought we see God, therefore, as identified with the Law and as one with the Principle of Creative Love.

We ascend into the maturity of simplicity with Christ and endorse the word that God IS Love.

#### §4

An advanced psychic development is probably necessary before the mysteries of the origin and nature of The Christ can be deeply understood. The Church has the simplified form of this teaching, but unless it is penetrated by a far more inward understanding gained from knowledge of the possibilities of life as it advances beyond the mortal, it may be rejected just because of this over-simplification. You will find that as your own knowledge is extended new aspects of this central mystery will be revealed to you. They cannot be accepted fully if they are given prematurely. So let these things abide in contemplation; they are the seeds of knowledge which must lie dormant in the soul until the upspringing time visits it.

Christ lived on earth; that is, He had to be able to use an earthly body. There are many beings who have passed beyond the possibility of reincarnating in human form. The Spirit which used the body of Jesus had never before embodied in this way. There had, therefore, to be a very special preparation of an earth body of surpassing purity and of high development before it could contain this Spirit. This was probably provided by the descent to earth in the form of the Babe of Bethlehem of a Being of wise and ancient origin who had almost reached the stage of freedom from the necessity of return to earth. As this man grew into manhood the strong spirit of Love and Power we know as The Christ came near to Him, overshadowed Him and was able by degrees to possess and use him, sharing his life and suffering, and experiencing in His body that separation from the spiritual world which is the lot of mankind on earth.

In this sense you will understand better the references to 'The Father' and the assertion so often repeated, that Jesus and The Father are one. St. John's Gospel gives much light on this association of a mighty spirit with a man of high spiritual rank. Such a portent can only be possible in world affairs under the most exceptional circumstances. It marks a crisis in the process of evolution.

Thus was brought down to earth the Power and Being which was nearest in purity to the Creative Love itself. Thus it entered into history and left a record on the face of the earth. Spiritual influence works always powerfully on the reverse of human affairs' in this case it left its own sphere and was manifested among men. The records of its penetration into the earth sphere thus remain for testimony and remembrance of the eternal verities which hiddenly underlie our life on earth. Man ascends into this knowledge as he climbs the planes of immortal life; there for long ages he is steeped in it. Then he is re-embodied in a human form again and matter shuts him in. His physical brain develops, his intellect works in and through the

current ideas of his day, he is imprisoned in the flesh to a greater or less extent, and though his spirit never loses its longing for home, it is a blind longing finding satisfaction only through the exercise of his immature powers of intuition.

In the records of the life of Christ the soul finds the testimony and remembrance of eternal life which in its own person it has well-nigh lost. It can pass out through contemplation of these things to a living contact with the spiritual world, and through this contact it can lay hold of the skirt of the Divine and be healed. The Spirit of Christ, of the exalted Spirit which came to earth in the body of Jesus of Nazareth, haunts the earth still. Devotion is not misled when it knows that it can feel after Him and find Him. In this way He continues His redemptive work, ceaselessly working on the souls of men as the Spirit of Love which redeems from the power of the material world.

The earthly form He used, the man Jesus who was His instrument on earth, passed through these planes and has left His powerful impress on our history. Far more is connected with this Being than can be discussed between us yet. Over-simplicity is often the enemy of truth, but nothing can be known until the time comes when one can ask the right question of life; so for the moment be content with this incomplete account. I can add just this, though you will not fully appreciate my meaning yet.

The influence of the Christ is powerful in the after-death experience. His sojourn on earth had far-reaching effects in the spiritual world. In the form of man He could penetrate to the secrets of time and space and their effects upon the soul as they are only to be experienced on earth, and as no spirit could do which had never embodied. When the being of man is turned again towards earth after its ascent of the planes it is His influence and help that tide it over the crisis of being, and lead it back to the world of men.

His influence will increase as this age emerges from the night of materialism; signs are not wanting that it has passed its zero hour. Ever more powerfully the Spirit of Christ will operate in the world of thought, working always through the finer powers of intuition, until the whole outlook of man becomes spiritualized and he is able to bring to full development these powers which are at present masked by his senses.

We sigh impatiently and say, "Two thousand years of Christianity and the world is still morally as heathen as ever"; but two thousand years is a very short era in evolution, and what is in question is the development of a new power of being, a new quality of consciousness, which shall bring with it release from the limited outlook of the senses and escape into the boundless world of the spirit. This is the path of evolution for the human race, that through the intellect it may transcend the intellect so that a quality of consciousness may emerge which will give it full cognizance of the spiritual world and real knowledge of its laws. It is true that they were summed up two thousand years ago, but mankind has still to reach the stage of experiencing these things. In this great adventure of the human soul the Spirit of Christ again leads the human race.

You will see that to enter fully into this is impossible. I can only give you scanty hints of the experience of reality which is your birthright. There is much here that will become fully your own when you have duly pondered it. Let it enter and vitalize your thought and so make a way for more when the time comes.”

With this benediction our friend ceased.

## §5

It is too soon to attempt any summing-up of these tremendous themes. I can only try over ways of formulating them which shall make them more familiar to my thought.

I ponder chief among them the themes of God Transcendent, the Principle and Power of Life; God Immanent, life in every degree and under any form His appearing, a perpetually renewed Advent in the world; eternal life no longer a vague and rather awful continuance of this unsatisfactory pilgrimage but rather to be thought of as something within, a quality and power of growth towards the highest, the Kingdom of Heaven within. Here is eternal life for us in the raising of life to its highest power, so that it shall not be defeated by death after death, but rise again each time more glorious into closer affinity with its source. Here within the body is the resurrection and the life, life within life, life beyond life, until the innermost verity of being is attained by virtue of which the ascent into the highest possible sphere will be made. The strength and beauty of God is burgeoning within us, fashioning each of His creatures into conformity with its unique form in His thought.

The Quaker phrase was finely accurate: ‘That which is of God in every man’, and in line with what I had been told was their intuitive association of it with light, ‘the light within’. Their silent communing with God was a conscious and deliberate process of identification with the highest in themselves and a relating it to the highest they could reach outside themselves. ‘Inward’ was as truly ‘upward’, and by right of that mystical flight to reality they achieved a higher level of being which brought with it its own peculiar joy.

I thought much of the downpouring of the ‘Transcendent Being’. Whenever the earthly vision is transmuted there is this experience of light. ‘The glory of the Lord.’ shone round about the Shepherds; Saul was baptized into that glory on the road to Damascus, and many other instances of the sudden breaking into a power of new vision inherent in us all, but for the most part unsuspected and undeveloped, came into mind. It was characteristic of the vision of the mystic in every age, and there in the actual conditions of this other world was the origin of the mystic’s sight. I thought of George Fox, and of how in his lonely communings he saw the vision of ‘an ocean of light which was above all’, and thereafter, with inspired insight, he related the inward light, ‘that which is of God in every man’ with this universal source of light, that which is of God beyond man.

As our friend said, the harvest of all this is not yet, so comment becomes

impertinent. More and deeper experience must prepare the way for the ripening and the harvesting of what has already been sown. Beyond that is the hope of other work in this field of adventure and endeavour.

THE END