

THE CHILDREN OF EVOLUTION

Messages from Beyond the Veil

Received and Edited

by

N. O. Davies

With Foreword by

Dr. James Stephenson, M.A., M.Com., D.Sc.

“For they are the Children of the Evolution, and this is not their final home.”

Special Edition for:

PSYCHIC BOOK CLUB
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DEDICATED TO THE MAN IN THE STREET.

We want this book to be a book for the plain man – ‘the man in the street,’ as you call him. We want it to be practical in its nature, to set out the facts of life beyond the grave in plain, ordinary language that he can understand. We want to brush aside a deal of the false sentiment and mystery which has enshrouded religion so long. God never meant religion to be a mystery; it is man that has made it so. His handiwork - sun, stars, moon, earth, nature - is plain enough for all to understand - and religion was never meant to be any different. God’s purposes are plain from the beginning, it is man, by his interference, by his clumsiness, and not infrequently by his guile, that has obscured it so that the plain man cannot see or understand it, and it has had to be specially interpreted by interested parties - preacher or priest.

THE SPIRIT COMMUNICATORS.

FOREWORD

by

DR. JAMES STEPHENSON, M. A., M. Com., D. Sc.

There is probably no topic which has led to greater speculation or has aroused controversies more bitter than the question of the life which we may expect to experience after the change called Death. We arrive on this planet from an unknown sphere and, for our allotted span of years, we endure "life's fitful fever"; then once more the shadows close about us, and we pass on. For centuries, in this, as in many other matters, men looked to the Churches for guidance and received a very definite answer. It is fashionable in some quarters in this age of so-called enlightenment to condemn the Churches for the dogmatic attitude which they have assumed towards the problems of the hereafter. But before condemning an institution which, through the ages, has brought comfort and consolation to the troubled minds of millions, we must always remember that every teacher must adapt his manner of exposition to attune with the intellectual development of those whom he seeks to guide. It may well be, therefore, that the answer supplied in the past by the Church, perhaps quite unconsciously, was the one to which its followers were most receptive.

But knowledge of matters spiritual is subject to growth and development in the same way as the understanding of things material. The answer as to man's ultimate destiny which might be sufficient at an earlier day is no longer acceptable to a large number of people. The challenging discoveries of modern science have called into question many of the teachings of the Church - not as regards real essentials - but in respect of relatively minor matters. We must always remember that the great and fundamental spiritual message of the Church, obscured though it may be by the well-meant but often misguided dogmas and creeds of its ministers, is eternally true. But the type of mind which regarded the Bible as a document of entirely Divine origin, had difficulty in adjusting its ideas to the new knowledge, and the ill-founded opposition with which it was sought to defend old and unessential beliefs drove many from the established religious bodies.

Such a consequence must be deplored by any thinking person for, in many cases such people have gone from one extreme to the other and, having renounced orthodox religious beliefs, are led to deny any possibility of a future life at all. Here lies the useful field of endeavour for the Spiritualist Movement, in attempting to provide objective proof of the immortality of man, and in furnishing a picture, comprehensible to our present intelligence, of conditions prevailing in this mysterious after-life. It is not claimed that Spiritualism is the only road by which the truth may be attained, but the movement has a message to give to those who are prepared to approach these problems with a sympathetic understanding and a receptive mind.

Spiritualism has still far to travel before its real message gains a measure of popular acceptance. It has to fight against prejudice and preconceived ideas - a difficulty which any movement novel to the public must overcome. It is to be feared that many of its followers, whether genuine or otherwise, have brought the movement into disrepute by exploiting it for their own gain rather than by using it in the service of their fellow-men. Unfortunately, it is the indiscretions of the latter class which appear to have attracted the greatest measure of public attention so that the movement is still associated in the popular imagination with sensationalism and fortune-telling. But this fact need not deter those workers who have scorned to be drawn aside in order to captivate the unthinking, sensation-loving public, but have quietly and steadfastly followed out their ideals. Let them not despair, for if their aims and ambitions are high and their motives inspired by a desire for truth, the seeds which they have planted in the time of adversity will grow and flourish, and bear fruit in due season.

For this reason the patient work of accumulating evidence, such as has been undertaken by Mr. N. O. Davies as Editor of this work, merits every approbation and encouragement. It is true that psychic experience is conclusive only when gained at first-hand, and no responsible worker in the Spiritualist Movement has ever pretended otherwise. But even though psychic gifts may be developed by patient training and self-discipline, different workers obtain varied experiences, and such information as they can give should be disseminated as widely as possible. In this branch of investigation as in all others, it is only by recording and preserving the experiences and the lessons of the past that we can hope to progress in the future.

Cardiff,

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

It was not until July, 1925, that I commenced my study of Spiritualism. I was enabled to do so by reason of the fact that the daughter of an old friend of mine, in whose integrity I had absolute confidence, had developed brilliant psychic gifts. I knew very little about the Subject, but possessed a perfectly open mind. My wife and I and a few friends held a small circle at our home in Swanbridge, and met with such astonishing results that the reality of spirit survival (and by survival I mean complete survival of spirit, personality, mind, and memory), was established for me beyond any possible shadow of doubt. My spirit friends supplied so many evidences, not only of their own existence, but also of their intimate knowledge of our daily lives, during the last five years, that it were an insult to their intelligence, and no less to mine, to labour the point as to their survival, any further. You cannot converse with a myth.

Before dismissing this part of my subject, I cannot refrain from quoting the following tribute from Father Patrick, the leader of the band of controls, to the wonderful powers of the medium.

“It is remarkable to what a degree we have been able to communicate with your circle, through your having such a highly psychic person as your medium. We have been enabled, ere now, to control her for as long as three hours at a time, perfect results being obtained throughout; as many as a dozen different entities from our side have controlled her in the course of a single sitting at your house, as you can very well remember. We also remember your remarking after this séance that it was a most wonderful manifestation, each separate entity, with its individual mannerisms, voice, gestures, intonation, even dialect, standing out clear and vivid. We remember your saying, in no uncertain fashion, that after such a wonderful demonstration from the unseen world, which could by no possible stretch of imagination, or distortion of facts, no matter from what standpoint regarded, be imputed to the medium, it was no longer possible for any intelligent, fair-minded man to doubt the truth of survival after death, and we rejoice that after five years of patient and earnest study of this enthralling subject you have never wavered in that belief.”

About twenty-one months later, in April, 1927, Father Patrick suggested that I should sit apart one evening, as an experiment, to enable the controls to determine whether they could transmit a message to me by means of direct impression on my brain, *and without having recourse to the medium*. He added that entirely new intelligence would be communicated, but gave no hint as to its nature. I readily consented, and at 8 p. m., 22nd April, 1927, I sat for my first séance. The result of that sitting, together with many others extending down to December, 1928, is - this extra-ordinary book.

The modus operandi has been faithfully described (see bottom of page 28), and needs no further comment from me. The first instalment broke off *in the middle of a sentence*, but the rest of the sentence came through four days later exactly as if there had been no interruption. Between July 17th, 1927, and February 9th, 1928, and again the latter date and June 4th, 1928, occurred breaks in the messages due to my preoccupation with other tasks, but whenever I resumed, no matter how long the break, reception continued as if nothing had happened.

Whatever the verdict upon this book, no fair minded critic can deny that it furnishes a complete answer to the charge so often hurled at psychic investigators, that nothing but trivial and trumpery communications are ever received from the Spirit World.

Father Patrick's claim that entirely new intelligence would be communicated, has, I submit, been justified by the results. What is of equal importance, judged from another aspect, is the fact that the greater part of the messages was entirely new to me. Throughout the whole of the sittings, I can honestly say, I have never consciously recorded any thoughts of my own as coming from the spirit communicators. Exactly as they impressed them on my brain, so have I set them down, and so, in discharge of a solemn obligation, I now pass them on.

As previously stated, the messages were received throughout by means of mental impression, but when realized the challenging nature of the statements they contained, and how they controverted current opinions upon the most vital issues of the day, I determined to take every precaution to ensure that they had been correctly received by that method. Accordingly, in a series of sittings arranged with the medium, I read the whole of the manuscript to Father Patrick, who pronounced the statements contained therein to be absolutely correct. The comments made at this stage have been reproduced as footnotes under his name.

The late Rev. G. Vale Owen, to whom I submitted the MSS. says:-

“There rings through it the true note, that it is given out from the Spirit World. This, of course, is not to say that it comes from your spirit inspirers *verbatim* - all automatic writing, including my own, is tinctured by the medium through which it is given, in other words, the brain of the automatist.”

There remains the delicate question of the identity of the Spirit Communicators. Although the reader will already have gathered that the entity in charge of the Spirit Communicators responsible for the transmission of the messages is known as Father Patrick, he will still be entitled to ask: And who is Father Patrick? It is not an easy matter to establish the identity of an entity who passed over about 80 years ago, but out of the materials at my command I will endeavour to answer that question.

In the spring of 1926 the medium, my wife, and myself projected a visit to Cork, and as soon as that fact became known to the Spirit band - there was no need to tell them, they were perfectly aware of the fact as soon as we had formulated any

thoughts on the subject - considerable interest was manifested in the proposal mainly due to the fact that several members of the band hailed from that district. In particular, Father Patrick himself was greatly taken up with the project, and encouraged it in every way. Shortly before we left he made the following statements:-

That although known to the circle as Brother Patrick (or more familiarly "Father Patrick") his real name whilst on the earth plane was Denis O'Grady, that he was a younger son of Gerald and Molly O'Grady, a well known Irish Family residing in Cork, that at the age of 17 he gave up all his worldly possessions to the Church and entered a Franciscan Monastery in Cork, where he remained for the rest of his earthly life – 13 years. That as soon as we arrived in Cork he would take us in his sole charge and escort us to a church where a tablet would be found on the wall commemorating the family to which he belonged. The guidance would take the form of mental impressions registered in the brain of the medium by Father Patrick himself, and there would be no need for us to seek any material directions as to finding our way to any place we wanted to visit.

Well, the visit to Cork duly took place, and Father Patrick had the rare felicity of accompanying his three friends through the loved scenes of his earthly life. He took us in sole charge, and led us direct to the scenes he desired to revisit - on more than one occasion being so deeply moved that he was unable to resist the strong desire to control the medium whilst standing on some such favoured spot. On the first morning he conducted us to a Church, which we subsequently found out was St. Fin Barr's Cathedral, and where the Verger pointed out a Tablet on the wall the inscription on which was as follows:-

GERALD DE COURCEY O'GRADY,
(THE O'GRADY) OF KILLBALLYOWEN, CO. LIMERICK.
BORN 1 JANUARY, 1823. DIED 26th MAY, 1896.

(Here follow several inscriptions relating to various members of another branch of the Family - the O'Donovans). My information is that Denis O'Grady i.e., Father Patrick, was born on the 9th February, 1821, and passed over in 1851, and that the Gerald de Courcey O'Grady commemorated on the tablet was his first cousin, whom he predeceased by 45 years. The Verger, questioned on the subject, confirmed that a younger son of the O'Grady Family had given up all his worldly wealth to the Church and entered a Franciscan Monastery in Cork.

The authenticity of the foregoing statements, now made public for the first time, can of course be challenged by anyone acquainted with the history of the O'Grady Family.

That the information reached us from another than an earthly source is, I think incontestable when you consider that none of us had ever been to Cork before, or

had ever heard of St. Fin Barr's Cathedral, or of either of the Families mentioned on the Tablet.

With regard to the other contributors, the Spirit Communicators are of the considered opinion that no object can at present be served by the disclosure of their names. They point out that occasions have arisen during the last few years in which the publication of such names have not only failed to carry conviction to earth children, but have given rise to a certain amount of ridicule, a proceeding which they deplore, and of which they are anxious to avoid a repetition. Especially is this true in the case of those who have passed over so many years ago that their names hold no meaning for the present generation. (Example, "Phineas", Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's famous Spirit guide). "Let it suffice then," says Father Patrick, "that a large and brilliant band of Spirit Communicators - including amongst them many of the Higher Intelligences from very advanced Spheres - willingly and joyfully joined in the task of transmission. So much was this the case, and so great was the interest taken in the experiment on our side, that on one occasion, whilst the writer was reading his MSS. over to me, one of the Higher Intelligences referred to, although thousands of miles away at the time, was so interested in the reading that he personally intervened with a message which he desired to include in the MSS." (See top of page 46).

"The case is otherwise, however, when the name of the contributor carries a local significance, and accordingly we have great pleasure in giving the name of Bishop Hedley, late of Cardiff, as one of the most earnest and enthusiastic contributors to the series. With which intimation, and with God's blessing on the work, we commend it to our readers with every confidence in the result."

N. O. DAVIES.

CAREG CENNEN,
PENARTH.

CHAPTER I

THE GREAT ADVENTURE

The revelation we are about to impart to you, of the conditions of life on the spirit plane, will have as its main recommendation, utter sincerity and truth. The facts communicated may clash with many of your previous beliefs, and may occasion pain at severance of long cherished and well-beloved ideals, but nonetheless, the truth will have to be faced, at whatever cost and mental suffering.

The ideas you have long harboured, that death ends all, and consigns every mortal on dissolution, to the disintegrating silence and corruption of the tomb, until such time as, hundreds and thousands of years hence, the resurrection will be heralded by the blowing of the Angel Gabriel's trump, must, of necessity, be the first to disappear. That all the past generations of mankind have suffered from the corroding influence of this belief seems, in the after light of life beyond the tomb, utterly incredible and fantastic. That such a belief is opposed, not only to the plain commonsense of the ordinary individual, but to the scientific instincts of the gifted, is almost too much of a truism to be repeated. That such is the case, and that millions of your fellow creatures have faced the ordeal called Death with only its shelter as a protection and guide on the last and strangest journey of all - "Adventure," we think, some of your leading novelists describe it - is, alas, only too true. That rude awakening has awaited one and all upon their emergence from the valley of the shadow on this side of the grave, is only one of the many truths it is our duty to communicate to you, for the benefit of your fellow travellers on the journey of life.

We who are banded together on the spirit side, under the leadership of the Great Creator, we, whose sole aim and object is to save mankind from the errors which have clogged it in the past, declare to you at the beginning, with all the sincerity and strength of our being, with all the emphasis we can lay upon it, that never can it be stated too strongly and too often, that Death, so far from ending all, is but a beginning. So far from closing a door, it but opens it. Death is but the dawning of a higher, fairer, greater life. You have been told in your Scriptures that eye has not seen, nor ear heard, the wondrous things that are revealed to the newborn soul upon its entry into the Spirit world, and the Elder Brother has declared that "In my Father's house are many mansions", but these descriptions, vivid though they are, give but a feeble glimpse of the truth. Some slight measure of that truth we will be enabled, we hope, to convey to you and in such a manner as will not fail to be perceived by the human eye, but of the truth in its fulness, even we, who have passed over, many, many years, as understood in your earth time, can never hope to make you realize. Not a day passes but discloses some fresh glory, some new phase of a never-ending panorama, but however arduous we may be in our endeavours to assimilate some faint reflection of its glory, the task is often beyond our powers.

But we on this side have one consolation which is denied to you on the earth plane, - for us Time is Not. We are part and parcel of Eternity, to which there is no beginning and no end. We can rest on the way, knowing well there is no loss of time; we have leisure to study that which we have seen unfolded to us, there is no pressure on us such as is thrown upon you by the weight of competition and stress. We can ponder over these things, discuss them with Higher Intelligences, until we have mastered their meaning, and so prepare for fresh developments and still higher truths.

What you call Death is but the beginning of Eternity - eternal life, not eternal death. From the step which has been taken, when the silken cord which joins the spirit to its earthly body has been snapped, at last, there is no going back - no recall. It becomes on this side what has been the case on the earth plane - Evolution. The spirit advances from progress to progress - from stage to stage - sphere to sphere - in the well-ordered course of Evolution. But with this difference as between the evolution known to you on the Earth plane - there is no such process as the survival only of the fittest. While it applies to physical progress on the earth plane it has no spiritual parallel on our side. There is no such ruthless massacre of the weaklings as is demonstrated in Darwin's theory on earth - so far from being sacrificed they are nurtured and specially cared for. to adopt a phrase that is familiar to you "the wind is tempered to the shorn lamb" - and all that a loving Father - not unbending judge - can do for the wellbeing of his flock, is done. The result is a truer development of the spirit or Evolution than has ever been known on your earth.

In order to start at the beginning, we will now take you, step by step, from the so-called death-bed on the earth plane, and accompany the soul on its flight from the the moment that the silken cord is severed. You have doubtless watched the passing of a beloved friend, and will easily recall its salient features. You may probably have noticed the smile which illuminated the features of the sufferer as the moment of dissolution drew near; you may have observed the outstretched hands of the dying man; probably you put both down to a failing of the intellect under the strain; if so, you are mistaken. The smile was a smile of welcome, of gladness, of joy, as at the meeting of old and loved friends. It was a smile of recognition, while the outstretched hands carried the truth a little farther still. It was no failing of intellect, or reason, which you beheld, on the contrary *, never was the sufferer's intellect at a higher level; never was his vision so clear. For perhaps the first time in his life the scales had fallen from his eyes, and he was enabled to see through the materialistic barriers which had hitherto obstructed his vision, to the great beyond. The friends he had loved on earth had gathered together to meet him, and to assist him at his passing, and it was glad the smile on these - his friends - that gave rise to the glad smile on his features, and towards whom his arms were out-stretched.

* The first instalment broke off at this word, and, as will be seen, in the middle of a sentence, but the rest of the sentence came through at my second sitting four days later, exactly as if there had been no break. N. O. D.

The soul having passed over to the sphere next the earth plane - what we call the Astral plane - will henceforth fare according to its condition at the time of passing over. If the life led on the earth plane was stormy and stressful, involving the spirit in a perpetual warfare against adverse conditions, it will be necessary for the worn-out spirit to rest for awhile before continuing its journey. He will be met on arrival by his loved ones, the sight of whom will gladden his heart, but he will have been met in addition by one of the skilled bands of helpers specially summoned for the purpose, and whose knowledge and experience of the Spirit life, gained after many years' experience in the astral plane, will prove of more service to the newly arrived soul than even the sight or ministrations of his loved ones. For it is clearly a case where experience and inner knowledge counts more than affection, prized and dear though that may be.

The band of helpers who have been hastily summoned to the scene to meet the newly released spirit may, or may not, be aware of its exact condition. And in such a case it is not improbable that the whole band will undertake the journey. The reason is obvious, the desire being to provide him with a helper who will be able to respond to his needs. This will be better understood when it is realized that each soul on passing over carries with it to the astral plane its earth conditions. That soul may have had the simplicity of heart of a little child and it is with such feelings that it will reach the astral plane. With such feelings predominant it will be able to *see* a child spirit, and seeing, appreciate, whereas, a grown-up spirit, - say a priest or doctor, *would not be perceptible to its senses*. For this reason the band invariably contains a little child who will be useful in such a case, being able to greet that new-born soul, and place it more at ease. If the soul passed over with a longing for the consolations of religion, a priest will best meet his need, and a priest will be forthcoming; if a doctor, a doctor will be at hand. The point for you on the earth plane to grasp at this stage is the fact that the world beyond the tomb is a world of thought - a spirit world would have, of necessity, to be a world of thought, you will say; granted - but that is not entirely the point we are trying to present. *The astral plane is a world of thought where only moral qualities count in the scheme of progress*. It is hard for you to grasp this thought, but Sir J. M. Barrie came very near it when, in his delightful children's play - *Peter Pan* - he makes the children wish good thoughts in order to make the ship sail through the air. And the ship was lifted up and the ship sailed through the air, in response to the children's good thoughts.

Such is the effect of thought in the astral plane, you have but to wish a thing, and it is carried out *; you have but to wish to travel to a distant place - say Japan or Australia - and you are there at once, as fast as the thought you sent out can travel.

* Always pre-supposing, of course, that the new-born soul has fully recovered, is well acquainted with the new life, and is in a state of perfect mental fitness. - Father Patrick.

In like manner, thought responds to thought, and you have but to wish to meet, say, a famous writer, Carlyle, Dickens, or Shakespeare, and your spirit and theirs

commune at the thought. In this way the scope of your enjoyment is practically unlimited, you have the whole world to range, you have the countless great minds of the ages to commune with; you can now visit any part of the world you have just left, at leisure, see all the beautiful sights you were debarred from seeing while you were on the earth plane; it is a truism and a sad commentary on the conditions of life on the earth plane that in order to see that earth on which you lived, you have to leave it; you have, in earth language, to die in order to behold the glory of the world wherein you lived; "you must lose your soul to gain it," as one of your poets sings.

But to return to the newly-born soul; since conditions *create* thought, that is, the earth conditions which the soul brought with it to the astral plane, and again, since conditions *respond* to thought, *on the astral plane*, the fate of that soul can be fairly accurately determined. If its desire is for rest, rest it shall have - up to a point. It will be allowed to rest - its state in the interval resembling that of semi-coma, trance, or sleep - until it is in a fit condition to *resume its onward journey*. But if the desire of that soul was for oblivion - total oblivion, annihilation, soul-suicide - it will, like that other soul that needed rest only, and so obtained it, be *temporarily gratified*. It will be allowed to sleep until it expresses a desire, that is, sends out a thought, or wish, for *life*.

It is then awakened by the band to whose care it has been assigned, and intrected as to the best methods of carry out that wish; if it continues to sleep, and sends out no wish or desire to live, it is awakened after a certain period has elapsed. That period will vary with the individual, but cases are not infrequent where a soul has slept for two, three, or even five years before being awakened. You will doubtless recollect the case which we described to you, in a séance, some months ago. On that occasion, the members of our band had to leave the circle very suddenly, being summoned to assist at the awakening of a sleeping soul. You asked, amongst other things, how long had this soul been sleeping, and was considerably surprised when told "two years." We promised * that this particular spirit should come back amongst you and relate his experiences whilst in the sleeping state, but although that promise has not been redeemed, it has not been lost sight of!

* This promise, made over two years previously, was redeemed on Sunday evening, December 16, 1928.
- N. O. D.

Because we have told you that the astral plane is a world of thought, you must not run away with the impression that it has no physical existence. It is the country, or sphere, next the earth plane, the second stage on the soul's journey through Eternity, the first, or preliminary stage, being the life spent on the earth plane. It has a physical existence like the earth plane, and what is more, it is remarkably like it in appearance. In point of fact, in a physical sense, it is a replica of the earth plane, only it is much larger, much more beautiful, much more varied. It is an intensification of all that is great and good and beautiful on the earth; we have lakes and rivers and seas like you have, only they are more numerous, more beautiful,

more varied in their character; fields and lanes and trees and flowers and shrubs and grass we also have, but with the same difference in characteristics; our flowers are more beautiful and their scent is more lovely than those you have; the same law applies to everything physical on the earth plane; we have it also. You have some beautiful colours on the earth plane - we have often admired them - but they pale into insignificance besides the colours which meet your awakened senses in the spirit world. Description would not, we are afraid, convey to you one-thousandth part of the brilliant variety of hues you will see here, suffice it to say that the colours you are familiar with on earth are intensified a thousand fold - that there are colours, or variations of colours, which you have never seen on the earth plane, that their range and character and variety are boundless, and, to one on the earth plane, quite inconceivable.

For the rest, stars and sun and moon and planets in all their glory and majesty are present to our senses as they are to yours. In their case there is no difference, save in interpretation; we are able to appreciate their wonder and their magnitude in a far greater degree than you can, thanks to the clearer vision we have received on the spirit plane. And the seasons bring their growth, their glory and their decay in the same way.

You will, naturally, be interested to learn our mode of living on the astral plane. Herein we enter on lines of divergence from life upon the earth; we have no need to eat and drink at stated intervals in order to support life, although we are capable of both operations. *We subsist upon the ether or atmosphere*, so there is one grave problem the less to face upon our side of life. The ether, or atmosphere, gives us all the sustenance we require to sustain *energy* at its fullest; there is no question, for us in the spirit world, of any necessity for partaking of food in order to sustain life. Life, such as you know it, is a very precarious matter, liable to be snapped at any moment, suspended during the whole period of earthly existence, upon a single, and often a fragile thread. For us on the spirit side of life there is no such fear, no such possibility. Life once granted by its Maker, can never be taken away, can never be curtailed; life goes on for ever, it is eternal. Herein lies a fundamental difference in our points of view, influencing our whole conceptions, our entire thoughts. Life as you know it is at best but a matter of three score years and ten, and all your thoughts, your conceptions, your imaginings, your reasonings, are, not only coloured, but controlled, by that idea. How much different the outlook when that barrier of three score and ten is removed from your vision, and you are able to look upon illimitable time, upon Eternity itself?

If you will momentarily project yourself into the astral plane you will be able the better to understand our position and outlook; for us there is no set term of year to look forward to or recoil from; the dead weight or incubus of TIME is removed from our shoulders, and we can look forward to the future - if indeed Eternity may be said to have a past or future - without any qualms of mind. For that reason there is a vast

difference in our estimate of time, we need no clocks, watches, or alarms, to remind us of its flight, no almanacs, no calendars, to mark the passage of the years. Let it not be thought, however, that we have no sense of propriety in regard to the observance of fixed times for work or other purposes, or for appointments. Your experience of our punctuality in keeping our appointments with your circle during the last two years will readily convince you that, without any of the mechanical devices for marking time which you possess on the earth plane, we have as keen, and, we hope, as honourable a sense of its obligations, as any of our brothers and sisters on the physical side of life.

The importance of this different conception of Time which prevails on our side will be fully appreciated only in its effect upon the performance of the tasks we are given to do. We can enter upon any task - no matter of what magnitude or duration - without being hampered in its execution as you are, by considerations of Time. It follows that with ample liberty in this respect we can do more justice to the work. You on the earth plane are always fighting against time – work always seems in arrears, and in a large percentage of Cases, through the play of inexorable circumstances, and not through your own fault. You are always overburdened with work, and never seem able to get abreast of it – such is the pressure of competition, strain, and stress in your materialistic world. When you do eventually catch up with it and begin to congratulate yourself, you are quickly undeceived; more work is promptly forthcoming and you are soon back in the same state – fighting against odds. The main consequence of such a state of affairs – and the one we attach most importance to – is that work on the earth plane degenerates in quality through being “scampered.” The moral is obvious; when the pressure of Time is removed from the worker, and he has ample leisure to put his whole soul into the work as is the case with us, the quality of the work turned out is immensely improved.

We cannot dilate any further upon this topic, which might be spun out to any length, and become tedious for both. But before leaving the subject we want you to try and grasp a principle which will explain the whole vast subject in a flash, and incidentally elucidate one of the most vital truths of Spiritualism. It is this: when you have grasped the central and all important fact that you cannot annihilate life, and that, consequently, life goes on for ever, you will more readily comprehend the characteristics of the astral plane. There is also another fact which you will have to grasp at the same time – EVOLUTION. That is the second of two great truths of which the indestructibility of life is the first. Life goes on the ever, but it is the great law of its existence that it must progress and change, and the principle on which it progresses or changes is EVOLUTION. It follows that the process of change is accompanied by a change of scene. Life which is indestructible, and the first stage of the expression of which originates on the earth plane - that is the first phase - the first law. Obedient to the law of progress which is called EVOLUTION the scene changes to the astral plane - that is the second stage. Arising out of this law of indestructibility and progress of life, of which the first scene is laid on the earth

plane, comes the stupendous and staggering fact - a realisation of which will do more than any collection of dry facts to explain the nature of the astral plane - that, following upon death, dissolution, or decay in the natural world, *every living thing on the earth plane, whether it belongs to the human, animal or plant world, reproduces itself, in a greatly improved form, in the astral plane.* Nothing that has the breath of life in it ever dies, not a leaf, not a twig, not a blade of grass that falls to the ground, but reappears, in a better form, in the astral plane. When you have realised these staggering truths, which are enough to make the human brain reel, you will be well on the way to learn the most vital and most stupendous truths of Spiritualism.

CHAPTER II

WHAT HAPPENS ON ARRIVAL

There now being a clearer impression in your mind as to what the astral plane really is, we will hearken back to the vital moment when the disembodied soul from the earth plane reaches its borders. Its condition at that precise moment, as we have already stated, is dependent upon its state at the time of dissolution. You will also have seen that it has been met on arrival by its loved ones and also by trained and experienced spirit guides, detached for the purpose from the band to whose care the newly arrived soul is allotted.

Its actual state on arrival is usually that of semi-coma. The spirit, but newly liberated from its fleshly tenement, is unused to the freedom which that condition confers, and is consequently unable to realize its new state, or to take advantage of its new powers. It will be in a semi-trance or comatose condition. But when, gently awakened by its friends, it will be able, dimly, to comprehend its altered state.

The first thing to be done is to allot it a new body, an astral body, in place of the fleshly one it has just discarded. The astral body is constituted of vapour, or ether, and is a replica of the fleshly body at time of passing over. The reason for this is the necessity for maintaining its identity in the eyes of those it has left behind on the earth plane, should they ever again get into contact. Without this method it will be obvious that the process of identifying your loved ones who have passed over will be exceedingly difficult, since identification is alone possible through the description furnished to you on the earth plane, by the controls of the spirit side of life.

Having been clad in its astral body, the newly arrived spirit will be allotted to the care of a band of spirit guides, or helpers, who will be charged with its instruction and initiation into the never ceasing wonders of life on the spirit plane. These matters will, of course, only be gradually unfolded, to admit of the new spirit's fullest assimilation of the facts, since all will, for the most part, be utterly new and strange to the newcomer, and to let loose upon its dazed and reeling senses all the known wonders of the new life, would be to utterly blind him with the light, and so

defeat its object. The newcomer will first be taken in hand by a skilful and sympathetic spirit guide, who will examine and question him for details of his earth life, with a view to allotting him his correct sphere in the new. His tastes, ambitions, and leanings while on the earth plane will be fully and sympathetically considered and a new sphere, more in consonance with these predilections, will be allotted him. He may have had longings for literary expression whilst on the earth plane; longings which were ruthlessly suppressed by the iron heel of circumstances. Or he may have had aspirations towards painting, or oratory, or any of the fine arts, and, for similar reasons, have never been able to satisfy them. He probably passed out with all such longings crushed out of him, with never a thought of their satisfaction, and great will be his surprise when he learns that, having passed through the gateway called death, which formerly symbolized to him the end and not the beginning of things, *he will at last be able to realize his life-long ambition.* And in better circumstances, under better conditions, with a wider outlook on the whole subject, than he had ever dreamt of in his former life. To you on the earth plane reading these lines, it no doubt sounds like a fairy tale, but it is in reality an under, rather than an over statement. Not only will he be at liberty to enter on his beloved profession as soon as he is fit, but he will also receive the best possible instruction in his art, and, what is more, be able, at will, to consort and associate with the ablest exponents of that art through all past generations. If a poet, he will be able to commune with Shakespeare, Milton, Homer, or any of the great writers for whom he has had a predilection. If an orator, the genius of Cicero, Pitt, or Gladstone will, in a mental sense, be at his disposal. Equally so, the spirit of Leonardo-da-Vinci, or Turner, will become the heritage of him who is inclined towards sculpture or painting.

The next step, after ascertaining the bent of the new-comer's mind, will be to allot to him a suitable course of instruction. Beginning on a lowly scale, for it must be borne in mind that the new-corner will have to first forget the greater part of what he has learnt whilst on the earth plane; he will probably be sent to what you would describe as an elementary or "Council" school, along with suitable companions, that is, those similarly bent, and in much the same condition having applied himself diligently to his studies he will next be promoted to a higher standard, or class, much in the same way as is done on the earth plane.

But it must not be supposed that his instruction will be confined to the specific subjects connected with his choice of a vocation. The new-comer will have to embark on a study of general knowledge as a preliminary to all else. Just as the painter on the earth plane would have to equip himself with a general education before applying himself to his art, so will the new-comer on the astral plane. He will have to begin life on the astral in exactly the same way as he did on the earth plane, by *going to school.* To this there is no exception, as the most gifted of earth's children, equally with the most backward, find they have a great deal to forget, and a great deal more to learn, upon arrival on the astral plane. But with this vital difference, applicable to both types of scholar, they will receive the correct and proper instruction at last.

He will have to forget most of what he learnt in his former life, and in every successive stage of it. Art and science, with the conclusions of which he may have been perfectly familiar (we will assume, if you like, that he had obtained his "M.A." degree whilst on earth) will wear a new aspect when approached under the new conditions, and he will be positively amazed at the revelations of his own errors and ignorance which will occur frequently, his own "M.A." degree notwithstanding. Conclusions with regard to the whole of the arts and sciences which he fully believed to be founded on the solid rock of truth, conclusions which he himself and taught to others, will be shattered in an instant, and he will find himself staggering, reeling, without a single support from his past knowledge, wondering what will happen next. Most domains of knowledge will appear in a new light, astronomy, evolution, natural history, and physical geography in particular.

Not that knowledge will be discounted because of its origin on the earth plane. Truth is truth whatever its origin, but Truth is not a relative matter, to be determined by the circumstances of the individual case, as some of your cynical philosophers try to show. Truth is as indestructible as life itself, and will inevitably triumph in the end. So far from Truth being disparaged because it reaches us from the earth plane, it will be specially encouraged on that account, and, as will be planted in more fruitful soil it will flourish all the greater. Allied to it, supporting it, strengthening it, will be the new knowledge gained in the astral plane, and, together with these new forces, it will become an unassailable phalanx, moving from strength to strength, from victory to victory. There is an old saying on the earth plane to the effect that knowledge is power, but undermining its ethical value, we are afraid, are many and various materialistic considerations. Knowledge is power, on your side, because of the enhanced prestige it confers on its owner, for the worldly success it brings in its train. It's true, abiding nature is overlooked; it is not pursued or treasured for its own sake. Hence it is not esteemed so highly, or rightly, on your side as on ours.

Knowledge, in the new life to which the soul is re-born, is one of the pillars of that life. Here it is treasured for its own sake, apart from any gross, materialistic considerations. Here there is no pecuniary reward to mark its accumulation by any given entity, but it must be treasured for its own inherent virtue, or not at all. Pursuit of knowledge from base motives, the attainment of fame or notoriety, the satisfaction of personal vanity, would, in the new life, speedily defeat its own object. But pursuit of knowledge for its own pure, glorious ends, will bring otherwise unattainable riches within reach, and a measure of spiritual happiness far outweighing any materialistic rewards. No, let us reassure you, the pursuit of true knowledge for its own sake, even on the earth plane, is never wasted labour. It may be, and doubtless often is, the case, that from a worldly standpoint, the pursuit of knowledge that brings no monetary reward is considered doubtful wisdom. It is often scoffed at. "Poor fellow," you say, in accents blended with pity and scorn. "What good will it do him? What earthly good is Latin or Greek in his trade? It's a sheer waste of time, and he'll see his folly some day." It may be that the "poor

fellow” to whom you allude will continue his vain (?) efforts to the grave, and that your prophecy, so far as regards worldly emoluments, will have been verified by events. He will have gone through his simple life, following a simple vocation that called neither for Latin or Greek, and he will not have been a penny in pocket for all his efforts at acquiring knowledge. But it will not have been in vain. That man, humble and insignificant in your sight, will have acquired that which will enrich his soul, and laid a foundation for true happiness that will last through all eternity. We need not remind you that, in the astral plane, we have a different code of value to what obtains on your earth. That poor lad, who was trying to cultivate his mind while attending to the humdrum details of a trivial occupation, will have accumulated treasure in heaven far greater than that which was denied him on earth, and none of his seemingly useless, vain, fantastic attempts to gather knowledge of no use to him in his daily life, will have been wasted. When, at the end of his dreary march through the desert of a commonplace life, he will have reached the astral plane, almost unnoticed by his compatriots, “unwept, unhonoured, and unsung,” as your poet finely puts it, he will be amazed beyond belief to find that his reputation in his new home is far greater than it was in the world he has just left; that his poor, puny, insignificant efforts to acquire knowledge have borne fruit, and that he is so placed that he will be enabled to pursue his life-dream under far better conditions, untrammelled by those harrowing circumstances which dogged his footsteps in the old life, but still failed to subdue his indomitable spirit. Tell it to all and sundry, the pursuit of knowledge is a sure guide to happiness in the future life, and not an iota of true knowledge gleaned on the earth plane is lost; on the contrary, like everything that has life in it, it will have infinitely gained in value when transplanted to the richer soil of the astral plane.

The pursuit of knowledge - the true knowledge - not the false - is one of the great occupations of the after life. So far from being a hobby or a fad, indulged in for the purpose of killing time or dispelling loneliness, it will become an engrossing pursuit; there will be no need to press you into it, you will only be too ready, too glad, to enter into it with all your heart and all your soul. The revelations of the vastness, the complexity, the wonder of life in the various spheres which will be your daily portion will so enthral you that it will be difficult to restrain your efforts. Knowledge will have such a changed meaning for you, your new outlook will be so different, so much wider than the old, that your enthusiasm in the new crusade - the pursuit of True knowledge for its own sake - will know no bounds, and you will go on from vista to vista, success to success, progress to progress, unconsciously fulfilling God’s great law of Evolution which countless ages ago brought into being and sustains to this hour, the earth from whose bowels you sprang.

We will assume that our new spirit friend, by steady and willing application to his studies, will have made some progress in the new life, and is beginning, to use an earth term, “to find his feet”. Thereafter, his rate of progress, as indeed it did from the beginning, will rest with himself.

To enable this to be fully realised on your side, it is necessary to state, here and now, as one of the fundamental laws of life on the astral plane, that the principle of FREE WILL operates as powerfully, and probably more powerfully, on the astral plane, as it does on the earth plane. *Man's whole spiritual progress rests with himself, there is no compulsion.* To that extent it is perfectly true to state that every man on the astral plane is his own saviour. If he is anxious to save his own soul, or, as we would put it, *to progress*, no power on the astral plane, or out of it, can stop him. It needs no emphasising that God, the maker of his soul, will not stand in his way, but it is necessary to state that all the assembled powers of evil cannot effect the ruin of a single soul, whether on astral or earth plane. It is true that they can, and will, here as on earth, retard his progress upward, and cause him untold mental anguish, but they cannot destroy a single soul which, by the exercise of its own free-will, elects to save itself. The utmost that evil can do, in its age-long fight with God, is, to delay the final victory of the latter. Good, which is God, must inevitably triumph in the end.

You will, no doubt, have already perceived the emergence of two new facts at variance with your earth-born beliefs; you will have found some difficulty in accepting the statement that man is his own saviour on the earth plane in view of the fact that millions of your fellow creatures have passed over in the comforting belief that Christ was their Saviour, and that no matter what happens on the earth plane, their final salvation on leaving it will be assured. So much their religion on earth has taught them, so much they imbibed at their mothers' knee, so much confirmed by priest or pastor, sealed and sanctified in the teachings and rites of the Church; such was the final consolation and hope administered to them on dying. *Christ has taken your sins upon, his own shoulders, you are safe.* No wonder that death lost much of its sting for the holders of such a comforting belief. But oh, what a shock for those who hold it upon arrival on the spirit plane! We are profoundly sorry to disturb a belief that has brought comfort to countless millions of your fellow beings, that has enabled them to face undismayed, the dark, narrow river of death, but it is absolutely necessary that nothing, no matter how dear, how sacred, how comforting, should stand in the way of TRUTH. As far as we are concerned in the whole course of this narrative, nothing ever shall. Truth first and last, at all times, all places, all seasons, no matter what the cost, because the TRUTH is God, and God is the TRUTH.

The Christ, whom the newly arrived soul has fondly relied upon for his salvation, will not have carried out the task which the errors and the selfishness of the world had wrongly allotted to HIM. That is the first great spiritual truth brought home to him on the astral plane. *He must save his own soul;* this is where the gift of FREE WILL conferred on him by his Maker comes in. He, and he alone, can do this, and not until he elects to will his own salvation, to set his spiritual house in order, and turn his face towards the light, not until he chooses to exercise that FREE WILL which is his birthright, will his soul be saved. It does not follow that his soul will be damned even should he fail to do so; God, his maker, is a God of Love, and surely

you cannot expect a loving Father to damn his own offspring . You would not expect that that to happen even on the earth plane, and you must concede to the Creator of All equal intelligence and charity to that of mankind. Not even then would he be damned, we repeat. Man is the noblest thing he has created, so much was the fond Father taken up with His conception that he gave him His own Image. It was due to such a conception that the element not compulsion should be entirely lacking in the guidance of his steps; it was due to his dignity that he should possess FREE WILL in toto, not as a half measure, not as a measure extracted unwillingly from the Creator, but as a spontaneous offering from the greatest Power in the Universe towards His noblest creation.

And this is where that great gift comes in. Man, though he has made grievous mistakes, we will not call him a sinner, we will not say he has fallen; too often have such untrue and undeserved epithets been hurled at God's noblest conception by so called Christian ministers - has only to act up to the dignity of his status, has only to exercise that gift of Free Will, *and mentally elect to be saved*, and the process will have already begun. Not even the Christ will have been able to save him until the initiative will have come from himself, but the will to be saved - we would rather use the term "to progress" - to our mind the term "saved" stands for one of the greatest misconceptions of the human race - once exerted, the thought once flashed out, and a whole series of helpful machinery will have been released to his aid. It is quite possible that the Christ will help him then - no right appeal to such a noble nature could possibly go unregarded, - but the petition must be on the right lines before the Christ can respond.

Of the other great misconception, *the existence of evil on the astral plane* - we will treat at greater length, as befits its importance, in a future chapter.

CHAPTER III

FURTHER ADVENTURES

Upon emergence from the state of semi-coma in which the ordeal mis-called Death has temporarily left him, the newly liberated soul finds himself surrounded by a host of his loved ones who have "passed over" before him, and who evince the greatest interest in his welfare. With them are two spirit guides, dressed in white robes, deputed to attend upon his wants, to explain the nature of the new "country," and to try and put him at his ease. It is all so terribly strange and new, so entirely different from what he expected. But although he is still in a somewhat dazed condition, two facts stand out clear in his mind. The place is crowded with living people; he is in the land of the living, and not the land of the dead. Furthermore, although he has discarded his carnal body, his faculties remain intact. He is still able *to think, to see, to hear, to touch, to feel, to remember, exactly as he had done on the earth plane*. Immediately a doubt flashes through his mind: IS HE REALLY DEAD?

But although the spirit guides are most indulgent and kind, although compassion and understanding are writ large on their countenances, although they explain that he is not “dead” at all in the accepted meaning of the term, but has only undergone a change of condition, has exchanged an old body for a new, an old life for a new and better one, he is too overwhelmed by sheer amazement to comprehend the half of what, with exemplary patience, they are trying to explain to him. And yet he has only to glance around him to be convinced of the truth of their words. The building in which he awakes seems to be a kind of hospital, or convalescent home, it is crowded with doctors, nurses, patients and their friends, but although everybody seem to be busy, there is no noise, no confusion, and the wheels of life seem to run with perfect smoothness.

A glance out of the window reveals still more evidence of life - abundant variety of life - but it all runs smoothly, and he is sufficiently a man of affairs to appreciate the fact that underlying this great manifestation of activity is a wonderful organisation. But his further attempts to fathom the mystery sends him into a stupor, from which his guides, after consultation, decide not to wake him, but to let him sleep on.

When, a few days later, he wakes again, he feels much fresher, with a strong desire for life animating every feature. He gets out of bed, and, to his great surprise, finds he can not only walk without difficulty, but with greater ease and facility than he formerly did, the motion seeming to be that of gliding through an atmosphere that makes way for his passage rather than obstructing him with its force. When he looks around him, and finds himself in a country remarkably like the earth plane, his first doubts are confirmed. His body, too, appears younger, fresher, and lighter than the old one, although in all other respects exactly alike. In spite of having passed through the ordeal called death, in spite of his earthly body having been consigned to the tomb, he finds himself still alive, in a new country, with body renewed, and senses more alert than they had ever been before. What is he to make of it all?

There is a hill in the distance, dominating a glorious valley - how it recalls memories of those he had climbed in youth - he determines to climb it, and *no sooner has the thought flashed through his brain than he has arrived at its summit*. There must be something wrong here, he says to himself; by what unearthly means did I get here? He is not a whit tired, he applies his hand to his forehead, *but there is not a trace of perspiration*. His body is as cool and fresh as if he had never moved from his starting point on the plain, several miles away.

His memory reverts to his home on the earth plane, *and in a flash he is there*. Actually there, in his new body, which could fly through the air, which needs no nourishment, and never seems to get tired. He sees his loved ones mourning his death, he looks in on his friends, who do not seem so utterly inconsolable after all; he goes to his office and finds his colleagues carrying on just as before; he hears his name mentioned, not always with deep respect and regard paid to it when he was alive, it is true, and then all of a sudden he thoughts switch back to the new country

from which he has just come, and he is there in the twinkling of an eye.

“Pretty quick travelling that,” he says to himself, but he is soon destined to experience a more striking example. His thoughts recur to London, and in a flash he is in the midst of the dense traffic of the Strand; Switzerland, and he is looking at the blue waters of Lake Luzerne and climbing up the terrible Jungfrau; another quick transition and he is back once more in the astral plane.

His memory, also, is remarkably fresh. In a short space of time he has traversed the whole of his former life, every vital scene, from birth to death (?) being reconstructed and presented to his mind. It is remarkably like watching a picture in a cinema, only the picture on the screen is his own life. It all comes back fresh to his mind, but somehow, his judgment, as he sits there watching it, seems to have undergone a change, and he regards it with vastly different feelings to those he used to experience in the old life.

The longer he sits in judgment on his old life, the more changed, the more severe, that judgment becomes. Never before has his past life presented itself in such gloomy colours; pride of race and social position, feverish pursuit of wealth and its ostentatious display, empty parade of intellectual endowments - the things he had prided himself on most - seemed of very little moment now. He can hardly realize the fact that at one time they had been his all in all. But whatever they had been in the past they had completely vanished and none of them are of the slightest use to him now.

He reflects with satisfaction that, although he has been several days in the new country, and has walked about a good deal, he has never once felt hungry. “Simplifies the position immensely,” he says to himself. “Since I haven’t any physical wants to supply, why worry about earning a living, and as regards the money I left in the bank there’s no need to regret its loss, since it isn’t of the slightest use to me now.”

He appears greatly comforted over the idea.

But there is one peculiar feature of all his wanderings on the earth plane. Outside the astral plane his new body seems to be invisible. Although he has been back amongst his old surroundings, and seen his old friends, nobody seemed to be aware of his presence. He could come and go at will amongst his loved ones at home, or his colleagues in the office, but nobody seems any the wiser. He has appeared at the breakfast table at home, he has even sat on the chair, which, out of custom, had been allotted to him, he has watched his wife and daughter and son during the whole course of the meal; he has even kissed them, has looked into their eyes, but without making any impression. It is true that once or twice his wife made a sudden start, as if recoiling from something, but she had soon recovered, and gone on with her meal as if nothing had happened.

All this strikes him as very strange and sad, and even tragic, but there are

compensations. Although he cannot make himself seen or heard by his friends on the earth plane, *he can read their innermost thoughts with utmost ease*. This strange new gift puzzles him exceedingly, it almost frightens him at first; he is utterly unable to account for it. There seems to him something uncanny in the ability to read another person's thoughts. On the earth plane they used to look askance at people who were able to do that, *they instantly put it down to the devil*. It occurs to him - how his views are already changing - that that has always been a trait of mankind. When they come across anything beyond their comprehension, it is invariably attributed to an evil origin. It seldom seems to strike man that the origin might quite as easily be a good, as an evil one. Super-natural or supernormal powers, in the view of earth children, invariably spring from an evil source.

He now discovers that in this new country *every thought formulated sets up a vibration in the atmosphere*, and he quickly learnt to read these vibrations. That is also the case as regards the earth plane, and this new faculty explains his ability to read the thoughts of his old friends as soon as they were formed. This new power gives him an immense advantage over them, almost compensating for his failure to make himself seen and heard - but it is destined, before many days are passed, to make a great change in his former opinions, now that he possesses the secret to people's thoughts. It also makes him a sadder, if a wiser man, for by means of this strange new power he finds himself, at last, face to face with the naked truth.

When the spirit guides told him, on his arrival, *that the astral plane was a world of thought*; he had utterly failed to comprehend their meaning, but it is gradually being made clear to him. Not once since he has reached the astral plane has he heard a human voice. Conversation and discussion are carried on silently, by the simple process of reading thought vibrations, but although he is already aware that thought, whether originating on the earth or the astral plane, instantly sets up vibrations in the atmosphere, he has failed to connect this fact with the one he is now about to realise, that the human voice, for purposes of personal communication, is altogether banished from the new country. It is a soundless country. He examines his new body and realises more fully than ever that it is of very airy fabric indeed; it is composed of the ether or atmosphere, of a much finer tissue than that found on the earth plane. He has no eyes or ears or hands or tongue or throat in the former sense, and without the vocal organs one cannot very well speak. The new state has its limitations, but balanced against the loss of speech and visibility are the wonderful new gifts with which he is now endowed. He has been groping his way, like a man in the dark - to a highly important truth - *in the new country matter is altogether subordinate to spirit*. He has but to will a thing and it is done. All his new gifts bear testimony to that fact; his body is made of an airy fabric but it can travel ever so much faster than the old one made of flesh; he cannot speak - having no vocal organs - but he can make himself understood, and can understand others - much better without them. He has no body to speak of, but senses are much more alert.

Summing up the situation, he now recognises the remarkable truth - *he is not dead but a spirit*. He was so overpowered with the thought that for a long time he was still, trying to realise this new and extraordinary fact. A spirit lives for ever, a spirit is indestructible, he now survives as a spirit; he part and parcel of immortality. The incubus of time, that has so often dogged his footsteps in the old world, has been cast from his path for ever.

Since communication is by thought, and thought alone, there is no need for any language in the new country. The universal language is no language at all, in the earthly sense, it is a thought language. Here is one tremendous problem solved already, he thought to himself. Down on the earth plane the greatest barrier to free and unfettered human communion was the vexed language question. The vast majority of dwellers on the earth plane couldn't communicate with each other for this very reason. Not that there were no other barriers, equally as effective as language - country, race, creed, nationality - so that between them, the largest sections of the human race were kept apart from each other. But in the new country the language question is solved by the very simple expedient of abolishing it altogether. It follows that a large percentage of human passions and prejudices have been quietly disposed of at the same time. He almost laughs at the simplicity of it all; why hadn't they thought of something like that on the earth plane, where every country made a fetish of its own language, and it in the name of progress (?) tried to ram it down everybody else's throat. He reflects with pride, however, - *for he still human* - that the language he had spoken while on the earth plane, had been more successful than any other in finding acceptance as a substitute for international communication.

Earth teachings had led him to expect an extraordinary transformation at some future and distant period following death - people glibly called it resurrection. When Gabriel's trumpet had at last been sounded, and the remnants of his bones had been gathered together in the musty tomb - that, in itself, no mean miracle - he would be suddenly transformed into a saint, and would sit with the elect in heaven, twanging harps and singing hymns for all time. That had proved a very comforting thought, until he begins to dissect it in the light of the new knowledge. Now, inexpressible boredom is a mild way of describing an eternity spent in such a manner.

What a pity that a little common sense and practical knowledge had not been devoted to this vexed question of human survival. If human survival were a fact, and it was blindly proclaimed as such from every Christian pulpit in the land - it stood to reason that human beings must find some other means of spending their time. Why, these methods could not compare with those used on the earth for killing time. Literature, art, science, philosophy, each was dignified, each was intellectual, each was noble, but none of these were thought worthy to be introduced into a paradise promised all true believers - the hymn and the harp had vanquished the noblest achievements of the human race.

He thanks God - not on his knees, as formerly, but standing upright, as became a son towards his Father - that the new country had been dedicated to no such folly. Here the arts and sciences are received with open arms, as are all other means of intellectual expression, no matter what their origin. He could not think of a single art, craft, or science that is not represented in the new land. Hymn-singing - in itself a noble form of expressing devotion to the Creator - is duly appreciated, but secular music is appreciated none the less. There is none of that narrow distinction between secular and religious matters that was such an odious feature of the old country, where everything that savoured of lip service to God was extolled, while secular music, from which that feature was absent, was altogether banned. Music, like everything else, is judged and welcomed on its own merits, even as human beings are - there is hope and solace in the thought.

It is astonishing to what an extent the realization of the fact that he is a spirit helps the progress of the newly liberated soul. From that moment his whole outlook on life alters; he never hesitates, never once looks back; his progress is sure and certain. He is able, in an amazingly short period of time, to realize the nature of the new country, and to adapt himself to its new conditions. Now, when he meets his fellow men, he does not attempt to speak to them, as he formerly did and failed, he simply exchanges thoughts with them; after a little while it becomes quite natural and easy. But he very soon realises that the new gift is a two edged sword. Since people can read each other's thoughts it is useless to attempt to deceive them. True to earth habits, he had at first tried to do so, not wilfully, or with malice aforethought, but from a love of politeness, a disinclination to offend people's susceptibilities. The result was a ghastly failure, he was quickly caught in his own snare, and discomfiture, shame and sorrow, which appreciably retarded his progress, resulted. It is impossible to progress in the new world by means of deceit and imposture, as was perpetually done on the earth plane. Deceit is quickly detected at its birth and immediately exposed, and in view of such a damning fact only a fool will persist in the attempt. The new world is a world of thought in which only moral values count in the race for progress; he has already received undisputed evidence of the fact in the set-backs which inevitably followed all attempts at lying and deceit.

It all seems so stupid to him now, in the light of the new knowledge, whereas, formerly, he had been inclined to consider it "smart." As part of his new outlook he begins to regard human frailties not so much as heinous sins, but as errors due to lack of accurate knowledge, and not to an inherited tendency to evil. He begins to see things in a new light, a purer light, the light of knowledge. He realises for the first time the truth of the poet's saying that "to know all is to forgive all." Man is not the creature of evil that the theologians and priests and preachers make him out to be; he is the creature of evil circumstances, as much sinned against as sinning. Man did but do according to his lights, that is, his knowledge, and he was not to be condemned merely because that knowledge was faulty. He was not responsible for its inaccurate condition, he had been unconditionally forced to accept it; he couldn't

help himself; he had not the means, even if he had the desire, of finding out whether it was true or false. His life was cast in a narrow groove circumscribed by tradition and custom, on all sides were barriers erected by those two powerful agencies, and it took a braver and a greater spirit than his to break them down. Only one man in a million was qualified for such a task.

He realised, in sorrow, the tragedy of man's life on the earth plane. His entrance into it, as a poor innocent babe with a millstone in the shape of "original sin" tied round his puny neck - was in itself a tragedy. He was a sinful creature from the outset - that damning handicap was drummed into his ears as soon as he was old enough to comprehend the meaning of words. It was distinctly cheerful - from his present detached position he could almost discern a gleam of humour in it - to be branded as a criminal from the first day of his birth. He arrived in a world of sin already branded with a load of it. Because Adam and Eve had sinned he must be saddled with it, in addition to bearing the burden of his own misdeeds. And he must not even cavil - that smelt of rank heresy - and there were short shrifts for heretics in the old days.

Viewed from his new standpoint, in the light of his changed outlook and new knowledge, the thing was monstrous. It was unfair, it was unjust; it was utterly illogical. No system of ethics which had the faintest sense of justice to recommend it could possibly justify such treatment. To be brought into the world without being in any way consulted was bad enough, but to be thrust into it with a halter round your neck was worse. And the halter was worn, not in expiation of your own particular misdeeds, but those of other persons, far back in the dawn of the world. But to be told, in the face of this double injustice, that all this was the work of a God of Love, was the crowning height of irony. And this was the treatment meted out by a God of love to the one being in the universe whom he regarded as his noblest creation, and created in His own image. An insult to God and an injustice to man, such were the terms in which our new friend summed it up.

CHAPTER IV
THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO WORLDS
PART I. - OUR INFLUENCE UPON YOU

Forsaking, for awhile, the fortunes of our friend whose experiences we have been describing, we will endeavour to touch upon a larger subject of more general interest perhaps, but one on which little illumination has been thrown in the past, at least from our side of the tomb. We refer to the relationship existing between the astral and the earth planes, or, in popular language, between the inhabitants of "heaven" and those of earth. Only premising, at the outset, that there are few phases of the vexed question as to the continuity of life with regard to which so much misconception exists.

It is the fashion, and we presume, the belief of earth children, to assert that no such relationship exists; or that, if it does exist, it is of a very shadowy and nebulous kind. So abstract and remote in its application and consequences as to be "outside the range of practical politics." Having dismissed it as such most people, until within recent years, have been content to leave it at that. But the rising tide of Spiritualism has brought it to the front with a bound, and it is no longer possible for sane, thoughtful people to dismiss it as a chimera or a dream.

Such relationship exists, and when earth children have fully realised its character and extent, they will probably be amazed at both. For the relationship between the two spheres is not only close, intimate and personal, but they touch each other and interact at all vital points, at every stage of life on the earth plane. From birth till the dissolution of life man unconsciously comes under its influence; were he taxed with the fact he would deny it and attribute such indulgence to any cause but the right one. From the nature of his spiritual training he is hostile to the thought of any such influence; and again, still true to his training, attributes to all such influence an evil, rather than a good, source.

It is time that the truth should be told. At every stage in his career, man, whether he is aware of it or not, *whether he wills it or not*, is subject to strong influences from the astral plane. *His every step on earth is watched over by kind friends in the spirit plane.* There is as much interest taken in the humblest amongst you as in your most distinguished (?) personages. No matter how insignificant by birth, position, and attainments he may be, his career is watched with absorbing interest on the astral plane. He may be neglected, slighted, humiliated, and insulted every day of his life, it makes not the slightest difference on this side. So long as you have breath you have hosts of loving friends around you, endeavoring, often vainly, to help you on your way. No sickness or misfortune befalls you but that every attempt is made to mitigate its effect, in sunshine no less than in shadow we are with you, surrounding you with our good influence, endeavouring in every way to help you onward. It may seem a tremendous statement, but it is no less true, that no living being on the earth

plane is watched over and tended from the spirit plane, and when you realise the vast millions that inhabit the earth at the present moment you will realise its enormity.

The population of the earth may be great, but that of the astral plane is infinitely greater. The inhabitants of unnumbered ages are foregathered in the astral plane, hence, when you come to a mere comparison of numbers it will be seen that yours are, comparatively speaking, insignificant. Men who walked the earth thousands of years ago are still to be met with on the first sphere of the astral plane for the reason that they are still what may be roughly called "earth-bound," and consequently unable to pass beyond its confines. To quote one example, *most of the Romans of Caesar's time can still be met with in the first sphere of the astral plane in the year of grace 1927.*

We have selected the Romans as the most striking example of the failure to progress, for the reason that this most wonderful race has always appealed to the thinkers on earth. They did "great" things in their day, as things are considered on your side ; they conquered the world, or as much of it as was known at the time; they were the most intelligent and energetic race of men that had lived up to that time. But for them and their fellows - the Greeks - the torch of learning would probably have been extinguished on the earth plane thousands of years ago. The Romans had all that the earth could offer, and they, doubtless, not entirely without reason, thought themselves superior to the rest of mankind, yet for all that they are the most backward people on the astral plane to-day. The reason is plain, they had such a good time on the earth that they have not been able to dissociate themselves from its influences from that day to this. They are earthbound, they are still in the same condition as two thousand years ago, and until they will attempt to shake off the domination of earthly influences they will so remain for perhaps thousands of years again.

The question already forming in your mind, - remember you who write this, that we can easily read your thoughts - is, how and when this influence is manifested? The answer is this: much in the same manner as we are able to read your thoughts without your being in the least aware of it, we are also able, by means of mental concentration (still without your being aware of the process) to impress our thoughts on your brain. There is no necessity for you to be entranced, we can do it while you are in a normal state. The principal hindrance is a physical one, when the person whose brain we propose to impress is not in a sound physical and nervous condition, then the process becomes involved, there is a danger that the thoughts may become mixed, or weak, as in the case of a wireless apparatus when the batteries have run down, or where atmospheric interferences.

If another example were required no better one could be offered than the manner in which this book is being written. By previous arrangement with our friend who writes this down - made through a medium beforehand - our friend sits down at his

desk at home at a certain hour on a certain evening, each week. Some time before the hour approaches the band of controls, who are in charge of this highly interesting experiment, meet together to discuss the subject matter to be transmitted. Having decided upon that the whole band, together with numerous helpers from other bands, enter into intense and sustained mental concentration upon our friend's brain. In effect, although his physical body is in no manner affected, we control his brain for the time being, and by this means are able to impress our thoughts upon him. After an invocation to Almighty God on our friend's part, into which we on our side heartily enter, he sits down at his desk as usual at 8.15 p. m. on Sunday or Friday - the nights usually chosen for the work. He doubtless has given the task as much attention as his heavy daily labours will allow, but it frequently happens that after an exhausting day at the office he does not feel nearly as fit - mentally or bodily - as he should like to be. In the latter case we assist him as much as possible before hand by magnetising him without the aid of a medium. This may seem as extraordinary to you as the fact that we are able to transmit our thoughts to him, but it is equally true. We prepare our friend, who is far from strong physically, for the evening's task. The result is that after a strenuous, worrying day at the office, he sits down to his task fit both physically and mentally. He is, practically, rejuvenated.

Well, then, the hour approaches, and finds him at his desk, without a single thought of his own on the subject. He takes pencil in hand, sits with his left hand to this temple - just as he is doing it this moment - 9.20 p.m. - and waits for the thoughts to come along. He seldom waits long - our friends get quickly to work, and, almost before he knows what he is doing, his pencil is busy at work, setting down the thoughts transmitted by us. This may go on for an hour - an hour and a half, even two hours - at the end of which time he finds he has neatly written down from five to seven pages of manuscript, and not until it is over, and he has ceased writing, is he aware, through reading his own manuscript, what exactly he has written down. We emphasise the words "neatly written" for the reason that our friend suffers from writer's cramp. * - and is often unable to handle a pen, much less write distinctly. So the process of magnetising our friend has to include special treatment for writer's cramp to enable this task to be satisfactorily done. Although he is much addicted to literary work, for which he has a special bent - hence our utilizing his talents in this manner - he frequently finds himself too exhausted in the evening to write more than a page or two, but now, thanks to our efforts, he is able, with comparative ease, to turn out from five to seven large pages in the course of an hour and a half. Allowing one hundred and eighty words to a page, he will have turned out at least a thousand words in the course of a little over an hour - not a bad evening's work as things go on your plane.

* *This is perfectly true. I have suffered from writer's cramp nearly all my life. N.O.D.

In the course of this silent séance, or discussion, we communicate with each other

by means of thought language entirely. He frequently asks questions - we encourage him to do so - and we impress the answer on his brain. By this means we are able to get going again after a pause has occurred. There may be something our friend does not agree with, or which he thinks he hasn't correctly interpreted. He then signals his thoughts to us, we answer him in the manner shown, and the work starts going again.

Through ignorance of the tremendous part played by us in your daily lives - being constantly with you and impressing our thoughts upon you, - mankind gets all the credit for much of the work done by us. Not that we are at all anxious to reap the glory of it - we can dispense with all such tinsel triumphs - but we are anxious that you should realise what we are doing. Whenever any of you on the earth plane do a brilliant thing you are naturally glad, pleased with yourself, proud of your triumph. You naturally think that you have done the whole thing yourself - unaided. You never give a thought to us; probably you do not know that but for the silent work we are doing help you, you would never have been able to do it. The brilliant thoughts which solve your problems, and enable you to, achieve a great "personal" triumph, are not your thoughts at all. They are our thoughts, the thoughts of your friends and loved ones on the astral plane, silently transmitted to you in the manner described.

We impress those thoughts on your brain without your being aware of it; you immediately, and naturally, assume them to be your own, and appropriate them as such. You achieve a personal triumph, you rise in the estimation of the world, your name becomes famous for some great work done, while all the time it is due to the silent, insistent, unselfish work of your friends on the astral plane.

We, in turn, are equally anxious not to take credit for what we haven't done. When we say they are our thoughts we are not strictly correct. And the explanation shows how correlated everything is in this seemingly mixed and complex world. We transmit to you in turn thoughts transmitted to us by higher intelligences than our own, who similarly may have had them passed on to them from a higher source still. So that you see that the information passed on to you from the astral plane may have had a very much higher, spiritual and intellectual, origin than our sphere. We on the astral plane - being the next sphere to yours - are far from perfect, far from being omniscient. But we are in touch with higher influences all the time, and the knowledge we lack we can always obtain. It is ever at command. Those in authority above us are as anxious that we should see the light, as we are to pass it on to you. The same sublime intention to help and uplift runs from end to end of the vast system controlled, at its highest, at its ultimate source of knowledge, light and power, by GOD HIMSELF, GOD the Father, Who loves every one of his vast creation, and only desires to see them happy and blest.

Our friend is showing slight signs of fatigue, and we must draw to a close. But we find he has written more pages tonight than at any previous attempt - eight in all - and it has gone through spontaneously, almost without effort. The better the day the

better the dead, they still say on your earth, and when that day happens to be a Sunday, when our friend is mentally and physically more alert, there is some truth in the saying as applied to this attempt. We leave it with you as proof of the statements in this chapter - eight pages of manuscript in an hour and a half.

When you realise that we are constantly with you - unseen, that we can fly to any part of the earth plane with the speed of thought (you have but to think of us to summon us), that we can not only read your thoughts but also impress our thoughts upon your brain without your being aware of it, you will be able to form some idea of the tremendous power over the earth plane possessed by the dwellers in the astral plane; also the awful possibilities attending the exercise of that power for evil ends.

We cannot help thinking that there is considerable confusion of thought, or rather loose thinking, on the earth plane upon the question of inspiration. It is a very trite saying amongst you, whenever any work is exceptionally well done, that the executant must have been "inspired." That is, any work of art calling for exceptional skill is unanimously attributed to some power, or influence outside, or above, the capabilities of the earth plane. You speak of a poem, a picture, a speech or a song as having been inspired from some high source or other, but you cannot say how, or explain exactly what you mean by "inspiration." You are convinced of human limitations in respect of whence the extra power, or inspiration, which transforms it from an ordinary performance, i. e. *human* performance, into a work of genius, comes from. You have a vague idea that it comes from God, - you have in your mind the expression "Divine inspiration," but in what manner conveyed, you have not the slightest notion, since the artist or author of the work we are considering would not for a moment admit that his power came direct from God. The words "Divine inspiration" is a typical example of the loose thinking so much in vogue on the earth plane. You never stop to consider that Almighty God does not work direct in bestowing His favours. He may have done so in primitive times, when the world was young, and its dwellers inexperienced in the art of government; He may, or may not, have spoken direct to Moses, but even that is a debatable point. However, it does not matter so much, but the point we are stressing is that the Almighty Creator has too vast a responsibility resting on His shoulders to personally attend to the needs of the earth and the astral planes. You cannot hold the reins of government and see to all the details yourself, and that should be patent to all. Therefore, if the Almighty cannot personally attend to these matters He must depute them to someone else, and that is exactly what happens.

What you on the earth plane want to realise more thoroughly is that God is not merely a pious expression, a tradition, but a tremendous dynamic, living force. You have to cross over to the astral plane to realise a millionth part of His vast activities, vast power. You have evidence of it on the earth plane, but you get so accustomed to the sight of His handiwork that you fail to realize its greatness, but the evidence which you possess, great though it is, pales beside that which greets your eyes when

you enter the astral plane. You are nearer to the Godhead, you feel it in the atmosphere, in every breath of your body, and you feel that it is alive, and in operation. But you can no more gaze upon its radiance, even here, that you can stare at the physical sun on the earth plane.

We want this book to be a book for the plain man – “the man in the street,” as you call him. We want it to be practical in its nature, to set out the facts of life beyond the grave in plain, ordinary language that he can understand. We want to brush aside a deal of the false sentiment and mystery which has enshrouded religion so long. God never meant religion to be a mystery; it is man that has made it so. His handiwork - sun, moon, stars, earth, nature - is plain enough for all to understand - and religion was never meant to be any different. God’s purposes are plain from the beginning, it is man, by his interference, by his clumsiness, and not infrequently by his guile, that has obscured it so that the plain man cannot see or understand it, and it has had to be specially interpreted by interested parties - preacher or priest.

Another mistake you are fond of making is to attribute to the Creator the habit of performing miracles. Mankind has a soft spot for miracles ever since the days of Christ. Now it must be admitted that God made the laws of nature, and that a miracle breaks all those laws. Is it reasonable, or feasible, therefore, that God, the Creator, should encourage the breaking of His own laws? The necessity of a miracle, in our opinion, points to a weakness in the case. Where a case is strong enough to stand upon its own merits there is no need for a miracle to enforce its teaching. God’s laws are strong enough to withstand anything, there is no need for Him to perform miracles to enforce them, and believe us or believe us not, God never breaks his own laws; He never overrides the laws of nature; He never performs miracles. So that when it comes to the question of supplying a worthy painter or writer on the earth plane with the necessary touch of genius to uplift him - in virtue of his own merits only - above the crowd, God does not perform miracles to do so, but merely passes the matter on to His capable subordinates. It descends from sphere to sphere in like manner until it reaches the first sphere of the astral plane, where it is transmitted direct to the earth plane by means of the machinery there installed. And that machinery is no more or less than the dwellers on the astral plane, who once were human beings, and are more in touch with earth conditions than the inhabitants of the higher spheres.

We could make a greater claim did we but wish it. Half the thoughts you think in the course of your daily work have a similar origin, they are placed there by us.

Man speaks in glowing power called imagination, a product of the human brain, as he fondly thinks. You will be shocked to hear us say there is no such thing as imagination – at least, not in the sense in which you interpret it. The imagination which you boast about consists of the help afforded you by your friends on the astral plane. Were we to withdraw that help and influence you would be as one groping in the dark. Similarly, in regard to the subconscious self to which you attribute such

extraordinary happenings, forgetting that its powers entirely consist of thoughts stored there by us for your use - a reservoir of thought that can be drawn upon at will. Our influence, our power, is also responsible for another phenomenon which you have vainly tried to solve. We refer to the subject of dreams. You have offered some fantastic explanations of this phenomenon which in spite of its common occurrence is as much of a mystery as ever. But you have never associated it with a spiritual origin, never thought that we, of the astral plane, had anything to do with it. You never think that during sleep the spirit leaves the body as in the state called death, of which it is but a semblance, and that the adventures occurring in your sleep actually befall the spirit which is temporarily released. You dream of visiting the far ends of the earth, and when you wake up you smile; "only a dream," you say, little knowing that the dream was true, that the spirit leaves the body during sleep, and actually makes the journey to the far-off region, returning to the body at the time of awakening. You may have noticed some difference between some sleepers as to the method of awakening. Some instantly respond to the call, their spirit has not wandered very far, it is close, at hand, or maybe has not left the body at all. Others are awakened with difficulty, their spirit has wandered far, and when the summons to return comes they may be in the far ends of the earth. But until they do return there is no awakening for that body. How near a semblance sleep is to death will now be seen. If the spirit fails to return, or if in its haste to do so the silken cord which binds it to the body snaps, the sleeper awakens no more; this will account for many cases with which you are no doubt familiar, of death occurring during sleep.

It is difficult for you on the earth plane to realise how personal, how intimate, is the connection between the earth and the astral plane. We are ever with you, we see everything you do, hear everything you say, and what is more, read your inmost thoughts. We know you far better than you know yourselves; we enter into every detail of your everyday life, we impress our thoughts upon you at every stage, and all without your knowing it. We enter into your pursuits, your ambitions, your dreams, your hobbies, and, so far as they are honourable, we try to further your efforts in every way. We visit your homes, your offices, your workshops, your churches, your places of amusement, your sports and pastimes, your conferences, your debates, your Houses of Parliament, and everywhere you congregate. We accompany you in the train to your office, we go with you on your holidays, we are with you in your studies: not a day passes but some of us visit you in your homes. We know everything that happens on the earth plane, we read your books and newspapers every day, and could discuss with you any topic with you at any time of the day or night. Morning, noon, or night, we are ever at your beck and call.

"Why do we do this year in, year out, without recognition or reward?" asks our friend. To this there are several answers, each equally true. We do it, in the first place, because it is part of our day's work to help earth children. In a way we have no option in the matter, we are compelled to do it. The astral plane is a wonderful piece of organization, everything is done in perfect order, in obedience to well thought out

and clearly defined orders; there is no confusion. We are organised in bands, each with its own region of operation, its own tasks, and each perfectly organized under its own heads. A band may number anything from half a dozen to a dozen and a half, in addition to which various helpers will be assigned to it for special training, or as supernumeraries. And it is the bounden duty of this band to help earth children in every conceivable way left open to them. The manner of fulfilling our duties we have already tried to describe. But there is no shirking our duties in the astral plane; the orders come down from the MOST HIGH, transmitted from sphere to sphere until they reach us. We said, just now, that we are *compelled* to do this, but really when we consider the origin of the obligation thus laid upon us, there is no question of compulsion in the matter.

Such duties become sacred obligations, sacred privileges, and their performance is always a source of infinite satisfaction to us.

Another reason why we carry on lies in the fact that it is part of our spiritual training. It is an integral part of the law of progress from sphere to sphere, to help each other all we can. It is but carrying out the law of the Creator to love thy neighbour as thyself. It teaches us humility - a virtue that is esteemed highly on our side. To ensure our own spiritual progress we have to serve others, that is the law of the astral plane. And no half-hearted measures will suffice, no deception being possible. Each spirit must do his share loyally and wholeheartedly if he is to progress himself.

But apart from all selfish, or rather personal considerations, since spiritual progress cannot be defined as selfish, we help earth children from sheer love of them, sheer love of the work. Earth's tragedy is ever before our eyes, we can see into the homes and hearts of men. At Christmas time, while we would fain rejoice with you, our hearts are often too sad to rejoice. Not only do we see the abundance meted out to some, but we also see the homes where there is hardly enough food to feed the children. You in your comfortable home, enjoying the Christmas viands and the games, etc., may you perfectly happy, without a thought of the misery of others, simply because you cannot see it. Probably you are willing to help them when such suffering is brought to your notice, but what they eye does not see the heart does not grieve. But we cannot shut our eyes to the world's tragedy, and our hearts are sad in consequence.

We are in constant touch with all advances made in knowledge, all inventions made from time to time on your earth. Your motors, aeroplanes, gramophones and wireless are perfectly familiar to us, and we think such inventions do credit to man's inventiveness and brain power, but were we to tell you that the germ of every new idea which fructifies in man's hands originates on our side of life, we would not be believed. We are not sure that we would not be laughed at; it does not matter, the fact remains. How often a sudden idea strikes you for which you cannot account; "Why should I think of that?" you say to yourself, or, "I wonder what put that into

my head?" You are candid enough, on some occasions, to admit that some thoughts that arise in your mind are not prompted by the circumstances of the case. But although you never dream of associating that thought with the denizens of the astral plane, it is one of them who has put that idea in your head. The idea may be a simple one, but the source of its origin is the astral plane. And so through the cycle of men's lives, from the cradle to the grave, the same thing happens. Almost every thought he thinks, whether trivial or important, is impressed on his mind from above. And when we go to the trouble to place an insignificant thought in your mind, we are not likely to be lacking when the all-important new idea - marking the new invention - is required. In conclusion we repeat, almost everything of note ever achieved on the earth, and for which man gets the credit, originally starts in the astral plane. That is what we mean when we say that our influence is tremendous and far reaching, and not the humblest amongst earth's toiling millions but is included in its scope.

Were we to tell you of the extent to which - by God's command - we intercede in the affairs of men, you would be inclined to think we were romancing. We are somewhat in the position of those "special" newspaper correspondents who are liable to be called upon to undertake a journey to the far ends of the earth at almost a moment's notice. We have to hold ourselves in readiness for anything that may happen on the earth plane, and the constitution of our party is determined by the nature of the event. All movements on your side - whatever their nature - are closely watched and studied here, the most competent authorities, or experts, on the subject in hand, being called into consultation. Nothing that interests you but has a reflex interest here, and nothing is too trivial or frivolous - human moods take queer flights at times - to be noticed on our side.

We have an Intelligence Department beyond all earthly comparisons, and without going into the further issues involved in its extension to other worlds than yours, let it suffice that its operations cover the whole habitable globe. Not only the principal parts thereof, but every corner, however remote, however secluded or insignificant. We do not require either a map or chart to distinguish the various parts of the earth, since we are able to visualise, at will, any or every part of it, but for reference or consultative purposes we have in front of us maps, plans, charts, drawings and pictures, showing vividly every detail and feature of the earth plane and its many and varied inhabitants. We have what you call "contour" maps of the earth plane showing in actual reality the very features it is intended represent. For example, a mountain would appear there as an actual mountain with the peculiar verdure growing on such an elevated height, a valley would be made up of the actual natural constituents of a valley, rivers would flow, lush meadows appear in all their verdant greenery, trees, woods and forests appear in their natural elements, true in every detail. The constitution and colour of the soil is also faithfully shown. In fact, our "contour" maps or pictures are actual facsimiles of the original, and not merely lines drawn on parchment, as in the case of your earth maps. The people inhabiting each section of the earth plane are also shown, together with their special attainments

and accomplishments, on the map, which also records, in a similar lifelike manner, the special characteristics of any region, whether appertaining to the earth or its dwellers. Our maps are practically an epitome of the earth plane as it appears from day to day, and any changes occurring on your plane are duly reflected on them. We are thus able to observe, study, and diagnose any movement on your side.

As one example of our activities, we may mention the great industrial problems which to-day are shaking the foundations of your world. We have made these a special branch of study, and all the best brains on our side are engaged in its prosecution. For there is nothing that makes a wide appeal to us on this side than the grave problems that crop up on yours with regard to the vivid questions of capital and labour. The occurrence of a strike is the signal for great activity on our side. We instantly meet to consider the situation, study it, discuss it, fairly and impartially, *from every point of view*. It may surprise you to know that, not only are the “pro’s and con’s” of the workers considered, but also those of the other side. While our sympathy is, not unnaturally perhaps, with the “under-dog” for the reason that it is he that suffers most, we have also to consider the just rights and interests of the master. But it must not be supposed that we take sides in a dispute, whatever its causes. We have to repress our natural sympathies in the more sacred cause of justice - absolute impartiality and justice is our motto. Our aim is not to foster partisan ends, not to encourage the “victory” of this side or that, but so to bring our united influence to bear upon both parties as will enable the dispute to be solved on the most reasonable lines, and with the minimum of suffering for both sides. We do our utmost to dissipate the feeling of bitterness and prevent the prosecution of those extreme views which so tend to prolong such disputes. The deliberations are continually watched by our representatives on the spot, *and in the same room as the negotiators*. Our modus operandi is principally the concentration of thought - thought strengthened and directed by power received from the Godhead Himself - upon the negotiators. You materialists have no conception of the manner in which, unbeknown to you, we are able to impress our views upon men’s minds. You may, sometimes, have been struck at a change of front on the part of a negotiator who had hitherto proved unbending - it is as if a reasonable, nay, charitable thought had suddenly struck him, and as he proceeds to enunciate his changed view much surprise is felt although no one in that room has guessed the source of his inspiration. But that is exactly where our influence comes in, and it never fails to be thrown into the scales on the side of justice, moderation and right, not matter how unequal the contest or how hopeless the odds may be.

You have also doubtless noticed how frequently we have interceded on behalf of the unfortunate men called upon to suffer the extreme penalty of the law for taking life, and how, whenever such cases have occurred in your vicinity, we have stressed the point in favour of the condemned man. So solemnly do such occasions appeal to us on this side that special measures are taken whenever such a case arises, and no sooner is the dread sentence pronounced, or confirmed in the case of an appeal,

than a band of trained spirit helpers is immediately despatched to the prison to alleviate, as far as possible, the dreadful sufferings of the condemned man. Never for one moment is he left entirely to the tender mercy of that brother man who has failed him at the last, but a constant service of intercession on his behalf to the Supreme God is maintained right up to the last dread moment. Every possible effort is made to get the unhappy man into a proper frame of mind, to get him to relinquish his hold on the world that is fast slipping from him, and to cling to the surer hope of his God. That dreaded cell is made the scene of constant unremitting intercession on his behalf, and we question whether, in spite of the crime that has been committed, its atmosphere at the end of the ordeal is any less sacred than that of a church; such is the constant stream of prayer that has ascended to God from its grim and sordid interior. The horrors of that last three weeks in the seemingly lonely cell are mitigated as far as possible - the thoughts of the poor prisoner are not allowed to dwell overmuch upon the last dread ordeal; our main object is to divert his thoughts from the scaffold into a purer, loftier channel. As the sands in the hour glass run out our efforts are redoubled, and it is a source of the deepest satisfaction to us to know that in the majority of cases our efforts have succeeded, and the horrors of the gallows have been almost hidden from the prisoner's sight. And when the last dread morning comes we are not only there in force, but are frequently reinforced - some of the choicest spirits from amongst the angel ministers of God having come in response to our urgent request - and we gather around the unfortunate man on the dread march to the scaffold. Similar preparations to receive him are made on the other side; he realizes perhaps for the first time, that God's mercy is greater than man's, and every opportunity is given him to confess his sin and make a fresh start. Not even the murderer, however, is deprived of the right of Free Will, and no compulsion whatsoever is exercised in his case.

Not a single human being, from a King down to a dustman, is exempt from our influence. Kings and rulers of men are our special concern - we could tell you many a graceful, beautiful story about the inner lives of your present Royal Family did we care to do so - your legislators and their deliberations are no less the subject of our deepest concern. We do not do these things out of a sense of idle curiosity, or as a hobby, or as a means of killing time, but by the express command of the God Head, and with the sole object of introducing a leavening of the Divine Spirit into the bitter acerbities of human life.

We cannot close without expressing the horror and detestation of every one on our side at the survival in this enlightened age of a barbarous system of capital punishment. That a Christian country should so far forget its dignity as to descend to the methods of the murderer in dealing with those who have taken human life, is to us almost inconceivable. As to its efficacy as a preventative of crime we are entirely unconvinced, but from the higher standpoint of ethics, the so-called Christian country which practises such an abominable system stands self-condemned as a hypocrite and a snare.

CHAPTER V
THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO WORLDS
PART II - YOUR INFLUENCE UPON US

Whereas in our last chapter we endeavoured to show the considerable extent of the influence exercised by the astral plane upon the earth, we will now endeavour to prove that the influence of the earth dwellers upon our fortunes is also considerable. Where influence and power exist there should be a corresponding sense of responsibility, and while emphasising the extent of our good influence upon you and not ignoring the possibility of evil, we must also remind the dwellers of the earth plane that they also have a responsibility to consider in respect of the possible effect of their life and actions upon the denizens of the astral plane.

The relationship of the two spheres being so close and intimate, it follows that almost everything that is done on one sphere is reflected in the other. Arising out of the actions of their inhabitants, there is a constant and continual repercussion between the two spheres. We have already shown that the process of thinking on the earth plane is reflected in the astral plane by means of vibrations in the atmosphere, but you will hardly be inclined to believe that *every thought on earth is repeated on our side*; and that every such thought has a possibility for good or evil, according to its character. Also, that every thought that reaches the astral plane from the earth plane attracts to itself other thoughts of a similar character. If it is a good thought, other good thoughts will automatically join it upon arrival, and together they will ascend through the spheres upward, gathering force and gaining strength on the way, until they reach the HOLY OF HOLIES, , the citadel in which GOD is enthroned. There is no limit to the possibilities of good contained in a single good thought. Similarly, every evil thought attracts to itself evil thoughts, and together they range through the spheres, gathering strength as they proceed, and culminating in undreamt of evil - such is the power of a single evil thought. When you consider the vast population of the earth plane, and that most of them send out thoughts for the greater part of the day, you will faintly realize the enormous power and corresponding responsibility resting with the inhabitants of the earth plane in respect of those countless millions who have preceded them to the astral plane.

So great is this power and influence that we may almost claim that the inhabitants of the astral plane are at the mercy of their friends on the earth. So incessant is the torrent of thought that proceeds from the earth to the astral plane, that it is almost impossible for us to evade it. We cannot wholly escape its influence. Fortunately for us, the law of selectivity comes to our rescue. Immunity from this evil rests to a large extent with ourselves. Herein again the law of free-will is made manifest, and as like attracts like, so to escape the evil thoughts reaching us from the earth plane we have but to think good thoughts ourselves. If our thoughts good your evil thoughts will not reach us, and vice versa. We will not receive your evil thoughts because our minds are not attuned to receive them; and similarly, and unfortunately – free will

again – a beautiful thought from earth would not be able to reach a mind on the astral plane that is not similarly attuned. It is an exact analogy to the “tuning in” on a wireless set. Without the proper wave-length you cannot tune in a distant station, and so cannot receive its programme, but once you have inserted the proper coils in your wireless receiver you will immediately be attuned to that station and thus receive all its thoughts. But, since a beautiful earth thought cannot reach him for whom it is intended unless that being is properly attuned, i. e. also thinking beautiful thoughts, you may argue: What is the good of us sending out beautiful thoughts since they who are in need of them cannot receive them? There is something in the contention we admit, but if no evil thoughts were sent out from the earth plane the evil minded spirit on our side could not possibly evade the good ones which would be continually assailing him. He would have to succumb in the end, and become attuned in spite of himself.

You who read this must remember that to be on the astral plane is not of necessity to be “saved”, using that term in its widest – unsectarian - sense. It may surprise you greatly to know that very often we on this side are worse off, spiritually, than you are. We are floundering worse than you are, or worse than we ever did while on earth. To you this may seem strange, but it is true, miserably, sadly, lamentably true. There are millions over here who have not yet realized their true condition. Dazed and bewildered, they wander about like lost spirits. As we heard someone say, “the astral plane is so much like the earth plane, he at times does not know whether he is dead or alive.” Although the man who said it is a bit of a wag, there is a vast deal of truth in the saying. *There are millions here who hardly know whether they are dead or alive.* What they heard about the future life while on earth has proved so utterly wide of the truth that they don’t know what to do, where to turn. And they wander about with a look of despair on their faces, in a condition little likely to offer much resistance to the inevitable evil influence which comes along, and makes easy victims of them. One more soul in danger of losing its birthright, is it any wonder that with such pictures daily before our eyes we are apt to get saddened?

The responsibility for this state of affairs lies to a certain extent with you on the earth plane. You have not only failed to read your Scriptures aright, but you have persisted in your errors, and sent millions of souls into eternity little prepared for the new life. Had they been taught even the rudiments of knowledge concerning the actual conditions of life after death, how much pain and torture they would have been spared on passing over. Years of agony - a hell of doubt, remorse, regret – ceaseless and aimless wandering for years – as you count time – all this could have been avoided. But it is not our purpose to censure you - God forbid - we know your difficulties only too well - our sole object is to warn you, prepare you, so to guide your steps that when your turn comes to cross over you will be so fortified with knowledge that you will be able to find your feet at once, and become acclimatised to the new country, thus avoiding years of torture and misery.

We should like to make clear to you that you can do much to help these unfortunate beings. We remember a friend of the writer's,* who had passed over through his own act, breaking in on a séance that was in progress at the writer's house, and passing the message: "If I'd only known what I was doing I'd never have done it. Pray for me; think of me; it will help." The power of thought is strikingly illustrated in the case of these spirit derelicts, wandering about in the dark regions. So long as no one thinks of them, there is little chance for them to find their bearings. But a single thought may prove their salvation, it may stir upward longings; one good thought leads to another; there is nothing more efficacious than prayer in the case of these lost souls. The more good thoughts that are registered up here concerning these people the brighter their chance of salvation. No wonder that the writer's friend, writhing in the dark regions, cried out in his agony, "Pray for me, think of me." But there is a bright sequel to this story, we are pleased to relate. His appeal to the circle - most of whom - the medium excepted, - knew him in the flesh - did not fall on deaf ears. There were thoughts in plenty for him—prayers too – and months afterwards he again burst in on another circle at the writer's home, but this time with a joyous cry. The messages and the prayers had reached him in his loneliness in the dark regions of the astral plane, *and his face was now turned towards the light.*

* A gentleman, well known in Cardiff, who passed out by his own hand, but whose name, for obvious reasons, I have decided to suppress. - N. O. D.

We on this side are able to tell your spiritual condition at a glance. You have doubtless heard of the "Aura" which arises to meet us as soon as we get in contact with the children of the earth plane, but it is possible you may not be able to grasp its full meaning. An aura is the exhalation arising out of the various gases or chemicals which go to the making of your physical bodies, and it acts, in a manner, as a kind of spiritual barometer. Every one of you has an aura, and we can always tell your spiritual state by its condition. The aura is a true reflection of your thoughts, wishes, and deeds from hour to hour. Everything that you do is represented in its density and colour, the blacker your thoughts the darker your aura, and the brighter and more helpful your normal condition, the brighter will be your aura. Different moods have different colours to represent them, thus evil thoughts darken the aura, good thoughts give it a brighter colour, spirituality, sensuality, even the state of your intelligence, your mentality, are all represented. If you could only be enabled to see your own aura for yourself we have no doubt you would be profoundly impressed; you would scarcely be able to believe that the large proportion of black in the colour of your own was built up by your own evil thoughts. When mankind is in an evil mood you can faintly realize the prospect which meets a visitor from the astral plane. But without wishing to cast any reflection it is notoriously true that the general aspect of the aura arising from the earth plane is dark and forbidding, and creates a thick wall of mist between us, penetration of which is difficult. It creates a barrier between the two spheres which greatly increases the difficulty of our operations. The materialism which is so

rampant on the earth plane to-day is plainly reflected in the dark auras which raise a dense wall of fog between us. Remembering that the astral plane is a thought world where only moral values count, you will realize the extent of the barrier which has to be removed before we can get any of our influence felt. The aura is useful as a guide to the spiritual state of the millions living on the earth plane, but oh, we wish in our hearts that its colour was of a brighter hue.

Thought creates thought; like clings to like. Thought is imperishable, even as life is indestructible; once sent out you can never recall it; obedient to the changeless law of the universe it goes on its way through the various spheres fulfilling the law of its being. If it is a good thought there is no limit to the sphere of its influence, it may save a soul in pain, it may save a hundred souls from ruin, but the converse is equally true of an evil thought. There is not a different law for the good thought, it must abide by the same law as the evil thought; God is absolutely true to His laws, He never breaks them, never deviates from them a hairbreadth in order to save a human soul. His laws are unchangeable, unchanging, as HIS WILL, HIS Purpose, of which, indeed, HIS Laws are but the expression. And true to HIS Compact with man when HE granted him Free Will, the evil and the good have to abide by the same laws. God's Laws are automatic in their action, and absolutely without bias in their operation.

Nor does HE resort to miracles in order to impress the World of men; to do so were to break HIS own Laws, dislocate the complicated machinery which exists to carry out HIS purposes. Things which seem to the mind of man as "supernatural" are not so in actual fact, there is no such thing in God's universe as "supernatural," what appears so is simply an unusual application of an ordinary law; but there are such things as "super-normal," and if this were borne in mind, and "supernormal" read for "supernatural" in the many instances in which you come across it, much confusion of thought would be avoided, and the Problem of life after death rendered clearer to the ordinary intellect.

In some respects Thought is the most important thing in the whole universe; it lies at the root of the most heinous sins. Murder and all evil, all lust, all cruelty, all uncharitableness originated in thought. No man commits an evil without first thinking of it, and if evil thoughts could be cut out of man's life altogether the problem of his salvation would have been more than half solved. We want you to remember that every thought is recorded, that it takes up its permanent residence in your sub-conscious self, and that you can never eliminate it. In the astral plane it has more powerful influence than even on earth, here it is reflected in the ether, in the aura, and its influence for good or evil is more pronounced than on our earth. For the astral plane, although physically as real as the earth plane, is essentially a world of thought.

Nor can mankind, knowing the dictum of the Christ, who laid supreme emphasis on the value of pure thinking, be held guiltless of the evil created by thought. Possibly

mankind was not previously aware of its effect on the astral plane, but this ignorance will not wholly acquit them. The true test of character is thought, where they are pure, actions can look after themselves, but where they are not there is no true character. It is false, it does not ring true; it is as a house built on the sand. To one and all of you then, we say, with every fibre of our being, see that your thoughts are pure and true, see that you do not, by intention or neglect, imperil the progress of a single soul that has preceded you on the journey to the astral plane; and your pure mind will soon be reflected in the brighter colours of your aura. So will your influence increase for good even at this stage of your progress, and so will your reward be good, when your own time comes.

CHAPTER VI

THE RELIGION OF THE EARTH PLANE

Religion is defined in your earth books as “the recognition of supernatural power, and of the duty lying upon man to yield obedience to these, the belief in a supernatural embodiment of power, wisdom and goodness governing the universe, and holding moral relation with man; the performance of our duties of love and obedience towards God; piety, any system of faith and worship; sense of obligation or duty,” *

* Chambers' dictionary, 1898 edition. N. O. D.

It will be seen that there is nothing, even in your own text books of knowledge, contrary to the doctrines and claims of Spiritualism; the foregoing description is wide enough, broad enough, elastic enough to embrace anything we of the spirit world have taught you, but it is when we come to the question of interpretation that we must part company, if only for a little while.

Religion has been the most absorbing topic in the life of man ever since the beginning of the world; it is even so to-day, disguise it how you may. There is no subject more arresting, more thrilling, more upsetting than man's relations towards his Maker. It is probably the most contentious subject ever broached, the cause of more quarrels and bloodshed than any other. On this subject, of all others, man cannot remain cool and dispassionate, to his great loss and regret, as the history of the world will show. But this is a sin that God can more readily forgive than its counterpart – apathy. God can forgive an error that arises out of earnestness and zeal, even though that zeal be a mistaken one. God is more ready to forgive an earnest than an apathetic soul. HE, the great worker, has no love for idleness in His creation.

On no subject has mankind gone so far wrong as on the subject of religion. Accepting religion, for the nonce, as a description of man's duties towards his Maker, you will find that at almost every stage of his career, man has misinterpreted the laws of God, in other words, Religion. Much of this was wilfully done to further

his own interests and desires, much of it was due to his own ignorance, part of it to evil intention. God's meaning is plain for all to read it; it is man that has made a mystery of it - to his own undoing. He has always interposed his own ideas between God and His people, and while at the start there was not so much difference, as time passed, and the errors grew and hardened, the gulf between man and his Maker grew wider and wider still, until God had to take exceptional measures to correct His erring people. But it is such a deep rooted tendency in man to wander from the true path that time and time again, after having been brought back to the true road, he has gone off on his own way after a while.

Man has so long pinned his faith and built his religion upon the Bible that it is with considerable diffidence that we tackle this subject. But the truth must be told. The Bible, alas, is no safe guide for mankind; while parts of it were, no doubt, originally inspired, that which you have to-day, although purged by means of modern translations, of much of its inaccuracy, for the most part consists of the voice of man, and not the voice of God. Or, if you cannot accept this dictum, we will say that it is the voice of God heard through lips of man; the voice of God revised by the hand of man, and to such an extent an epitome of man's errors, that it cannot be accepted as inspired. Our criticism, so far, relates entirely to the Old Testament, we will deal with the New Testament at a later date. However much we may shock our readers, we repeat that the Old Testament, so far from being a revelation of God's will, is a grave hindrance to the spiritual development of the human race, and ought to be rejected as a teacher, and considered only as literature, poetry, history, and biography, and even in those fields of thought it is not to be accepted as a sure guide. There was some method in the madness of the Roman Catholic Church when it discouraged and forbade the indiscriminate reading of the Old Testament by the people.

We do not propose to weary you with a detailed criticism of the Old Testament we have as free access to its pages on this side as you on yours; we have discussed it in its present and most modern form probably as much you have; but after allowing for all that can be said of the Old Book, in the considered opinion of the Higher Intelligence of the spirit side of life, those who have access to Higher Sources of Inspiration and Knowledge, besides who Light all earthly knowledge pales, the reading of the Old Testament as a spiritual guide is not to be encouraged. It were far better for mankind if it placed is aside and forgot its teaching altogether; its theories of creation are altogether too misleading to be seriously entertained, while its teachings are equally misleading it talks too much about a God of Vengeance, a warlike God, and too little about a God of Love. Its heroes, for example, King David, are scarcely fit to be placed as an example before mankind, and, with a singular lack of modesty, and even decency, it records a number of incidents which are scarcely fit reading for the pure minded. And to claim for all this farrago of tradition, hearsay, ignorance, superstition and immorality, the inspiration of the Word of God, is not only rank blasphemy, but a sure detriment to the cause of spiritual progress. Even

allowing that a lot of its history were true, we do not agree that it was ever intended by God that the history of warring tribes of two thousand years ago should be utilized as spiritual food and example for the highly sensitive, cultured, civilized races of the twentieth century. Such reading is all very well in its place and age, as a record of fighting, or the history of a warring tribe or race, but what application it has, whether true or not, to the spiritual needs of the present day, we have never, since we have reached the Higher Knowledge, been able to determine. While on earth, in the flesh, we thought and believed as you do now, but having gained access to the Truth, which can only be done on this side, we cannot any longer lend any countenance to the belief that the Old Testament is an inspired Book and true spiritual guide, and we will never rest until we have rescued mankind from this delusion and snare.

There was a man who saw the naked truth a hundred and fifty years ago, and gave it out to the world, for which he was much persecuted. His name was Thomas Paine, his book was called "The Age of Reason," and that man, who had no faith in any of the churches, but simply in God and His works, went nearer the truth than any of the learned expositors and divines who have filled the world with treatises on the subject, - before or since. Thomas Paine guessed the truth of religion long before his time, and although he was not aware of it, his opinions, published in 1794, coincide with the opinions of Modern Spiritualism.

We do not mean to contend that the Old Testament is not to be read, but that it should be approached from a different standpoint and read with the greatest care. We see no great harm in its being read as history, so long as it is not accepted as a strictly accurate history. In some respects it is a valuable contribution to the history of the early stages of mankind, and even of religions, religious customs, and beliefs. But it is most valuable when read as literature, or better still, as poetry. Most particularly does this apply to the Psalms, which are really poetic in their conception, in their dress, in their language, and we are entirely in accord with those earth scholars who have published them as poetry, for their meaning is much more to be appreciated when read through that medium. What cannot be read as poetry pure and simple, or as history not altogether to be relied on, should, in our opinion, be read as literature, as prose, but as a spiritual guide and example to the twentieth century, - NO! Even on your earth plane there has arisen a strong feeling against its acceptance as inspired truth, and when we realize that the first five books of Genesis, all duly ascribed to Moses, could by no stretch of imagination have been written by that great man, but were written hundreds of years later, by a band of Jewish Priests in exile, and that similarly fatal objections can be made against a large number of the other books in the Old Testament, then it is clear to even the most orthodox Christian of to-day that it is no longer possible to accept it as an inspired Book. If the authenticity of its successor - the New Testament - is open to doubt, how much more so the Old Testament written in a still darker and more credulous age.

We are more at home in dealing with the New Testament, which is much more recent in date, and much less in volume. But even this Book, we observe, has not escaped the severe criticisms of earth scholars, who are hopelessly divided as to the origin and authenticity of the first four Gospels giving the Life of Christ. It is remarkable, look upon it from any standpoint you may, how the four Evangelists, - Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, - fail to agree as to the various incidents in the life of Christ, and we have the evidence of one of your modern Christian commentators, * who, writing upon St. Mark says "We once more have three records, and no two agree. Mark and Luke give *one* blind man, Mathew gives *two*; Mark and Matthew say that Christ healed as he was going out of Jericho, Luke as He was approaching it. Mark and Luke say that He healed with a word, but they do not quite agree as to the word, Matthew that he healed with a touch. These discrepancies are of no moment, except as part of the overwhelming evidence that the Bible does not supply us with infallible history. It is impossible to accept every statement in the Bible as historically accurate." We on this side are entirely in agreement with your earth critic, who has been wonderfully candid and fair. It is impossible to accept even the New Testament as historically accurate, and the fact that not a single one of the Gospels was written until nearly forty years after the death (?) of Christ, when they were written out mainly from memory and tradition, from different standpoints, and with different motives, should make even the most zealous Christian pause before accepting even the New Testament as wholly inspired.

* "St. Mark, - Cambridge Bible Series, edited by Rev. A. Plummer, M.A., D. D.

But even granting that a good portion of the New Testament is historically accurate, we want to point out that mankind has failed to read it aright. They have again interposed their own bigotry, their narrow minds, their ignorance and intolerance, in the message of God to his people. They have woefully misinterpreted the words of the Christ, and have utterly failed to understand His real meaning. They have wrapped in mystery of their own invention what was intended to be a simple, straightforward, businesslike statement of God's relations towards His people, and no less when Christ was the medium through which HE spoke. For reasons of its own - worldly in the main - the Church has appropriated the Words of God to its own use, and taken under its own charge the salvation of mankind. In modern commercial language, it has created a "corner" in salvation.

The first of the errors to which we would draw your attention is the doctrine of original sin - a glaring example of what we mean in the foregoing statements. For reasons which we cannot conceive, this damning heresy has been hurled at poor mankind from the dawn of history. Because Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden *, every earth child subsequently born into the world is made to pay the penalty. He is to be handicapped at the outset by being saddled with a sin of which he was entirely innocent, and which no Court of Justice, be it human or Divine, could possibly charge him with. And this in spite of the oft repeated statement,

which we are all supposed to believe, that the Author of our being is a God of love,

- * Father Patrick interrupted the reading of the MSS. at this stage with a message which he stated he had that moment received from a Higher Sphere. "The only sin they committed in the Garden was but the natural course of the propagation of the species, and if God, having allowed the Tree of Knowledge of both good and evil to be placed in the Garden, one wonders why and how man was to partake of the fruit of the one without at the same time partaking of some of the fruit of the other. The fruit of both was contained on one Tree and it is quite possible that man may have partaken of the fruit of evil entirely through ignorance."

Nothing could be further from the Divine intention than this. So far from saddling man with original sin the Creator is loath to charge him with even his own. The great heart of the Father so beats with love for the meanest of His creatures that HE were far more likely to remit him his own sins than to hold him liable for the sins of Adam and Eve. (We are not even sure that Adam and Eve did sin, even more than our fellow beings to-day). Every such statement about original sin is an insult and a grave offence against the great God of Mercy who rules on His Throne, and the teaching of such a wicked doctrine ought to be swept out of every religion, every church, every land, that dares to label itself Christian.

Another great delusion concerns the birth of the Christ. We on this side are not so greatly concerned about the Virginity of Mary, we consider this as one of the little things of no account, but to you who put it forth as an established article of the Christian Creed, we would urge the fact that such a birth were contrary to the laws of Nature which God himself has created. And as God does not deal in miracles - to perform which would mean the breaking of His own laws, - we attach no credence whatsoever to it. Neither do we believe the story about Mary being espoused by the Holy Ghost, such a thing being also unnatural. All these stories about the Virgin birth and the espousal by the Holy Ghost are of man's creation. You will nowhere find it stated by God that such was the case, and this is one of the mysteries which man has created about the Christ. Christ was born of woman, even as you and I, there was nothing extraordinary about this usual functioning of Nature; and had God designed what men believed He did, then He would have found other means of sending Christ into the world.

The next point, around which controversy still rages on your earth plane, concerns the Divinity of Christ. Man is very anxious that Christ should have a great pedigree. A virgin is espoused by the Holy Ghost, and even after allowing that the virgin was a woman - a daughter of Earth - they still claim that her Son was the Son of God. Mankind in their mistaken zeal, claim two totally illogical and irreconcilable attributes concerning the birth of Christ. They claim that he was *human and Divine*, the Son of Man and the Son of God. How can that be? How can a man be both? It is unnatural - such a thing cannot be. If He was the Son of God in the sense that man claims Him to be, then it is not necessary that He should have been born of woman. God could have sent Him into the world in a train of glory more dazzling a thousandfold than the sun at noonday. He would not, need not, have resorted to

such methods to raise a Son unto Himself, - when with a wave of the hand, with a single thought, He could have given effect to His wish.

Those who hold this theory of the Divinity of Christ forget one supremely important point. Not even the most zealous supporters of this view will contest the universal claim that all mankind enjoys the same privilege, - kinship with the Father. In our inmost hearts we all cherish the same belief; we are sons and daughters of God. Did not Christ Himself advance this claim on behalf of the whole human race? "I go to my Father, and *your* Father; my God and your God." He never made the same claim for Himself that mankind has made for Him. He never once claimed that He was the *only* Son of God. That is man's doing. But have you who hold this view, followed it to its logical conclusion? If Christ is the only begotten Son of God, then that rules out the whole human family from kinship with God. It cancels the last lingering hope in man's breast that part of him is also divine in its source. If Christ is the only begotten Son of God it is impossible for mankind to claim the same relationship with the Father. It cancels, at a blow, the aspirations of the whole human race, - surely not a light thing, not a thing to be expected from a loving and forgiving Father? For a God of Love to disinherit the whole human family is unthinkable.

Another point that must not be forgotten is that Christ never encouraged this idea of His Divinity. Throughout the whole of the New Testament He refers to Himself as the SON OF MAN. Since nothing He said was without design, the outcome of consultation with His Father in Heaven, since He did nothing haphazard, or on the spur of the moment, the significance of this designation on His part is very great He never repudiate His human relationships, neither His father nor His mother, brothers or sisters, save on one memorial occasion when, for the sake of pointing a moral He asked His Mother, "Woman, who art thou?" At all other times He recognised them as blood relations, and we have reason to think, unfortunately, that some of those relations were very human indeed. But were He the Son of God in the special sense in which it is now claimed by the Christian Churches, He could not, consistently, have countenanced the claims of earthly parentage. He would have been, in duty bound, compelled to disown them. It would, no doubt, have strengthened His position had He been able to do so the world would have been more ready to receive His Gospel, and to believe in Him as the true Son of God. But He couldn't have been loyal to the Truth to have done so, and He never attempted to conceal His earthly origin. This is one reason why we on this side, with ready access to the Higher Knowledge to be found only beyond the Tomb, while differing profoundly from the earthborn belief in His Divinity, cherish for him a veneration and a love greater than that for any man who has trodden the earth plane. It surely must have been a temptation to Him to accept the title which His followers wanted to confer upon Him - Son of God - and it is the supreme test of His character that He successfully withstood it, and never once renounced His earthly connections, poor and insignificant as they were, and, as such, stumbling blocks in His path towards His great goal.

Christ is universally accepted by you on the earth plane as the great example, but have you ever considered the damage which acceptance of the Divinity theory inflicts upon the value of that example? We say it with all due reverence, if Christ is of Divine origin, then it is hardly fair to poor suffering mankind to expect it to follow such an exalted example. If of Divine origin, He is no example at all. The temptations which so weigh down mankind would pass Him by like the idle wind. He would be altogether immune from the lure of the World, the Flesh and the Devil, and again, with all reverence we say it, it is no credit to anyone to overcome a temptation which in no way appeals to him leaves him entirely unaffected. If He were of Divine origin, the record of his pilgrimage on earth would have read far differently. It would have been one triumphant progress - from first to last. There would have been no confession, in fact, no suggestion of human weakness about it, no wrestling with the flesh and the devil, no feelings of despondency and weariness at the end of a trying ordeal, no despair, no agony, no blood, no sweat, no turning aside to seek strength and guidance from His Father, which was such a feature of His life. Oh no, the record would have read far different - Satan would have been promptly dethroned, and the Powers and Principalities of darkness swiftly put to flight. It would have been the career of a Conqueror coming in all His Majesty and all His Glory, and EVIL would promptly hide its face. But the ideas of our Heavenly Father were so vastly different from this scheme of conquest by Might and Majesty that we have a very different story to tell. And we are not sure that any of you not any of us, would prefer the former method to the meek and lowly plan which was actually followed. In this matter, as in all others, we have to acknowledge that His Plan, His Will, was best, and that a better, nobler, lowlier example, selected from the lowliest of the lowly, would be more acceptable to the human race.

To us on the spirit side of life, there is a tragic aspect to this oft discussed question of the Divinity of Christ, and that is, its effect upon that great soul Himself, and the terribly false position it has placed Him in. Continual persistence in this error on the part of earth children has involved the great Nazarene in an endless crucifixion. That He was a Man of Sorrows whilst on the earth plane is well known to every one of you - it has been fittingly celebrated in song and story - but that, owing to this cruel error, He has become a Man of Sorrows on this side also, has perhaps never been realised by you. But such, alas, is the case. We who live on the spirit side, and have not only come under the influence radiating from His presence, but have actually come in contact with Himself, can aver that to be the solemn truth. It has not only placed Him in a false position as regards the inhabitants of both spheres, but it has also involved Him in a position of singular delicacy and difficulty with the Most Supreme God Himself. In your mistaken zeal on this subject you have never stopped to consider the possible result of your misguided efforts upon the Christ Himself; whether if it should happen to turn out not to be true, what would then be His position? You have advanced His claims almost beyond the realm of the Godhead Himself, - a large section of your Churches has well nigh forgotten the

Father in the Son - and another great section of Christian believers has reached the extreme limit in the excessive adoration of Mary, His Mother. From our perfectly serene and detached standpoint on this thorny subject - we hold no brief for either side, save Truth alone - we are able to consider it dispassionately in all its bearings, and in all its implications, and we have no hesitation in saying that if it is wrong to place the Mother on such a lofty pedestal, it is equally wrong to uplift the Son to such a dizzy height as the Godhead. If you want our candid and considered opinion on the matter, we are entirely averse to elevating either above the natural stations allotted to them by the Most High God. The most that can be said for the worship of Mary is that in Her Person, the noblest type of Womanhood, the Mother, has been specially honoured, and as such the practice - within reasonable limits - cannot have any but a good effect. Stripped of all the trappings with which tradition, superstition, and the Church have endowed her, Mary, as the sweet, simple, pure, lowly mother of the greatest man that trod the earth plane, is a worthy figure upon which to bestow our esteem and veneration. In honouring Her, mankind is but paying due tribute to the great role played by the mother in the history of the world. Specially selected by God for the purpose of preserving the human species, it is well to remember, sometimes, that but for the mother there would be no human race in existence.

To have this unsought greatness thrust upon Him every day of His life, to have attributed to Him powers off which he is not possessed, to invest Him with functions which He has no right to assume, to have millions of supplications addressed to him daily which He has not the right to receive, to be called upon, almost hourly, to usurp the functions of the Godhead, to be implored and beseeched for salvation, every minute of the living day, by a world in error and in agony, such is the ordeal which has perpetuated for the Christ the role of the Man of Sorrows. Oh you professing Christians, you who have taken his name, you who profess to love Him, stay and consider for one moment, the position in which you are continually placing your would-be Redeemer. Consider well before you again ask Him to do a thing which is contrary to His nature, contrary to His right, contrary to the law of the God Head, to perform. Petition Him no more to take the sins of the World upon Himself, look no more to Him for your own salvation, but set out in earnest along the path which God, and no less the Christ, has shown you, to achieve it for yourself. Remember, if only in pity, that though He was never destined by God to carry the sins of the world upon His shoulders, you are, by your persistence in this cruel error, continually placing that burden upon Him, and so making Him the Man of Sorrows for all eternity. Do not think for one moment that His great Heart does not bleed for the sorrows of the Earth plane, and that He would not gladly bear the burden you seek to impose upon Him, would not gladly sacrifice Himself for your sake, were it in His power so to do. But it is impossible for Him to comply, be the appeals ever so poignant, for between the Christ's compliance with the demands of an erring world lies the great compact - based on Free Will - made between the Creator and His

offspring in the beginning of Time, the one and only basis upon which the salvation of the human race can be achieved.

We who dwell on the same side of the Tomb as the Christ, and who have frequently come under His blessed influence, with all our hearts and soul echo this, His Message to all earth children. "Cease to regard me as any but a human being; think of me as the Elder Brother - as one of yourselves. My heart bleeds for you to-day as it did in the days when I trod the earth; think not that I have forgotten you; I am always near you, and will help you to bear your troubles to-day as I did in the days of old. Lo, I will be with you always, even to the end of the world."

The message of the Christ, a plain statement of His attitude and bearing towards the children of the earth plane to-day, is no effort of rhetoric on our part, but represents an actual truth. The expression "I am always near you conveys a literal truth, while the promise: "I will help you to bear your troubles to-day, even as I did in the days of old" – is being redeemed every day of His life. Not a day passes but that the Elder Brother visits the earth plane to watch over His brothers and sisters, and to carry out, unseen, in countless daily acts of love and charity and loving kindness, His mission of Peace and Goodwill. To comfort the afflicted, to be with those who are suffering, to heal broken hearts, to watch over the widow and the orphan, and in a thousand other ways to help the poor and needy, the weak and the helpless – such is His daily task. He is accompanied on His daily errand of Mercy to the earth plane by his favourite disciples, Peter and John. It was even permitted to us – not many months since – to touch the hem of His Garment as He passed on a hurried visit to the earth. The Christ is not spending His time in wordy warfare with the great intellects of the High Spheres; He is not concerned, as is His Church on earth at the present day, with ritual, sacrament and creed, not even with the revision of the Prayer Book, but is spending His whole time in carrying out in person on the earth plane to-day what He preached there two thousand years ago. Every day of His busy life, He is translating into action the high ideals enshrined in the Sermon on the Mount. Form, creed, and ritual troubled Him but little during His pilgrimage on earth in the flesh, and He is as little concerned with them to-day, now that He is in the spirit, but with that look of supreme compassion and understanding which has always characterised Him, He boldly faces the problems which have converted the once fair earth into a veritable vale of tears.

Although Jesus of Nazareth is not the Son of God in the sense in which earth dwellers claim Him to be, as the Elder Brother He occupies a position almost as exalted, and entirely unique, in the Heavenly Spheres. By virtue of the life He led and the gospel He preached on the earth plane 2,000 years ago, Jesus of Nazareth to-day occupies a place next to the Godhead, in all the Heavenly Spheres. He plays a part in the government of the Universe second only to God, and although His responsibilities and tasks are immense, - His glory in proportion, - He is still the lowliest being in all the Heavenly Spheres - there is nothing too great, and *nothing*

too little, for Him to be concerned in, and He is as easy of access to the lowliest and the most insignificant being on the earth plane, as to the most High and Mighty of His compeers in the heavenly planes. No matters of state too pressing but that a cry of distress from a soul in trouble on the earth plane will reach Him, and receive His immediate attention.

Your conceptions of the Christ to-day are as erroneous as your beliefs concerning His divine origin. You imagine Him surrounded by a trail of glory - and for this you can claim some authority from the Scriptures, which is equally misleading - sitting on a throne at the right hand of God, fawned upon by a thousand courtiers - or something to that effect. Such a position of pomp and glory would naturally render Him inaccessible to the vast denizens of the spirit planes, but nothing could be further from the Truth. There is nothing of that dazzling magnificence about the Nazarene, and even if there were, it would be inconsistent with the gospel of humility which He preached on the earth plane. There is no glory about the Christ save the glory of Truth and Humility – the glory of compassion and understanding and knowledge - the glory which He has won—and which anyone else can win - by a life of spotless purity spent in the service of God and his fellow man. Jesus of Nazareth was a human being, and there is nothing that He did that any of you could not do to-day. He would be the first to affirm and echo this statement; He does not want to be considered of Divine origin, and implores all those who have fallen into this error to cease regarding Him as the only begotten Son of God, but as a human being, even as you and I, the son of earthly parents, but who, by a saintly life and high spiritual talents, has qualified to be truly called a Son of God – still even as you and I.

Jesus of Nazareth is never idle. He is constantly travelling through the Spheres, with no distinguished entourage but His old earth companions; He does not go about in state, no pomp or show attend His movements, but moves about as a plain humble man; He is constantly being consulted on matters of High import by the Higher Intelligences who control the Spirit Realms, and His advice and counsel is sought on every hand. Yet for all that, He is easily accessible to the lowliest spirit. But do not let us mislead you. We do not mean by this statement that every one of the countless millions on the astral plane can see the Elder Brother at will. The Elder Brother is *accessible* to each one of them, but this is not the same thing as saying that each one can *see* Him. Let us remind you again: the astral plane is a world of *thought* where only *moral* qualities count for progress. The Elder Brother is accessible to all who can see Him, but how few, alas, on our side have progressed so far as to be *able* to see Him, you would be deeply surprised to learn. The Elder Brother passes through the Spheres every day, but only the pure of heart can see Him. Between Him and the countless millions who would gladly surrender their every spiritual possession for a glimpse of Him there is a materialistic barrier which their feeble vision cannot penetrate. You will now be better able to understand His saying, whilst on the earth plane: “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God,”

The government of the Universe is a greater task than even the control of the British Empire - and it requires for its successful operation a vast amount, not only of highly specialised knowledge, but of general knowledge as well - knowledge beyond your dreams, we may add. Government of the Universe is not a dream, miracles do not enter into it, but it involves a profound knowledge of natural laws, their principles, actions and reactions, and it is also highly practical in the interpretation of those laws, and their application to the daily task. Pomp and majesty do not enter into the government of the Spheres; the only glories are those natural ones which proceed from the operation of clearly defined and immutable laws. The work that the Elder Brother does - and He is the second in command of all this vast organisation - is that of no sentimentalist and dreamer, but is of a highly intelligent and practical nature. Only a highly organised, trained intellect could hope to tackle the numerous problems of Government which beset the Higher Intelligences every day, and yet of Him it has been said on our side, as marking His fitness for the high position He holds, that in the gaze of no man living, whether on earth or heaven, is there so much of compassion and understanding contained, as in the eyes and countenance of the Elder Brother.

So long as the claims for His Divinity are persisted in by earth children will it remain a matter of grave difficulty on our side to readjust the relations which have thereby been disturbed as between the Godhead and the Christ, and between the Christ and earth children. So much is this difficulty felt that we have been prepared even for a direct interposition on the part of the Christ in order to settle the question for once and for all, and in order that the scheme originally prepared by the God Head for man's redemption may operate in its fulness once more. And inasmuch as persistence in this error delays the fruition of that scheme it behoves earth children to eradicate the root of the evil, and so fall in line with the course of ordered progress instituted by the Almighty.

Your Prayer Book, which you have read hundreds of times, and considered, perhaps, not once *, tells you that the Trinity is composed of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, that they are three in one, and one in three, yet *indivisible*. We ask you to pause at this extraordinary statement; *Three in one, and one in three, yet indivisible*, and to consider it as a reasonable, matter of fact statement, much as you would a statement on a material subject. What is the plain man to make of it? To begin with, it is utterly incomprehensible to the ordinary intellect; we would defy even your keenest intellects on the earth plane to give an intelligent interpretation of this extraordinary formula. There is not an iota of intelligence, sense, or truth in this tangled statement about the Trinity. Concerning the first part: "The Father is made of none; neither created, nor begotten," we have no observation to offer - to attempt to describe the Almighty were a task far beyond our powers, but regarding the second: "The Son is of the Father alone; not made, nor created, but begotten," we desire to state with all emphasis, here and now, that not only is it an entire misstatement of fact, but it is entirely inconsistent with the other statements in the Bible which imply that Christ

was born of woman, and that Joseph was His father. How could He be the Son of Mary if He was “not made, not created?” the whole statement is a contradiction in terms; “not made, not created,” yet born of Mary. It is as easy to trace the hand of man in this amazing network of impossibilities and absurdities, as it is difficult to attribute such a statement to the Almighty Mind which is the essence of lucidity, truth, intelligent reasoning, and common sense.

- * There is an inherent tendency on the part of mankind to repeat automatically that which they have been taught (especially in regard to religious matters) without seriously considering the meaning of the words they give utterance to. The repeating of the Prayers of the Church is much like a young child repeating a Table that it has learnt by heart. - F. P.

The third statement that “The Holy Ghost is of the Father and the Son; neither made, not begotten, but proceeding,” we could better understand were the word “spirit” used instead of “Ghost;” in the text, and even in the belief of most earth dwellers, the Holy Ghost is accepted as a *separate entity*. Here again is a monstrous error – a gross superstition. The Holy Ghost, as understood in your Prayer Book, is an entire myth – is has never had an existence, and, we are safe in saying, it never will. The Holy Ghost has never had an existence outside the imagination of man. It may have been necessary in the days of the early Church, when the layman was less educated than he is to-day – to preserve an atmosphere of mystery about the teachings of the Church, in order to maintain his interest in religion – and this was no doubt intended for one of the wrappings whereby the mind of God was concealed from the plain man. But now that the plain man has become enlightened, and is thinking these things out for himself, such a course is no longer necessary. Believe it or not, my friends, the day of mystery in religion has passed away, and only an intelligence which is worthy of its great subject - and which has nearly always been withheld from its treatment - will maintain that interest to-day.

Christ’s greatest gift to the world was His Spirit - on this we are all agreed. Next to the creation of man in the image of God – the spiritual image, be it understood - we regard the Spirit of Christ as the greatest blessing the world has ever received. In all our prayers to God on this side we always invoke the Spirit of the Elder Brother, and if this quotation from the Prayer Book which we are considering had substituted the “Spirit” of Christ for the “Holy Ghost” we on this side would not cavil overmuch, although even then the statement would be full of inaccuracies. But the Spirit of Christ is of such priceless quality that its inclusion as such - and not veiled as the mythical Holy Ghost, - would not be undesirable.

Again, take the creed of St. Athanasius, which was promulgated in the early days of the Church, and in a much darker age than this. To the mind of this worthy man the major part of religion consisted of a fitting recognition of the Trinity, and it throws a curious sidelight upon the mentality of the men who moulded the originally simple faith of Christ into a thing of creeds, ceremonies, and dogmas, that in their considered view the outward semblance was greater than the inward reality. Reading this creed over in the cold light of reason and modern knowledge, it is

almost incredible that for nearly two thousand years the most advanced section of mankind has been content to accept such tawdry, sorry stuff as its daily spiritual food.

“Whosoever will be saved: before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic * Faith.” “Which Faith except every one do keep whole and undefiled; without doubt he shall perish everlastingly. And the Catholic Faith is this: That we worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity. Neither confounding etc., etc.” and so on for another forty paragraphs, nearly every one of which contains a grave inaccuracy, but also adds to the mystery in which this subject has been enwrapped.

* Save where otherwise stated in the context, the expression “Catholic” used in this book, is intended to refer to the Universal Catholic Church, and not to any particular branch, or section thereof. – F.P.

We have no hesitation in declaring this creed a cruel and unchristian belief, entirely at variance with the spirit of that Christ to whom it is so found of paying lip service. It is a monstrous perversion of the truth, it is a wicked libel upon the Godhead, to define the Christian Faith as consisting mainly of belief in an incomprehensible version of the Trinity, and, to consign everyone who does not believe such a grievous misrepresentation to everlasting hell.

The creed of St. Athanasius, which is described in the Prayer Book as “this Confession of our Christian Faith,” represents the teachings of the Church on the subject of man’s salvation, and in no less degree, seeing that the Church claims to speak with the voice of God, the view of the Godhead Himself. The barest analysis suffices to reveal the utter inconsistency and gross inaccuracy of the statement. According to the creed every human being who does not believe in the Trinity is consigned to everlasting punishment, and in this view God is understood to concur. We have to accept as the naked truth the statement that the God how creaed man in His image, who poses as a loving Father towards him, is prepared to consign him to everlasting punishment for the simple reason that he does not believe in the Trinity as defined in this creed. That is the sum and substance of the whole matter, and we cannot release the Church from the position to which it is tied down by acceptance of this creed. Man is to be damned for ever if he fails to hold this article of faith, the sentence is absolute, universal.

Neither is there any possibility of “contracting out” of the creed. The case is perfectly clear, there are three parties concerned: God, the creator of all; the Church which arrogates to itself the right to adjudicate on man’s salvation; and lastly, the whole of mankind. Let us now consider its application to all the various sects and nationalities comprised in that term.

The Gospel of Christ has now been preached on your earth for nearly two thousand years, and during that period untold millions of people in India, China, Africa, etc., have passed over in complete ignorance of its existence, while there are untold millions in a similar condition to-day. When we multiply the number of such people who “die” annually by two thousand the total becomes appalling, and yet, according

to this creed, this vast multitude is undergoing eternal punishment for a crime of which it is utterly and absolutely innocent. Such, reduced to its logical outcome, is the condition of affairs on our side to-day if this creed is to be accepted as correct.

Even if you confine yourself to that relatively insignificant section to whom the Gospel of Christ has been preached, you are still face to face with a grave situation, involving vast numbers of people. The definition of the Trinity being entirely inexplicable to the plain man, it follows that those who have without fully understanding what they were doing. If they achieved salvation thereby they achieved it under false pretences. It is impossible for them honestly to state that they understand it, consequently their confession of faith was utterly false. According to the tenets of the Church, either you believe it toto, or you are damned. Summed up, that is exactly what the teaching of this creed amounts to.

But if this vast number of false believers imposed upon the Church by professing a belief in a thing they could not possibly understand, it must not be assumed that God was also deceived. Consequently they must not be looked for amongst the "saved," and the only alternative logical explanation of their fate is that they, too, are amongst the vast hordes suffering eternal punishment on account of this creed. Put briefly, the greater part of mankind for the last two thousand years has been eternally damned on its account, and viewed in this aspect the whole position not only becomes untenable, but utterly absurd. When you realize that the Creator not only watches unceasingly over the whole of His vast family, and is prepared to forgive them "seventy times seven" mentioned by the Christ, it is an insult to the intelligence to suggest that the "damnation" of St Athanasius has the slightest influence upon the fate of any human being, whether he has already heard of it, or whether he has not.

This creed is also responsible for the perpetuation of two other serious errors - the Divinity of Christ and the Doctrine of Eternal Punishment. With the first of these we have already dealt, but as regards the latter there is really very little to say. The statement carries with it its own condemnation. Not only is it utterly unjust and unjustifiable, not only is it utterly illogical, but its perpetuation would stamp the God Head as a tyrant and a despot for all times. It is really an insult to the Godhead to consider its bare possibility. There is not a single saying of the Godhead which can be quoted in its support; it is utterly repugnant even to man's sense of justice, leave alone that vastly finer conception of the Creator's. You have but to momentarily consider it in its bearings on God's greatest attribute - *that of a loving Father* - to reject it in its entirety as wholly man's work, one of the many baseless fabrications of the church on earth, part and parcel of the mysterious wrappings wherewith God's real nature has been obscured from the world.

This creed of St. Athanasius is really an epitome of the worst errors of the Christian Church. We will not call it the Christian Faith, for nothing could be farther from Christ's ideals than its interpretation as here outlined. The tangled and

incompressible Trinity; the doctrine of eternal damnation; the unfortunate claim for His Divinity; the belief in a material hell - *everlasting fire*; His anomalous position, on the right hand of the Father, as judge of the whole human race on the last day when, contrary to every known canon of scientific knowledge and common sense, bodies that have been lying in their graves for thousands of years will arise up afresh and forthwith proceed to render an account of themselves, these and many other errors which are proudly proclaimed as the Catholic Faith which “except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved,” are all perpetuated in this creed.

We consider the Lord’s Prayer one of the most beautiful utterances of the great Nazarene, and in view of the important part it was henceforth destined to play in public worship, it is a matter of the deepest regret that, either through ignorance, faulty translation, or sheer wilfulness, several grave errors should have been allowed to creep in. We refer to the words - the italics are ours – “And *lead us not into temptation.*” We are utterly unable to see any justification, from whatever point of view considered, in the present wording of the text. Put in this manner, it is an insult to the Creator. The attitude of mind which can possibly conceive the Creator and Father of all as being deliberately prepared to lead His flock into temptation is beyond our comprehension. It is as utterly unthinkable that the Creator could possibly lead any of His children into temptation as that He would be prepared to agree to their eternal damnation. That the case of an earthly father who has rarely failed in his duty towards his family, who has clothed, fed, educated and given them a start in life. It is idle to suggest, in view of all that he has done for them, that his conduct is not actuated by the deepest regard and affection, and you can imagine his feeling were his progeny to continually beseech him *not to lead them into temptation.* The same thing is true, although on a much larger scale, of the relations between the Creator and mankind. He who has brought man into being and sustained him ever since, is not likely to be guilty of leading him into temptation and danger. Knowing human weakness, is He not far more likely to keep him away from temptation than to wilfully precipitate him into it? What would man do in a similar case? Would he be likely to lead the son he loved best into temptation, or would he not rather try and shield him from it - try and ward it off?

This error, and the pain which its constant repetition must inevitably cause the Creator, has frequently been considered on our side, and after numerous conferences and considerable discussion, in which all the Higher Intelligences of the Spheres have taken part, we have corrected the error in the Lord’s Prayer, and we on our side always use it in the form shown below: -

Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven, Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we *try to forgive those that trespass against us. And leave us not when in temptation*; But deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, The power, and the glory, For ever and ever. Amen.

For the words “As we forgive them that trespass against us” we have substituted “As we try to forgive those that trespass against us,” and we consider that very little justification is required for the change. The words as they originally stood were entirely misleading. They contained a definite statement of fact – of something that has been done. We solicit forgiveness for our trespasses on the ground that we have already forgiven those who have trespassed against us. That is what we commit ourselves to when we use the old form of words, but do any of our earth friends seriously contend this to be a true statement of the facts of the case? Do you, when you glibly mutter the Lord’s Prayer, ever give serious heed to the forgiveness of those who have trespassed against you? Remember, no prevarication is possible with God in a matter of this kind or, in fact, of any kind whatsoever. The God who can read your thoughts is above and beyond the prevarication of earth children.

Human nature, therefore, being very apt to overlook the real significance of that which it so glibly utters, it follows that the vast majority of those who use the Lord’s Prayer in its old form are guilty of making false statements. That they are unintentional does not alter the fact, or their nature, least of all does it alter the nature of their effect on the God Head. It makes it almost impossible for Him to grant a request which is based on false pretences. Logically, of course, the error would invalidate the whole position, and vast numbers of daily prayers would thus be rendered useless, but fortunately for mankind the warm heart of the Father not infrequently overrules the judgment of the Creator, and God, taking the will for the deed, is only too ready to forgive human errors.

In the form in which we use the Lord’s Prayer every allowance is made for human frailty, while adhering more closely to the truth. The amended form of words “And leave us not when in temptation,” in our opinion, offers a just and common sense solution of the difficulty. It also concedes the Fatherhood and overlordship of the God Head. The other modification, “As we try to forgive those that trespass against us,” is by far a fairer statement of the case from man’s point of view. It concedes man’s failings, and it also concedes a far more important thing - a serious, humble and sincere attempt on his part to recognise and overcome it. It betrays the true spirit of prayer, and an exhortation so framed is far more likely to reach Him for whom it is intended and receive a fitting reply, than a petition based upon an untruth.

CHAPTER VII

THE EXISTENCE OF EVIL ON THE ASTRAL PLANE

At the outset we gave you a faint and imperfect outline of the glowing possibilities of life in the spheres beyond the tomb. That was a true and unvarnished story of progress, possible to anyone who starts on the right lines. But inasmuch as every new born soul is not sufficiently enlightened to make such a start, it follows that in

nearly every such case there is, alas, no progress to record, and it is now our sad and painful duty to show you the other side of the picture, and present you with an aspect of the evil which befalls such souls on the astral plane.

Of the existence of such evil, alas, the vast majority of the dwellers on the earth plane are painfully ignorant. The earth-born beliefs in which they have been nurtured preclude any such possibility. Their future state resolves itself into an instantaneous change of character - complete renewal of a body that has lain, maybe, for thousands of years in the tomb - and a simultaneous entry into a Heaven paved with gold, and devoted, mainly, to harp playing and hymn singing.

Far darker, unfortunately, but infinitely more just and absolutely true, is the picture we have to unfold for you this evening. But it is a true and fitting corollary to the phantasmagoria of vain and vapid beliefs which were inculcated on the earth plane, and which leave the unfortunate possessor stranded on the shores of the sea of death - a derelict, a wanderer in a strange land, without any indication whatever of the nature of the country in which he has arrived, and without any idea as to the method of progress, or even of bare existence therein. To be just to him, his head is so full of preconceived notions that he is utterly unable to receive any new ideas. What with surprise, humiliation, wounded pride - all his life he may have defended those very ideas which now, at the testing time, he finds have played him false - the position of our friend is deplorable.

But do not, for one moment, imagine that we have failed in our duty towards him, that we have not met him on arrival, attended to his needs, tried to explain the situation to him. Our new friend will not listen to us, turns away from us with feelings of the deepest horror and disgust. All attempts at explanation, especially where we are compelled to touch upon his religious beliefs, are invariably repelled.

When we tell him that the new country is Heaven, he will have none of it, he was assured of his goal long before he left the earth plane. When we inform him that we have no distinctions of Caste, Creed or Colour, but equal rights for all, he holds up his hands in holy horror. That is sheer blasphemy, what about the supremacy of the white race who ruled the greater part of the globe, and surely there was preferential treatment for those who upheld the Catholic faith? He is not going to surrender his old ideas, even if he is in a new country. He believes in the supremacy of the white man, and will countenance no mixing with coloured races. Nor is he going subordinate the glorious creeds and faith of the Catholic Church for the sake of a catchword cry or democratic equality. Equality there never can be - God never meant it to be - between the different casts which make up the population of the earth. If he cannot associate with his social equals, if he cannot hold the faith he had been reared in, he will stand alone and go his own way.

That is the end of our intercession for a time, and go his own way he will. The thing has reached such a pitch that it is deemed advisable to leave him to himself, not for good, be it thoroughly understood, but only until such time as he has rested

sufficiently, has seen more of the new life, and has had time to reflect further. Of the millions who reach the astral plane every year, no one is ever lost sight of. They are all registered in our books on arrival, together with a statement of their condition, peculiarities, prospects, and ultimate treatment. In exactly the same way as your doctor questions you about your ancestors, your habits and your mode of life, your likes and dislikes, etc., with a view to arriving at a correct diagnosis of the case, so is it done here. The expression of the earth poet, "Record one lost soul more," has no significance on our side. No soul is ever lost, however far he may wander from the true fold, however long he may persist in rejecting advice and true knowledge, he is never struck off our books. It is only a question of recording some more details of the case with a view to arriving at a correct diagnosis, we have unconsciously lapsed into earth language once more, or maybe, altering the treatment. No case is ever regarded as hopeless, no soul is lost, no matter if it takes a thousand years of your earth time to follow it up and treat it.

The great limitation on our efforts here - as with you on the earth plane - is the eternal question of Free Will. There must be no trifling with this great Charter of Liberty; on this point the Creator remains inexorable. There can be no compulsion towards our new friend. We have our duty to discharge by him, but we cannot compel him to receive our views. The choice, and the penalty likewise, is entirely his. So that, if he persists in his course of conduct, we have no option but to let him have his own way. Always with this proviso, he must forever remain under observation, and the instant he relents, all the helpful machinery which we possess is put in motion with a view to helping him on his onward way.

It must not be supposed, however, that our new friend is henceforth to lead a continuously solitary existence. The great law of the attraction of like for like immediately operates upon arrival in the astral plane, and he will as naturally gravitate towards those holding similar views as do the flowers towards the sun. While the holding of incorrect religious views is not esteemed a crime on our side, such being esteemed a lesser error than the cultivation of a blank mind, it is not elevated into a virtue, and does not entitle the holder to an advanced place on the astral plane. But in virtue of the compelling power of thought, which determines the physical side of our of our lives, the view he holds will relegate him to a region, not of total darkness, but of a grey, depressing twilight, and in this depressing atmosphere he will have to remain until such time as his views will have altered.

The darker regions are reserved for those who have committed some great crime or led wholly immoral lives, people who have never had any religion of any of any kind in their lives, thieves, murderers, swindlers, debauchees, oppressors of the poor, misleaders of public opinion, those *by whom*, as Christ says, *offences have come*, and many others who have deliberately wasted the great gifts which God had given them.

The new arrival will inevitably gravitate towards his own kind. The deciding factor is

not always that of race and kindred - although in the case of the majority of the lesser gifted sons of men, that will be so - but considerations of intellect and culture play a great part. For example; a great literary genius who is, say, an Irishman, will not, necessarily, gravitate towards his countrymen, but towards others, probably of differing nationality, who are similarly gifted. In this case high mental qualities will override the claims of race and kin. On the other hand an Irishman who is not so gifted, but who may conform to a very ordinary type, is far more likely to gravitate towards a colony of his own countrymen than towards a literary sphere.

Those who have spent wicked, sinful lives on the earth plane will, inevitably, rejoin those of a similar type; the unrepentant murderer will be attracted towards other murderers; the fornicators, the seducers, and the debauchees will find themselves in the company of others of the same low, depraved type.

There is a Divine plan and meaning behind this inexorable functioning of the law of the attraction of like for like. By its means, and alone by its means, is redemption, or progress, made possible for those who have sunk deep in crime and sin. The idea is simple - it is to compel the sinner to live in the atmosphere of his own misdeeds. The murderer finds himself in the company of those who, like himself, have taken human life. The atmosphere of the murderer is there, he cannot escape its horrors, he meets it morning, noon, and night, he is steeped in it up to the lips, and the inevitable result is - *nausea*. That is the only way in which conviction can be brought home to a mind that has stooped so low as to slay, so to surround him with the atmosphere of the deed as to enable him to wallow in the filth and horror of it all, so to surfeit him with it as to produce a violent reaction. You see in this also the functioning of the law of Free Will. This man has asked for this thing, and it is given him in such abundance as to turn on him, the only means by which the lesson can be driven home. So with the drunkard, who promptly finds himself in the midst of similarly thirsty souls. He is given all that his unbalanced, but not necessarily debased, nature call out for in the way of intoxicating drinks, but when he gets them, alas , the savour is gone , and the taste is one of exceeding bitterness, like that of the waters of Marah. He can drink himself to his heart's content, drink himself to satiety; there is no one to say him nay. He alone is responsible for his own destiny, but it all turns to ashes in his mouth, and that way alone lies conviction. Some of you may question the statement that a man may have as much to drink as he wants on the astral plane, and problems such of those of supply and payment will immediately occur to the earth mind - but we assure you of the *literal truth* of the statement. As regards the supply it is forthcoming as soon as you *will* it, and there is no question of payment on the astral plane. Here everything is free - food, clothing, education, travelling, amusements, etc. There can be no question of payment where there is no currency. The drunkard gets as much as he can drink of any beverages he chooses to wish for. If he desires beer he can have it, if whiskey, gin, or wine, or anything else, it is his for the asking. He is justified in thinking that he must at last have got to Paradise, so promptly are his wishes met in everything.

The religion of his childhood, which promised him a heaven in the hereafter, has been abundantly justified in the result. What more desirable place to go to than a country where one can spend the whole of one's time in drinking, at no cost to oneself? He goes on his way merrily, wondering how long it will last; all around him are his boon companions - inveterate drinkers like himself - and they drink, drink, drink, reproducing in the process all the worst features of a drunkard's life on the earth plane. But somehow or other something seems to be missing. It does not taste quite the same as on the earth plane, where you had to pay, or promise to pay, for all you consumed. There was a sting in the flavour of the drink on the earth plane which is sadly lacking in the new country. There is a touch of unreality about the whole business. The reaction comes sooner than he expected. He cannot stand the nausea and inefficacy of it any longer, and from the depth of the drunkard's being there rises a cry for better things. That is the first intimation of dissatisfaction with his present lot which has yet come from him, that is the first step on his onward march. It may have been faint, almost stifled in its birth, almost recalled by recrudescence of passion; but be it ever so feeble it was heard at the Fountain Head, and measures were instantly taken to improve his surroundings in accordance with his wish.

Those who are still dubious about the reality and efficacy of Free Will will be so no longer when we tell them that it is not merely confined to the fulfilment of good wishes, but to the bad as well. They may very well marvel at a God of all goodness, a loving Father, acceding to an evil request from one of His children, but such is the inexorable fact. Free Will is no chimera, neither is it a half measure. When He granted it He never meant it to operate merely one way; to have done that would have been to cut down its efficacy by one half. God's ways are not ours; they are sometimes hard to understand, and have to be taken on trust. Without questioning the wisdom of the Great Creator in the slightest degree, we may venture to guess that where evil requests are granted it is done with the sole purpose of accelerating the progress of the petitioner.

This may seem a contradiction, not only in terms, but in actual reality, until we reflect that an evil request granted produces such a reaction, such a nausea, as to hasten the desire for progress in the soul that has put it forth.

As with the murderer and the drunkard, so with the gambler and sensualist. The former may satisfy his passion for gambling to the top of his bent, while the latter will never lack for victims of his lust. But sooner or later the inevitable reaction comes, and the surfeited soul, for, maybe, the first time in its sinful life, sends out a prayer for better things.

We can imagine the confusion of thought that exists on your side as regards the worst side of life on the astral plane. We have hitherto refrained from painting that life at its darkest, but the full truth must now be told. The statement that there is no hell or heaven following death (?) is perfectly true as regards the interpretation which has always been put by you on those terms. There is no hell fire on this side,

but only a hell of remorse, a mental hell. The whole of your past life stands out before you so clearly and vividly that you realise its full meaning only when you have quitted it for ever. You realise to the full at last, and with a poignancy you have never known before, what splendid possibilities it contained, and how woefully you have failed in their realization. The tragedy of unrealized hopes, of unutilized talents and wasted years, comes back to your mind with a treble significance at last. What might have been! You feel a regret, a remorse, a longing, that turn your days into weariness, your nights into sorrow and bitterness. And as on the intellectual, so on the social, or human side. The people you might have made happy, but made miserable instead, the thousand and one little acts of love, kindness, and charity, which seemed such tiny, unimportant things at the time now loom huge and tragic; you realize the truth of the poet's words: -

“For evil is wrought by want of thought
As well as want of heart.”

But it is too late to undo the evil, and a world of regret and longing fills your heart.

To bring home to the minds of earth children what it means to sojourn in the dark places of the astral plane we want you to imagine your sensations upon encountering the inky blackness of a pitch dark room. For the moment you are stunned, and lose all sense of perception; you put out your hand in front of you but cannot see it, the darkness is so dense that you can almost feel it upon your face - you can almost cut it with a knife. While it is true that after a time the strain becomes less, and you appear to be able to penetrate a little of the dense black wall around you, you never get fully used to the sensation, and never feel at your ease. In fact, the longer you stay the worse the cumulative effect of your environment.

It is probable that the majority of you earth children have never experienced such a sensation for longer than a trifling interval, but when it comes to weeks, months, or even years spent in such an environment, the human mind recoils with horror. Yet this is precisely the kind of *existence* – you cannot call it life - that millions of your fellow creatures are leading to-day in the dark regions of the astral plane.

But worse even than the inky darkness is the environment it brings in its train. Not a gleam of light filters through the darkness, not a ray of hope penetrates the heart of the wretched being condemned to such a horrible existence. It is worse than imprisonment; it is a kind of living death. The darkness is so great that he cannot see any of his human kind; it is true that from time to time he can dimly discern the outline of some ghostly, shadowy figures moving around him; occasionally these figures seem to become clearer, he can see the human lineaments, but when he eventually recognises them it is to recoil with horror. The outlines presented to his blurred vision are much the same as his own. It is one of his own type that he sees, and with a muttered imprecation he withdraws once more into the inky black isolation of what is tantamount to his prison cell.

Days, weeks, years, or even a lifetime spent under such conditions constitute such a hell of suffering and remorse that it is a wonder that the wretched being is able to retain his reason on its seat. The whole of his existence consists of aimlessly wandering about in the dark, without a thought directed towards repentance or progress. Is it any wonder that he sinks lower in degradation and despair, and becomes a real harbinger of evil? Evil thoughts, evil passions, evil desires, evil ideas; that is the sum total of his wanderings through all the weary years. He becomes what is popularly known on the earth plane as an evil spirit, although we do not entirely concur in the cognomen. There is no such thing as a wholly evil spirit, a misguided, misinformed, ignorant spirit, yes, but never a wholly evil one. The mere fact that he wears the lineaments of man is proof that he is not wholly evil, but possesses a spark of the Divine fire which distinguishes a man from the dumb creation.

To return to our hopeless wanderer. This is he who committed a great crime, or led an evil life, whilst on the earth plane. He never troubled his head about religion, never had the faintest notion about the new life athwart the tomb. What is worse, he is in such an abandoned state that reason and argument cannot make the slightest impression upon him, he is so bent on his evil courses, that there is nothing to do but let him have his way. It may be he realizes, or partly realizes, his mistake when he finds himself so promptly enveloped in pitch black darkness. His mind is on the very lowest level, and the corresponding environment is just what we have described. For dark, evil thoughts, a dark, evil environment. Remember, this man enjoys the privilege of Free Will, he has asked for this thing, and God, in granting it, is simply fulfilling His share of the bargain. So the man, cursing all around him, and with evil in his heart, starts on his wanderings through the dark and lonely places of the lower astral plane. With not a gleam of light to lighten his path, not a ray of hope to sustain his sinking heart, the outcast goes forth. Friendless and alone, with no one in the vast universe to care for him save the God whom he disowns, into the darkness he goes. But, although no human heart has a thought for him, he is not forgotten, he is always on our books, and God is only waiting for a sign, just the faintest whisper of a desire for something better, to enable Him to stretch forth His hand towards the erring man.

Can you conceive of a more terrible fate than that of this solitary spirit wandering through the darkness for, maybe, a whole lifetime, before realizing his true position and the remedy for it? We do not wish to pile on the horrors, but we feel that it is due to earth children to know what may possibly be in store for them.

The fate of this tragic figure should act as a terrible warning to all who read these lines. Think of it, dwell upon it, if only for a few moments, visualise it if you can. To be compelled to spend a lifetime wandering about in the dark in a strange country, without a solitary soul in the whole vast universe to spare him a single thought. If ever there was an outcast in the bitterest sense of the term, surely this man is he? He

has no friends on either side of the tomb; on your side he has doubtless left many to execrate his name, and consequently no kind thoughts reach him from anywhere. There are no vibrations in his pitch dark atmosphere, there is no hope in his heart, which harbours none but evil thoughts. What is worse, he has no knowledge of the conditions of life in the new country, and no desire to acquire any. He does not know where to turn, even if he feels the desire for a change. Save for the inveterate hatred of God and man which consumes him, his soul may be said to be dead. What hope is there for such a being?

Only one, it is true, but it comes from God Himself. Out of the whole population of the vast universe He is the only one who has not forgotten him, and He never will. But why does not God inform this poor blind soul of the fact at the outset, and thus save him from the subsequent horrors? queries the reader. The question is permissible, since we presume you have already forgotten the compact between God and man. But God does not forget and never will. Nothing would be easier than for God to compel this man to receive the light, and acknowledge Him; He has only to lift up His little finger, and a thousand angel messengers will flock to do His bidding, but this would be saving the man against his will, and no compulsion must ever enter into the relations between the Godhead and His favourite creation. Oh no, the initiative must come from the man himself before any steps can be taken. Oh, that we could drill this supreme thought into the minds of every man, woman and child upon the earth, to save you from a similar fate.

There is one way, however, and one way only, in which you on the earth plane can assist this desperate man. You can pray for him. We sincerely trust you will not adopt the selfish and superior attitude observed by many on the earth plane to-day regarding this matter, some of you considering that you have sufficient troubles of your own, and that the dead (?) must be left to look after themselves. Whilst agreeing that you have a superabundance of troubles in your grey, misty world, the adoption of a selfish, narrow attitude towards your departed friends will not help you to dispose of them or modify them in the slightest degree. Selfishness never does help anyone in the long run, least of all who is guilty of it. Possibly the attitude may be due to ignorance, and is partly excusable, but with the increase of true knowledge of life beyond the tomb that excuse is daily losing its efficacy. Besides, much is not asked of you, only an occasional prayer, and if you feel you cannot pray for him, a thought, merely a kind thought, which will take up two or three seconds of your time, will greatly help. No matter where he is, nor where you may be, that thought will reach the lonely man and cheer him on his way. It may prove the first glimmer of light he has had for fifty years, in which case you can imagine his feelings, and it may prove the turning point in his career - such is the power of a kindly thought.

There is as much, if not more, capacity for evil on the astral plane than on the earth. The lower astral plane has its slums as well as have your large cities; its low or fast quarters, like Paris or London; its gilded haunts of vice and sin, where bedizened

women put to shame even the most abandoned. Public houses and gin shops, drinking dens of the lowest, most depraved, type; brothels devoted to secret sin, and haunts of immorality where vice unblushingly flaunts itself in the public eye; opium dens where devotees of all colours and all nations spend most of their time in a drunken stupor; gambling saloons, obscene picture palaces, theatres, and music halls where the performers appear in a state of almost complete nudity; every conceivable device for sin and lust and debauchery, it is all there. It is as if the most depraved quarters of all your big cities on the earth plane had been bodily removed to the lower astral plane, taking their victims with them. Saturday night scenes in a great city are, no doubt, familiar to many of you; here it is much the same, the only difference being that proceedings are carried on with more abandon on our side. But if you examine it more carefully you will find this bravado little better than a cloak or veil for hollow, wild-eyed despair. The scene with its garish lights, its brazen indecency, its hollow mockery, might very well be described as Pandemonium let loose. This quarter is the most frequented of all in the lower astral plane, every place of amusement or debauch being thronged by vast crowds of people, of all races, classes and colour, for the greater part of the time. Of course, in estimating the popularity of this phase of life, as compared with a similar phase on your side, one must not overlook the important fact that here there is no financial problem to solve. You can wallow in lust, crime, sloth, and debauchery, at no cost to yourself, everything is free.

We do not want to go into more details on this description, suffice us to repeat that everything that takes place on the earth finds a repercussion on our side, and that there is no description of crime or sin, no exhibition of immorality on the earth plane, but is repeated here. The scenes of life in this quarter simply beggar description; it is as if all the abandoned spirits of Dante's Inferno, all the inmates of every lunatic asylum in the world, were let loose in one spot, with full power to perpetrate what sin they may, in what manner they like, as often as they like, for as long as they like, and with every conceivable facility, human and otherwise, for carry out their desires.

We fear the picture we have drawn does but poor justice to the original, but we hope we have said enough to convince you, not merely of the existence of sin on the astral plane, but of the overpowering horrors of life within its many folds. Of the result of a sojourn in the midst of such unbridled lust and forced gaiety we could describe at great length, but will confine ourselves to the statement that nothing could exceed the detestation and horror with which those speak of it who have experienced it and escaped. Where there is so much sin congregated together in one place it is idle to speak of any good influence, - there is no room in its hectic, hollow life for one pure thought. Those who have gravitated to this whirlpool of destruction are hemmed in on all sides by impure influences and find it hard to escape. "Abandon hope all ye who enter here," might well be emblazoned across its portals. The nearest parallel to it in earth literature is Dante's Inferno, and we cannot but think the great poet was

inspired when he wrote his awesome poem. But he made the very pardonable mistake of investing it with the attributes of a permanent state – Hell - the seat of everlasting punishment, which it is not. Although Despair and not Hope is the watchword of the denizens of the City of Lust and Pleasure, there is still a loophole of escape. God still reigns in His Heaven and all is well. Not one of its vast millions is ever forgotten by the Creator, but, as in the case of the lonely wanderer, there is only one way in which you can help, and that is by prayer and thought. Think kindly of them sometimes, and in your next petition to the Supreme God do not forget the unnumbered millions of souls drifting with no one to say them nay. Do not forget this little thing when next you pray; who knows, perhaps someone near and dear to you is numbered amongst that throng. Kindly thoughts help them upward, and the more kind thoughts that reach them from the earth plane the better their chance of success.

It must not be supposed that the Creator who called all these forlorn souls into being can look on unmoved at their terrible plight. It cannot be stated too strongly and too often that God, although of necessity a God of Justice, is first and foremost a God of Love. The Father inevitably comes before the Judge, and the latter never assumes His functions until the Father has failed in His task. Within the limits of the law of Free Will, which are stretched to the uttermost in every possible case, every conceivable effort is made by the Creator to redeem these erring creatures, and to bring them to a realization of their obligations under the Law. *The astral plane is covered with a vast network of organization having for its sole purpose the regeneration of erring mankind.* Everyone is expected to take part in this great Crusade, but – here again Free Will asserts itself – no one is compelled to do so. But in order to counteract the crippling effect of that Law, another Law comes into being, and herein we have another striking example of the Sublime and Supreme Wisdom of the Creator. *To help others is to help oneself* - the more good you do to others the greater is your own progress upward. What intelligent being anxious to progress, and this desire must not be confused with a selfish, ignoble ambition, for Progress is the Law of Life on our side, can refuse an invitation couched in such terms? None the less it is true that the same law operates on your side, the more you labour for others the greater your progress when you cross over. But it is not made so abundantly clear to you as it is to us. Here, with the larger vision, we can see farther and clearer than you. Here there is no dense fog and mist to obscure the vision and confound the judgment, as on the dreary earth plane.

It being made abundantly clear, then, that your own progress, to a large extent, depends upon your efforts on behalf of your less fortunate fellow beings, it can be imagined with what enthusiasm, gusto and zeal, the call to social service is responded to. We compared this great social work to a Crusade, and the comparison, in point of enthusiasm and persistency, holds good. Your earthly Crusades in the Holy Land, although mistaken in their object, instantly recur to the mind as striking examples of both virtues.

This Social Crusade, then, is a very real thing indeed. It is not a kind of *preaching* crusade; we do not bombard these poor souls with dialectics, with learned discussions and treatises on the pinpricks of theology. Rather do we try and impress them mentally with their true state and condition, and with the only way of escape therefrom. By every means in our power, short of compulsion, we try to bring home to their darkened minds the fact that they are not progressing, that it is in their own interest to progress, that their Almighty Father has never lost sight of them as His children, and never will, that he still cares for them, and is anxious for them to see the light, but that the initiative lies with them. To this there is no exception, from this Law no departure possible; they must first seek their Father, then He will gladly come to them.

The same perfect methods of organization are observed in the Social Crusade, or rescue work, as obtains in all other directions, for example, Nature Study. There are Departments for dealing with the erring, as there are schools and colleges for dealing with Science and Art. The whole of the astral plane is divided into districts, each under its suitable Head, who must be specially gifted for the work. For the rescue of the fallen requires as much tact, knowledge and skill, as the teaching of a science; if anything, it requires more delicacy. Rescue work here has been elevated into an art, its main principles and the best methods of carrying them into practice are taught in special schools and colleges. They are not taught indiscriminately, and only those who have shown special aptitude for the work are required to attend the classes. For it is recognised here, as Christ recognised on earth long ago, that the work of rescuing the fallen requires special qualities of head and heart to carry it through successfully, and without wounding the susceptibilities of the fallen. From the passion which Christ exhibited for the downcast and downtrodden whilst on earth, it may readily be conceived that He has a large share in the Social Crusade which goes on unremittingly and unceasingly on the astral plane; in point of fact it is His Special Sphere, and no honour is more sought for, or more deeply treasured, than to be allowed to become a worker in the Social Crusade.

The astral plane being divided into sections for administrative purposes, there is another great division, or classification, to be made as regards the class of person whom it is intended to help. As already stated, each such person as he crosses over to our side is registered in our books, as is also a full description of his past career and present needs. This description follows him wherever he goes; it is signalled from section to section by the rescue workers, so that where-ever he goes his condition is kept under observation, and every possible opportunity given him to progress. Unbeknown to him healing and light rays are concentrated on him, he is strengthened mentally, physically, morally, without even being aware of the fact. In these operations infinite tact, gentleness, sympathy, patience and specialised knowledge, is necessary. It would never do to let our misguided friend suppose that he was the object of these unseen ministrations, as it would only strengthen him in his present determination to resist. Much use is made of mental suggestion, direct

impression, in fact, the methods used are much the same as are largely employed towards earth children; with both we are able to work unseen; we can magnetise you unawares, we can fill your system with healing balm, we can impress your brains with our thoughts, all the while you are perfectly unconscious. In short, even at the risk of repeating ourselves, every method, short of compulsion, is impressed into the Social Crusade.

The fallen daughters of our great cities are specially cared for. The great Nazarene's concern with Mary Magdalene is probably the most beautiful incident in His whole life. He was the first great teacher in history to see the beauty of soul of a fallen woman. All others before Him had spurned her. In no other connection has mankind exhibited such rank and odious hypocrisy as in its treatment of fallen sisterhood. Scorn, loathing, and contempt was the usual reward for the sacrifice of a woman's honour, purchased with love and sacrificed for lust. We cannot help feeling deeply on this subject. We feel that if only for His treatment of fallen womanhood as represented by Mary Magdalene the Christ has earned the deathless gratitude of the whole human race. The leader of our band of controls, he who is in charge of those who are transmitting these messages to you through our friend, feels so deeply on this subject that he has consecrated his life to the cause of the Magdalenes on our side of the tomb. He is in charge of a rescue party whose special task is to seek out such and endeavour to reclaim them, and many a thrilling, poignant experience has he and his coadjutors undergone whilst carrying out this Divine work.

Scenes scarce believable, almost too terrible to print, meet us on every hand whilst in search of the Magdalenes. The venues of our operation are almost invariably the worst, mostly gaudy, most profligate areas of the great Pleasure Cities of the astral plane. Here, where every conceivable phase of vice sits enthroned, are also to be found the Magdalenes, flaunting their sorry trade. In numbers so vast, in conditions so diversified, ranging from the Princess in her tiaras to the little slum girl with her tawdry beads, that were we to attempt to furnish them, you would scarce credit the statement. But believe us, *here in one vast city are foregathered all the fallen women of the universe.* Their numbers run into millions, and they come from every part of the globe. Every grade of society, from Queens down to dairymaids, are represented in their ranks, and there are some great historical figures amongst them also, names that have appeared in historical records and memoirs, and on whose merest whim the fate of nations have often hung. *Some of them have been frequenters of the gay city for centuries.* Their names, if given, would be perfectly familiar to many of you, for the evil of lust, the sin of the flesh, is of all sins the most difficult to eradicate. Human nature is vulnerable at many points, gambling, greed, drink, avarice, for example, but especially so in regard to sins of the flesh. Hence the task of the missionary is most difficult and has to be carried out with greater tact. Here some of them live in greater magnificence than they did on earth, dwelling in royal palaces, surrounded by every concomitant of luxury; and you can imagine the difficulty of approaching such a personage in such surroundings, with the object of

weaning her from her present mode of life. It would be on a parallel with, say, a Salvation Army Officer approaching a Royal Palace on the earth plane with the view of reforming the Queen's mode of life, or possibly, a Royal mistress. You can imagine the Royal indignation, the contumely, the scorn with which the poor missionary would be received, and, probably, repulsed. It is only by such earthly comparisons that you can visualise the scene, the difficulty of the task, the tact, patience, diplomacy, fortitude, and persistency necessary for its accomplishment. The tale of rebuff and scorn which usually follows his efforts is too trivial to need mention, it is part of what he expects, part of what he is armed against, and it in no wise affects his efforts, which are continued regardless of time or any other circumstances until they are finally successful.

If you want local colour to make the tale convincing, as our friend seems to suggest, you must imagine the gayest of great cities, say Paris, Venice, Rome, or any of the great continental cities, on a Saturday night. The gay streets are thronged with a truly cosmopolitan crowd of both sexes, all ages, condition, nationality, colour, race, and pedigree. They are dressed in a bewildering variety of fashions, every nation on the earth plane, and every section thereof, being fully represented in the costumes. The colours are so varied and amazing as to make up a wonderful and ever moving phantasmagoria which spreads over the main streets of the city. Lights, coloured and otherwise, flare out in all directions; it will be noticed that the city is lit artificially, were it not for this the whole scene would be plunged into pitch darkness, a state akin to the moral conditions of its dwellers. The spacious and handsome buildings which tower over the houses are devoted to the consumption of alcoholic drinks. They are what you call hotels, drinking saloons, gin palaces, or drinking dens, and they are crowded on this particular night. Here as on the earth plane, class distinctions divide the crowd. The aristocratic roué will be found in a spacious hotel, while the slum dweller will frequent the vulgar drinking den. Theatres, music halls, picture palaces, and all kinds of public entertainments invite you into their precincts, which are usually made most attractive to sight and sense.

In the midst of this gaudy, hectic, excited, pleasure loving throng, and forming the most gaudy, excited, hectic pleasure loving of them all, will be found the Magdalenes, either surrounded by their admirers or their victims, not always the same thing, or making desperate attempts to inveigle into their nets those of the opposite sex upon whom their wayward fancies have temporarily fallen. They are dressed with meticulous care in the height of fashion, with every aid that artifice and human ingenuity can add, to heighten their beauty. Their spirits are high, there is a wonderful glitter in their eyes, on this night of all nights. Life, with its every concomitant of vice and pleasure flowing gaily around them, seems for the nonce well worth the living, and their motto for the moment is: "Begone dull care." Absorption in the scene around them succeeds in banishing it for the time. They are carried away, out of themselves, on this huge and ever flowing tide of pleasure seekers, and the aching heart and innermost conviction of the hollowness of it all is

silenced for a while. But only for a while. It won't be long before reaction sets in, and the accusation of an outraged conscience comes to torture every moment of their existence.

Into such a scene of gaiety, then, the rescue party is plunged. They will have met at Headquarters in response to orders posted up there announcing the date, time, venue, purpose, and constitution of the rescue party. The journey will be undertaken by air, and the distance, as estimated on the earth plane, will probably be considerable. The pleasure city for which they are bound will be situated in the lower astral plane, amongst the various Hells there scattered, in the Outlands of Heaven, as Vale Owen graphically describes it. In an outlying, bleak, destitute, barren country, where nature is at its most forbidding, desolate and ugly. (The latter term has a greater significance on our side than on yours. Here every value is intensified and the term "ugly" connotes things so repulsive that even the most abandoned sinner on the earth plane would recoil from them. In our view beauty is a virtue and ugliness a sin in measure little dreamt of by you, who have not yet plumbed the depth of either quality, but have appraised it at its face value alone.) Having arrived, after staying a little time at a rest house situated in a pleasant glade on the Way, we decide on our plan of campaign, and immediately proceed to put it into operation. The venue will probably be the drowded street we have already introduced to your notice.

The condition of the inhabitants of the gay city being several grades beneath our own it follows that our arrival will be entirely unobserved, none of them being of sufficiently clear vision to see us. We may decide to remain unseen and endeavour to mentally impress the Magdalenes with a sense of the futility of their lives; on the other hand, where this is unsuccessful we may so alter our condition as to become visible and so tackle them face to face, and, as it were, in the flesh . We will follow them, at close of day, to their homes, or, more correctly, their haunts. Here we will appeal to them to consider the lives they are leading, explain our mission to them, present our credentials, where this is at all necessary, usually it is not, for our bearing, our mien, our mode of address, will at once have stamped us on their minds as of a higher sphere than theirs, tender them any advice they stand in need of, point out that they are sons and daughters of God, but that they are lowering their birthright by the lives they are leading, and beg of them to pray to God for help. Their free will remains as much a reality in their present state as in that of the most advanced sphere, and recognising this, we make no effort to compel them to follow us. We appeal to their better natures, we beg of them to pause, and, such of them as are willing, to leave the gay city, there and then, and return with us to more congenial surroundings where there will be more light.

(Over here man's vision is determined by his moral condition, the more moral, the more spiritual, he, the more will he see, and vice versa. Oh, that we could make this fact clear to you.) We appeal to them, we beg of them , we use every fair argument

that we can think of, to induce them to give up their present lives, but no compulsion is used; it is for them, having heard our appeal, to decide what to do. Our main argument is invariably to ask them to appeal to God their Father, when, once this having been done, lightning results follow. We, who are constantly in touch with the Higher Intelligences, are instantly apprised of the position, and lose no time in removing them to better surroundings, where they are entrusted to the care of a band of skilled helpers; but when all appeals have failed, and when to persist would be only to put the seal on our failure, we immediately cease our efforts, and either withdraw from their presence bodily, or make ourselves invisible.

In detailing our experiences we can only deal in generalities, it would be impossible to give names. But while we have met all grades of humanity in their ranks, all grades of culture and depravity, we have never yet met one such being who was altogether evil. In even the most hardened cases a spark of the Divine still lingered. And they proved a most interesting type, drawn from every class as they are. The universality of their one great sin proves that all women are kin. As your earth poet has it: - "The Colonel's lady and Judy O'Grady, Are sisters under their skin." And we are also convinced, from a long and painful experience, that this type of humanity is more sinned against than sinning, more so than any other. Most of them have fallen through passion, affection, love, call it what you will, than through lust. It was mainly unselfishness, greater regard for another person than themselves, that led to their fall. And that being so calls all the more for gentle treatment. No class in history has been so unjustly dealt with by a man-made standard of morality and law, and while not condoning the offence, we think that the predominant sinner, man, should be made to realise his part in the downfall of women.

We have met amongst them some of the noblest, gentlest, most affectionate natures, living examples of the truth of the foregoing statements. Some were victims of misplaced trust in man's honour, a good many fell through sheer affection; a large number sacrificed themselves for their parents, or some other loved ones; but few reached their present position through lust alone. We have met some of the rarest and most beautiful natures in the Hells of the astral plane, women without a spark of regard for self, who fell through love alone, and who, had they turned out differently, would have graced any sphere of sanctity. Our hearts have well nigh broken at sight of such rare beauty – moral, mental, physical – condemned to such an existence. We have been almost constrained at times to break through the Law of Free Will and rescue them by force, did not the warning of the Godhead restrain us in time. But oh, the pity and the poignancy of this crowning tragedy, to see the fairest of earth's daughters – fairest in every sense - chained by the immovable force of habit and environment to a life which on reaction proves to be a veritable hell. But we will never give up the task until each and every one of them has changed her mind, and elected to come with us to better surroundings.

But it must not be supposed that we are always unsuccessful. Not an attempt is

made but results in, at least, one rescue, and even that is sufficient justification for the attempt. These erring daughters of Eve, having once signified their desire to change their mode of life, and return with us, are very specially cared for. They are immediately taken in hand by skilled workers of their own sex, who always accompany the rescue party. Medical and religious advisers are also at hand when needed. If they are not with the party, they will be sent along as soon as the need is signalled. The Magdalenes are then taken to a rescue home as far from their habitation as their condition will allow. Here they will be received with open arms, lodged in every comfort, and every possible opportunity given them to cast off the shackles, and start on the way of progress.

CHAPTER VIII

THE ORGANISATION OF THE ASTRAL PLANE

There is no doubt that the earth plane to-day contains many great and striking examples of organization on a large scale, and we believe you are not altogether averse to proclaiming the fact. Regulation of the traffic and control of the huge businesses in your large cities afford a striking example of the organising abilities possessed by many of your leading business men; but whilst awarding a mead of praise where it is undoubtedly due, we are compelled, by the inexorable logic of facts as disclosed by our daily lives on the astral plane, to point out that, compared with the vast and perfect system of organization prevailing on the astral plane, your efforts are but those of tiny children compared to giants. In an organising sense, you are yet but in your infancy. Here, on our side, you have a country vaster and infinitely more populated than the earth plane; here the tasks of government are infinitely greater and more difficult; here we are dealing with the needs, not of a single country, but of the whole universe, and yet the whole gigantic business of life on the astral plane moves with the smoothness and precision of a well oiled machine, perfectly handled, perfectly controlled. We know it is difficult for us to prove our statements, one reason being that you are not in a position to check, or controvert them, and as we are anxious not to appear to be boasting in the slightest degree, if you will but put on your thinking cap for a few moments we will try and prove what we have said.

Some things will be obvious even to the meanest earth intelligence. A little consideration will show you that this earth of yours has been in existence for some thousands if not millions of years, that the population at the present time runs into thousands of millions, that of this vast number a large percentage dies (?) every year, that this process has been going on for a vast period, and that every single soul of that unrealizable number has passed over to our side and is living here to-day. Try and realise this fact alone - that every human being born into the world since man first inhabited it - with the sole exception of the present population of the earth plane - *is living to-day on the astral plane*. Your imagination reels at the thought of

such colossal numbers; you simply cannot realize it. None the less, the fact remains. That represents one side of the problem only; the next element that enters is that of space. You will at first be inclined to repudiate our statement that this vast congregation of human beings lives to-day on our side, on the score of lack of space. You will think it almost impossible that room could be found for such illimitable hordes, but on consideration this problem of space will be more easily solved than that of numbers. Here astronomy comes to our aid; you have all been taught some idea of the immensity of the heavens and you can personally verify this to some extent, either by gazing at the heavens on a clear night, or by availing yourself of the use of a powerful telescope such as is installed in an observatory. We venture to think that, to a thoughtful, intelligent mind, the first glimpse through an instrument at the heavens is one of the most wonderful experiences possible to mankind. Such a revelation of the infinity of God compared with the insignificance of man, the sight is enough to instil humility into every soul that sees it. Such an idea of the vastness of space can be conveyed in no better way on your side, and when to this wonderful sight you add the knowledge gleaned by the great intelligences which have studied the heavens so patiently and persistently, you will have received such an idea of the vastness of God's handiwork, the Universe, as will enable you readily to dispose of the difficulty of housing the vast myriads of souls who have crossed over to our side since the beginning of time.

When you consider that the present population of the astral plane is too vast for the finite mind of the earth plane to grasp its significance, and that the whole of this vast multitude is controlled by machinery which works with the greatest of ease, with the minimum of friction, and is never thrown out of gear, there will have dawned upon your mind some faint conception of the meaning of organization on this side of the tomb. "It is the last word in organization." How often you have heard that expression applied to some specially laudable feat of business on your side, and applied, doubtless, from your own point of view, with good reason. But your views are not ours, your conceptions are aeons removed from those which pass current here, and while we deprecate comparisons between astral and earth plane, on the ground that it is unfair to the latter, we cannot help thinking that the verdict, if applied to the handiwork of the Almighty, as revealed in the organization of the astral plane, would not only convey a literal truth, but one beyond which comparisons could no further go.

The administrative machinery in use on the astral plane is not only the last word in organization, but is so far superior to man's loftiest conceptions as to be impossible of description in terms understandable by him. Nevertheless, within the limits imposed by this defect, we will endeavour to give you a brief idea of what it means.

You must bear in mind that hitherto we have been speaking of astral plane and earth only, both vast enough in all conscience, but when to these you add the rest of the universe, including as it does, not only all the empty space in the heavens, but all the

denizens thereof, - stars , planets, nebulae , sun and moon , etc .you will readily see that astral and earth planes are not simply dwarfed in point of size, but seem utterly infinitesimal in all other points of comparison. We have mentioned “in point of size” only for the reason that our earth readers will be unable to follow us in any other comparisons, any mention of the population of other planets, Mars and many others familiar and well, which to us are proved facts, being, doubtless, received on the earth plane with incredulity and even derision.

This, then, is the daily task of those who hold the reins of Government on the astral plane, administration of the whole universe, with its vast , diverse , and complex population, and its equally vast, diverse, and complex problems. Not one section of it but differs from the other, and requires different, highly specialised, and delicate treatment. But government on our side has this great difference as compared with that on yours. Here there is no Court of Appeal - how can there be an appeal beyond God the Creator? Every decision is final, whereas on your side there is hardly any decision of your Courts but is liable to be reversed on appeal. It follows that on our side there must be no mistakes - no misapplication of the law, no misinterpretation. Any mistakes on our side would have alarming consequences for you. A perfect knowledge of all God’s Laws and a perfect knowledge of the diverse manner and method of their application is therefore called for in our Administrators, and is never called for in vain. The standard of all branches of knowledge on our side is, of course, infinitely higher than that prevailing on the earth plane, high though that may be in these progressive days. Were it not so, our Administrators would scarcely be equal to their tasks. But granted all these attributes on their part, they have one additional, unfailing resource which is denied to you on earth, the near presence, influence, and direct inspiration of the Most High God, Creator of Heaven and Earth, and all that that implies.

The task is vast and colossal; the supreme knowledge necessary for its performance is always available; the human factor, or, shall we say the personal factor, is never lacking; everything that a supreme knowledge of organization on a colossal scale can suggest is invariably at hand, and yet with all these powers and attributes, even with the ready cohesion of all these wonderful forces, we do not think the wonderful organization in which it results would work with the smoothness it does were the one supreme factor in the case, the spiritual element, lacking. That, in a word, is the secret of the success of the vast network of organization that covers the astral plane, the spirit of the Creator, which breathes over all the workers, imbuing them with a rare intelligence of comprehension and ready willingness of effort. The Spirit of the Almighty Creator, which percolates from the Eternal Source of Power and Goodness through sphere to sphere until it reaches that lowly sphere next to the earth plane, imbuing all the denizens of those spheres with strength and power to perform the great tasks they are called upon to do. Remember that with all our vast and intricate machinery, Thought is still the greatest factor on our side. It is Thought that holds all matter in thrall, subdues it to its will. Put simply, you have but to wish a thing

and the thing is done. Matter is subordinate to spirit in all things, and this, next to the power of the Spirit of God, is doubtless the supreme factor in the successful Government of the Universe. Matter is subject to thought, and thought subject to God. That, in a phrase, is the secret of the Government of the Universe, as carried out on the astral plane.

Lest you should think we have been too general in our statements, we will gladly descend to the particulars. At the bottom of all this vast organization is Order and Method, Cause and Effect. There are no accidents in God's government, no departure from Law, Order and Method, no freaks, and particularly no miracles. There is nothing that cannot be fully explained in the light of Reason and Knowledge. Everything done here rests upon a solid plan which has been fully worked out and developed from the direct inspiration of the Creator Himself. Nothing is left to chance, nothing is left unprovided for. The whole Government of the Universe is divided into sections, at the supreme head, of course, being the God Head himself, the Creator of all, the Father of all. Next beneath Him, but not on the same level, are His Principal Ministers, in virtue of their advanced state of progress, both in spirituality and in knowledge, we could almost term them Angel Ministers. Jesus, Abraham, Moses, Elias, and some other names you Westerners would be surprised to hear; founders of great religions which you thought were banned from the favour of the God Head, will, doubtless, be found amongst these, and there will be some notable omissions also which will equally surprise you. Here is the Fount of Power and Wisdom, Knowledge and Spirituality, the Motive Power that governs the Universe; here all laws, all decisions, are made, all commands issued and passed on with suitable instructions to the next sphere, which, in turn, and in similar fashion, transmits them to a lower sphere still. From the High Court of the Godhead all Nature is controlled, and it may be news to you on the earth plane that the actual carrying out of these operations is entrusted to human hands on lower spheres. From the nature of the case, considering the vast issues at stake, and the tremendous tasks involved, it would be impossible for the Godhead, Who is a real living Spirit, an entity, and not merely a life force, a principle, as some of your philosophers argue, to attend to all these tasks in Person. Sufficient for the Supreme Being is the Task of conceiving, of controlling, of supervising the machinery that keeps the Universe in being. Were He to attempt to carry out these things Himself - we do not for a moment suggest that he couldn't do it - His hands would be hampered, and far more important things than even the execution of His Commands would suffer. There is a feeling amongst you earth people that the Creator runs the universe alone and unaided, and that He carries out every task, however mean and trivial, in person, presumably by a series of ever recurring miracles. Nothing could be farther from the truth, or from ordinary common sense. You do not expect your Prime Minister to sweep out the floor of the Houses of Parliament, or the Commander-in-Chief of your Army to attend to every one of its requirements, but you do, seemingly, expect the Creator of the Universe to

personally attend to every request of its inhabitants. All the actual work of control and execution is delegated to His Ministers, who carry out certain High Tasks themselves, and delegate the remainder to those in a lower sphere. In this way not only is the whole vast population of the spheres kept fully occupied, but each entity is given the task for which he is best fitted, the result being true, loyal and efficient service, given willingly, not enforced, in a spirit of love, gratitude and the sense of satisfaction which the performance of such work brings in its train. In one sense, considering the spirit in which all work on our side is performed, government of the universe could be fittingly described as a labour of love, plus aptitude and knowledge.

The whole of the work of government is divided into sections, each section being controlled by High Intelligences specially adapted for that particular kind of work. The Control of Nature, for example, not only on your own little earth, but in all the stars and planets, suns and moons, of the whole vast universe, is one great Department of specialised industry employing millions of entities, ranging from the High Intelligences down to the ordinary man of the street, as you would like to call him, the task of each particular individual being limited to the extent of his own powers. Nothing in this vast Department is ever left to chance. If it were, there would be chaos on your earth plane which would puzzle your scientists and weather experts for a year and a day. Many wise treatises, many sage lectures, would be written and delivered; there would be much shaking of the head by the scientific wiseacres, much prophesying of disaster by religious seers, and at the end nobody would be any the wiser. Not only is the whole theory and cause of the multitudinous operations of nature, from fierce volcanic outbursts involving the death of thousands down to the falling of a leaf in a lane, the subject of carefully reasoned and exhaustive laws which are promulgated direct from the Fountain Head, but every conceivable item of information on the whole subject is treasured and made available to every workman in this huge field. Halls of learning, colleges, schools, and classes in which the theory and practice of the whole thing is fully explained, are available to every student. And not only is he expected to attend them but he has to satisfy his examiners of his efficiency before he leaves his school, and is further subjected to a severe practical test before he is allowed to undertake any duties. The subject of Nature Study on our side is so engrossing that it attracts far more volunteers than are required for the actual work, but none are prohibited from attending the schools or classes on that account, the pursuit of knowledge being encouraged by every possible means. The text books are so interesting, so well written, so lucid, and the lectures by the High Intelligences so attractive from every point of view; from the manner of their delivery, every conceivable mechanical contrivance for illustrating the subject being used, much in the manner that the film is utilized on your earth plane. But there is always this additional virtue to recommend study on our side. Not only are the best teachers, writers, lecturers, etc., always available, but the free and loyal spirit in which everything is done enhances

the pleasure of the teacher no less than the student. No one is compelled to do anything here; consequently everything becomes a labour of love. And in this vast system of Nature instruction every possible facility - mental and mechanical - books, films, magic lanterns, scientific apparatus - will be found; there is not a dull moment in the class room or lecture hall, and everything goes on with a merry swing from first to last.

We could multiply examples of the thoroughness with which everything on the astral plane is organized and carried out, but there is no object in this as the methods adopted with regard to Nature Instruction are typical of all the others, and will suffice to illustrate the point we wish to make. From your own experience on the earth plane you can imagine the multiplicity of details involved in carrying on the government of a country, however small, but when it comes to the government of the universe you could multiply them a thousandfold without overstepping the mark. It must be remembered that not only have we to maintain the universe in working order in a physical sense, but we have to supply the spiritual and intellectual needs of its inhabitants as well. All knowledge comes from God, and is promulgated from sphere to sphere in an ever changing progress until it reaches the earth plane, where it eventually arrives in a much cruder form. All the arts and all the sciences, literature, philosophy, music, and many other branches of knowledge of which you have no conception, have their origin on our side, and it may surprise you to know that not even in those branches of knowledge in which you have specialized, and regarding which you are convinced you have said the last word, have you progressed beyond the most elementary stage. We could not even discuss the higher branches of knowledge with you for the simple reason that not only is your language inadequate to convey our meaning, but the limits of your capacity for understanding would present an impassable barrier *. But enough of this carping criticism; we have no desire to underestimate the extent of man's learning when speaking of the supreme intelligence of the God Head, nothing could be farther from the thoughts of the God Head than to disparage those who are struggling upwards under averse circumstances; but comparisons between earth and the astral plane as regards knowledge are simply not to be made. We would not call them odious, but they would be decidedly ludicrous, and when you cross over to the Spirit land you will quickly realize that we are understating rather than unduly emphasising the facts of the case. All knowledge comes from God, and from God alone; none has ever reached the earth plane save from that one source, and the quantity which is sent you for assimilation is governed by your capacity to receive it. It is a saying of the Christ's that every man's mental task is conditioned to his intellectual capacity, only He put it in a much finer, much simpler way.

* Compare the preceding paragraph with the following passage from SIR JAMES JEAN'S 'Mysterious Universe.' "Indeed, our earth is so infinitesimal in comparison with the whole Universe, we, the only thinking beings, so far as we know, in the whole of space, are to all appearances so accidental, so far removed from the main scheme of the Universe, that it is a priori all too probable that any meaning that the Universe as a whole may have, would entirely transcend our terrestrial experience, and so be

totally unintelligible to us.”

CHAPTER IX

THE BRIDGE

That, in spite of the change called death, there exists a bridge between the two worlds whereby the disembodied spirit, after taking its flight to the spirit land, can return to the earth plane to testify to its survival, is now an incontrovertible and unassailable fact. That belief in survival and return, in spite of the hostility of a section, mainly scientific and religious, is also accepted if not avowed, by the general mass of the people, we on the spirit side of life, to whom all human hearts are laid bare, can amply testify.

The evidence upon which this statement is based, to any reasonable and fair-minded enquirer, is not only overwhelming in its volume, but is in the happy progressive condition of being added to daily, by contributions from every part of the globe. When you consider that for the greater part of a century, ever since the beginning of the era known to you as Modern Spiritualism, although, so far from being modern, it is almost coeval with the existence of man, a large number of earnest and determined enquirers have been busily engaged in the task of building this bridge, and establishing communication between the two worlds, that during this period an enormous number of evidential messages have been received capable of only one explanation as to their origin; that the enquirers are as varied in race, character, attainments, religious beliefs, as it is possible for human beings to be; that the investigation has not been confined to any particular country, but has been spread over every part of the globe; that in spite of the fact that this diverse army of seekers after truth has been working independently, under differing conditions as regards place, time, and circumstances, the overwhelming mass of evidence so obtained is substantially in agreement; then we venture to say that the case for the super-normal origin and unassailable truth of Spiritualism is established beyond all reasonable doubt.

As a result of these investigations there exists on your earth plane to-day an enormous body of literature on the subject of Spiritualism. And while it does not all conform to the same high standard of excellence, for there are degrees of inspiration as there are degrees of genius, which after all means much the same thing, it must be conceded, from the wonderful degree of consistency in the results obtained, that the greater part of it must have been inspired from the same source, which source is not of your world.

What we wish to emphasise, however, as the outstanding feature of this literature is the remarkable agreement which has been achieved upon the main issues. Details may vary, as vary they must, where so many different temperaments are brought into play, but as regards the main facts of life on the astral plane, and the

fundamental truths of Spiritualism, they are, to all intents and purposes, practically unanimous. An unlettered man writing in the wilds of North America, years ago, received, practically, the same messages as a cultured journalist in London in the present year of grace. A spirit control in New York in 1922 preaches precisely the same truths as an Irish control in the remotest parts of Wales in 1928. Difference of race, of continent, of medium, of temperament, makes not the slightest difference to the message, which, no matter what the language or the audience, or the circumstances under which it is given, proclaims the same inviolate truth to all mankind - the survival of the spirit after death.

We have indicated the books dealing with Spiritualism as a bridge between the two worlds for the reason that it is incontestable that the majority of them are inspired from the spirit side of life, and do not represent the thoughts of the human instrument through whom they were received. Much in the same manner as this book is being written their contents were communicated by means of direct impression on the writer's brain. To such an end a suitable instrument must, of necessity, be forthcoming and suitable conditions provided ; it is scarcely necessary to add that in every method of communication between the two worlds utter sincerity of purpose and complete harmony must exist between the two parties.

There are five principle methods of communication: -

(i) Automatic writing; (ii) Deep trance control, (iii) Partial trance control, (iv) Inspirational control; (v) Planchette and the Ouija board.

(i) Automatic writing. A remarkable instance of this method may be found in the Vale Owen script. The instrument sits at a table and writes, not of his own volition, but at the behest of his spirit communicator, who manipulates his hand throughout. The personality of the medium does not enter into the transaction as far as the matter received is concerned, but his brain being fully alert, and he being in no sense entranced, it frequently happens that he exercises his critical faculties or interpolates a question upon the nature of the communications received. He is able to put the earth point of view before the spirit communicator, and so help to clear up doubtful points, but it does not follow that the communication will be in any way altered in consequence of this proceeding.

(ii) Deep trance control. The employment of a medium immediately lands us on more difficult and debateable ground. The method, so far from being new, dates back to primeval times, as witness the many historical examples adduced in the Bible, notably, the Witch of Endor and many others, most of which have been misconstrued or misrepresented, either wilfully or from ignorance.

It is time that that ignorance should be lifted and the facts set forth in their true light and perspective, for the benefit of this enlightened age. It is equally necessary to do this in view of the fact that the modern medium is a much maligned person, equally open to attack from woefully ignorant persons anxious to discredit the Spiritualistic

Movement, as from the unjust operation of the law of the land which was conceived in ignorance and is being administered in a petty, carping, unintelligent spirit of hostility.

In the case of deep trance control the spirit communicator takes complete possession of the medium's brain and vocal organs and is entirely responsible for what is said, from the spirit side of life, at the séance. The medium, whose personality is altogether eliminated, is entirely ignorant of the nature of the communications received through his lips, and this method, in our opinion, is by far the most satisfactory, as it removes all suspicion of the medium's intervention.

What actually happens is that the medium's spirit is temporarily removed from his body which is then entered by the spirit communicating, who proceeds to make use of the brain and vocal organs for the purpose of making himself heard by his human audience. The medium's spirit, in the meantime, usually remains close to the body, but not always, and not necessarily. Sometimes he is taken for a journey through spirit land or even to some distant part of the earth plane. He is fully awake and conscious of everything happening, but is not always able to retain a full and clear impression of his travels after return to his own body. He may remember part of them, and may have a hazy notion of the whole, but is frequently unable to recall any of his adventures whilst out of the body.

The inability of the inexperienced sitter to discriminate between the medium and the control is not only a frequent source of confusion at séances, but is also very discouraging to us. If it were the case, as a thoughtless sitter often observes, that it was the medium, and not the control, that had said such and such a thing, then a most vital safeguard of the truth and sincerity of spirit communications will have been lost. When you have fully realized that in all cases of deep trance control the spirit of the medium is out of the body, and can neither communicate with you, nor influence the communications received through his lips, then a most vital point will have been gained. No longer will it be possible to attribute the communication to the subconscious self of the medium, for how can the subconscious self operate when the spirit is out of the body?

The position of the medium's spirit whilst out of the body is entirely analogous to that of the spirit whilst asleep. During sleep, as we have already pointed out, your spirit frequently leaves your body and goes off wandering, either on its own, or in the company of a spirit friend on our side, and a dream is a record of its travels.

(iii) Partial trance control. In this case the medium's personality is only partially eliminated, and whether this method is to be considered as effective as the other depends, to a certain extent, upon him. If he is entirely sincere and trustworthy, and of a high order of intelligence, there is no reason why it should not produce equally good results, but where, unfortunately, as sometimes happens, he is not to be thoroughly relied upon, the interplay of his own personality with the messages received from the control, depreciates the value of the matter received. Even where

the medium's standard is high, there is still the danger of the communications being coloured by his own personality, which is only partially submerged. On the whole, the results obtained by means of partial control are not to be compared in value with those received while the medium is deeply entranced, and this method, in our opinion, should not be resorted to where the other can be employed.

So much depends upon the medium's health and temperament. He may not be in a fit condition to undergo deep trance, in which case the spirit communicators have to make the best of a bad job, and get their messages through the best way they can. A medium is naturally a highly sensitive being, were he not so he could not be a medium at all, but this highly sensitive condition carries with it the defect of its own qualities. So far from being immune from the pettifogging, jarring worries of every day life, this highly sensitive instrument, especially if of the feminine sex, is rather prone to fall a victim to them, and frequently undertakes a séance without being in a fit state to produce good results.

It is not an easy matter, however, to communicate through a medium even when the conditions are favourable, and we have often fervently wished our sitters could see the position as it presents itself from our side. The process of spirit communication is so refined, so sensitive, so delicate, depending so much upon the power of thought, that the least discordant element in a circle puts the whole machinery of or gear, and results suffer accordingly. The conditions of a successful séance are threefold: (1) The calibre and health of the medium, (2) The spiritual standing of the control, and (3) The conditions created in the séance room by the sitters. All too frequently the latter forget that the astral plane is a world of thought, not a material world, and that the thoughts they send out during the process of waiting, and which duly reach us, are of so discordant and unhelpful a nature as to lead to those unhappy results of which they complain. The harmony which is so essential to success is lacking. Remember also that the vast number of evil thoughts which are continually sent out from the earth plane creates a huge misty barrier between you and us, and that when this is very dense it is almost impossible for us to break through.

(iv) Inspirational control. No question here of deep trance, or even partial trance, but rather of a strong influence brought to bear upon the medium from this side, whereby, without depriving him of his personality, we are yet enabled to impress his brain, and not only to imprint our thoughts thereon, but to cause him to deliver them exactly as we had intended them to be delivered, and exactly as if he were deeply entranced. It is his lips that move, his voice that speaks, but it is our thoughts that he utters, exactly as if they were his own. The medium must conform to a high standard of integrity and intellectual worth, and unbounded confidence must exist between the parties, before the safeguards of control are dispensed with. This method is usually employed on public occasions, and the discourse is announced as an inspirational address, which is exactly what it is. The medium, who remains

normal throughout, moves his hands and arms about, lowers and raises his voice to emphasise his points, exactly as if he were delivering his own message, and a stranger unacquainted with the fact that he was delivering an inspirational address would probably never guess the fact. The whole of the subject matter is supplied him as he goes on by the communicating control, and he often gets on his feet to address a public gathering without having the faintest idea of what he is going to speak about, and frequently after he has delivered his message he is unaware of its import. But in the amplitude of his faith he never wavers, never has he known his spirit friends to let him down.

(v) Planchette and Ouija board. Frankly, for physical phenomena and its methods we have not much use, holding strongly that the subject is too sacred to be demonstrated by such means. Its only justification lies in the fact that there is a material type of mind which can only be so convinced. With the simpler forms - such as the Planchette and the Ouija board - much useful work might be done, provided the necessary precautions are taken by the sitters. In the case of these contrivances it may be said with truth that you generally get what you ask for; if you bring to the sitting an earnest, sincere, prayerful mind intent on probing this great subject of survival, you will probably get good results in the form of proof of the continued existence of your loved ones, but if, on the other hand you regard it as an amusement or hobby, intended to satisfy a craving for a new sensation, or to help to kill time, you will probably be paid in the same coin, and disappointment and anguish will be your share. But whatever the frame of mind in which you set out on this strange journey it is well to utter a word of warning. There are millions of evil-minded spirits in the astral plane, always keen on getting into touch with earth children, and in the absence of any effective control over such communication from this side, they may probably attempt to mislead you, even to impersonate your loved ones, and as they are always athirst for mischief, and do not scruple to tell an untruth, they may cause you untold sorrow and mental anguish, besides leading you astray. Always aim at a prayerful atmosphere, and, whenever in doubt as to the identity of someone who is trying to communicate, challenge him boldly, in the words of St. John: Do you believe in God? If he does he will readily and willingly assure you of the fact, but if he does not; not even an evilly inclined spirit will dare to tell you an untruth on the most vital subject from the Great Beyond.

There remains the most remarkable phenomena of all - the medium. There is no subject that more appeals to us on this side of the tomb than the delicate organism that has enabled a bridge to be built between the two worlds, and whether considered from the physiological, psychological, or psychic standpoint, the medium is equally interesting, equally wonderful. At once the prop and stay of this great movement, and no less the butt and target for the animosity which is felt towards it, there is no one to whom the movement is more indebted for the position it has attained to-day, or who has suffered more in the cause. Than the upright, sincere medium who, often without hope of material reward, devotes his time and talents to

this great work, there is no one to whom greater honour is due; on the other hand, no condemnation is too strong for the medium who prostitutes his gifts to base ends. We fully realise that we are dealing with a very thorny, very delicate subject, and that the history of Spiritualism, like that of every movement that has to rely upon human agency, is too often tarnished by the record of those who have betrayed their trust. We are in the unique position, however, of being able to see every possible phase of it, and the side which the world does not see is fully apparent to us. To know all is to forgive all, as your poet finely sings, and do not blame us therefore, if, *in dealing with the case on the whole of the evidence*, we should be compelled to differ from you.

To err is human, and there is no denying that a certain type of medium, whose powers, maybe, are on the decline, will resort to deception rather than confess his inability to produce results, especially if he has taken a fee from the sitter. It is inconceivable, of course, that a sincere medium would resort to such ignoble practices; even if he were to temporarily lapse from grace, his spirit friends would never connive at such a base imposition. In many cases poverty hurries the medium on the downward path, greed may also have its share in his downfall, and we have known cases where the scepticism of the public has driven the medium to desperation and despair. "Since they never believed the truth when it was given to them, they shall now have what they asked for" seems to be the line of argument adopted on such occasions. Far be it from our intention to attempt to justify such conduct in a medium, we would only plead in extenuation, that he be given the same consideration as other higher placed delinquents in other movements, for whose shortcomings there is not infrequently an amplitude of excuses. But to those of you who are only too ready to stigmatise the Spiritualist movement we would commend the sublime answer of the Nazarene to those who accused the woman taken in sin. "Let him who is without sin amongst you, cast the first stone." Neither should the upright medium be branded with the ignominy of his few erring brothers and sisters. There are thousands of noble men and women who give up their time and talents to the prosecution of this great work whose only reward is calumny, abuse, suspicion, and even social ostracism. Verily we say unto you that for such as, without hope of material reward, continue to serve the Master, year in, year out, great and beyond conception will be their reward when they reach our side. There are few that rank higher in the hierarchy of Heaven than the lowly medium who has given his all while on earth, to the spreading of the light.

The planchette and the ouija board have been described as the despair of modern science. Not even the prescience of those great and gifted men who are almost overweighted with material knowledge can account for the movements of the pointer spelling out the words on the board, it being clearly established that the volition is not due to human agency, but we consider that the gifted and sincere medium is equally beyond the ability of scientific materialists to explain. In past ages regarded as a witch and burnt at the stake, it is only within recent years that the

general advance of knowledge has made it possible for the wonderful powers of the medium to be really understood. You will readily appreciate that in the case of wireless the more delicate the adjustment of the receiver the better the results, that for long distance stations extremely delicate tuning-in is required, and that without being properly attuned to the distant station you cannot receive its message. If you carry the analogy into the spiritual world you will readily see that in order to be able to intercept a message from the spirit world, the receiving instrument must be very delicately attuned. That is the essence of the medium's great gift. He is in tune with the Infinite; he is able to intercept the vibrations sent out to you from the spirit side of life. The triumph of wireless pales alongside that of the medium who pierces beyond the veil. The majority of earth dwellers are too materialistic to intercept any vibrations from our side, and what they cannot experience for themselves, they refuse to accept as a fact, a very human attitude, after all. But the medium, because he is the most delicate, most receptive, most highly attuned of all God's creatures on earth, can do it, and it is this rare receptive gift which enables us on this side to communicate with you.

The truly great medium frequently possesses the gift of clear vision - clairvoyance. Even in a normal state, he can see infinitely farther than the ordinary human being, and can not only discern the spirit forms that visit your homes, but can so describe their characteristics, and with such a wealth of evidential detail, as to enable you to readily identify them. By means of the gift of clairaudience, he is able to hear what the ordinary human ear cannot detect - sounds coming direct from the spirit world. His sense of smell is also more keenly developed - he can detect the perfume of flowers wafted from the spirit planes on to your mundane world. So you see that the being who is popularly supposed to receive his powers from the evil one, is the owner of rare and remarkable gifts - God given. We do not pretend that an evil-minded medium could not divert these gifts to an ignoble use, and receive evil instead of good messages, but in like manner, so can all your gifts be diverted and debased. But that does not say that their origin is not of God.

The selection of so many illiterate persons as mediums in such an advanced age as ours, is not due to accident, but to a deep design on our part. Knowing the scepticism that prevails on the earth plane, and how, on every conceivable occasion, the messages received are attributed to the medium himself, we have endeavoured to controvert the charge by employing, as far as possible, those mediums whose education has been somewhat neglected. Although we regret the necessity for the practice, as placing a ban on culture, we consider its adoption to be entirely justified, and what is more, it has entirely answered its purpose. A highly intellectual discourse from one of our Higher Intelligences, delivered through the lips of the medium cannot now be even any human casuistry, be attributed to him, and so the sceptic, being confounded on the one issue, has to look elsewhere for points of attack. The medium's brain, and the medium's subconsciousness, being thus ruled out of the question, leaves our sceptical scientific friends somewhat non-plussed,

but such is the perversity of materialistic mentality that even then every attempt is made to attribute the phenomena to every source but the right one - the survival of life beyond the tomb.

CHAPTER X

A BRIEF SURVEY OF THE SPHERES

When Jesus of Nazareth, in the course of His earthly career, referred to the 'many mansions' existing in His Father's house, He was, of course, speaking metaphorically. Normally, a 'mansion' cannot be contained in a 'house,' in the accepted terrestrial meaning of the term. What He undoubtedly meant to imply was that in the vast regions beyond the tomb, which He compared to His Father's house, there were many Spheres and Planes through which mankind would have to travel in the course of their evolution. For "My Father's House" read "astral plane," and for "Mansions" read "spheres or planes," and you have the key to His great prophetic statement, founded, not on sentiment or fancy, but on cold, ascertained, and, if you like, scientific fact.

Those of you who are under the impression that the terms 'astral' and earth' planes explain the whole scope of man's existence - are the Alpha and Omega of his whole career - forget that the law of evolution operates far more effectively and justly on our side than it does on yours, and that progression beyond the tomb is by graduated stages to each of which is allotted a definite and different sphere corresponding to the stage of progression which has been reached in each case. Each sphere is entirely different and distinct from the other, there is a clear line of demarcation between them, and the boundary is not merely a theoretical barrier, but exists in actual fact and practice. The difference between the spheres is as great, and the boundary as clear cut, as those existing on your earth plane to-day, say, between great Britain and France, or Germany and the United States.

The soul, in its flight from the earth plane, at the change called death, reaches what is known on our side as the First Sphere beyond the tomb. This transition is neither a matter of sentiment, justice, judgment, or reward, the simple fact, devoid of all theology, sentiment or romance, is that a soul, when leaving the earth plane, in obedience to the unchangeable law of spiritual evolution, inevitably arrives at its destined end - the First Sphere of the astral plane. It could not go anywhere else on reaching the spirit side of life, no matter whether it was the Christ, or the thief on the Cross, the greatest saint or the greatest sinner.

The First Sphere, although much larger in extent, and more beautiful in feature, than the earth plane, is, physically a replica of the latter. So much so that most souls on arriving there from the earth plane, are unable to distinguish it from the land they have just left, and the question that inevitably rises to their minds is: "Am I living or dead?" The reason for this similarity of feature is obvious to any one with a

clear conception of the character of the God Head, the idea being to minimise the contrast between the two stages, and to make the newly arrived soul feel more at ease. Here he receives a new body and finds himself endowed with new and startling powers, in addition to which he retains fully all the senses with which he was endowed whilst living in the body on the earth plane. The Problems which worried him most whilst on the earth plane - earning a living, and means of locomotion - will have entirely disappeared. He does not have to toil in the ordinary sense in order to support himself and get a living, neither is he troubled about means of communication between place and place, or person and person. He can engage in any employment he chooses, or is best fitted for, and he can travel at will with the speed of thought.

The First Sphere is not a sphere in the fully accepted meaning of the term on our side. Rather should we describe it as a halting-place, or resting-place, for the new-born soul. Better still, it could be described in your earth language as a spiritual "clearing house," the place where all new corners are temporarily detained in order to be kept under observation, with a view to determining for which sphere they are best fitted. If they have led a very stormy life - physically or mentally - they are first placed in a convalescent home until they have thoroughly recovered, but if, on the other hand, they have had a peaceful passing over, and were in a fair condition, mentally and physically, at time of dissolution, they are detained only for a short while for enquiries.

The question of their eventual destination is decided by their mental and spiritual condition. If they have led the average life of the man in the street, and have not committed any great or heinous crimes, and are up to the average standard of culture, they are usually sent to the 2nd Sphere. If they are above the average, morally and intellectually, they are sent to the 3rd Sphere, if of exceptional merit they may be sent to even as high a place as the 7th Sphere. If they are not considered sufficiently advanced for promotion to the 2nd Sphere they are detained in the first until they have shown some evidence of progress, and this is the only instance where the 1st Sphere is used for residential purposes. Those backward souls who are either unable or unwilling to appreciate any teaching at our hands, but insist upon going their own way, usually find themselves in the grey regions created and inhabited by spirits of their kind.

The First Sphere, variously known as Paradise and Purgatory, is the Sphere referred to by the dying Christ when He told His fellow sufferer, the thief on the Cross, "To-night thou shalt be with me in Paradise." Most of the truths of Spiritualism are to be found in the New Testament, only they have never been rightly interpreted. In these words Christ may be said to have consummated His Mission on earth, which was NOT to bear the sins of the world upon His own shoulders, but to impress an erring and dark generation with the truth of continuity of life beyond the grave. It is highly significant, surcharged and pregnant with meaning, that His last words on earth

were a confirmation of this great truth. "To-night thou shalt be with me in Paradise": in other words, in the 1st Sphere of the astral plane.

The 2nd Sphere, no less than the 1st, is remarkably like the earth plane in physical form. But the air, or ether, is much more rarified than is the case in the other two, which feature will be found intensified in our upward march through the Spheres. In point of fact, this refining of the atmosphere is one of the principal factors determining the difference between the spheres. The higher you ascend the more brilliant the light and the more rarified the atmosphere. While the atmosphere surrounding the earth plane is gross and heavy, and often injurious to health, that on the 1st Sphere will be found to mark a slight improvement, and that on the 2nd a greater still. The beauty of nature, like the atmosphere we breathe, is of a finer type, the blending of colour being more delicate, intricate, and subtle. Spiritually, it also marks a real advance.

We will now briefly sketch the fortunes of a colony which has been transferred from the 1st to the 2nd Sphere. They are accompanied by their leaders who report on arrival to the Administrator of the region where they have encamped, and who with his advisers and helpers visit them in person and extend them a hearty welcome to their new home, finishing up with a useful homily on the conditions of life in the new sphere, and how they can best be met. After that they are taken to rest in temporary quarters, where they are suitably entertained.

The newcomers will, for a time, abide in their temporary quarters, and if, at the end of their period of probation, they have proved their fitness for their new surroundings, immediate steps will be taken to provide them with a suitable home, the choice of location being left to them. It may happen, however, that they have spirit friends domiciled there, who have already provided for them, in which case the question will have been solved. But if this is not the case they will have to construct their own homes; i.e. build and design their own houses.

The task of erecting a house on the astral plane differs vastly from a similar one on the earth plane. On your side it is a very laborious process, or rather series of processes, whereby every material obstacle has to be overcome by material means. First comes the architect and land surveyor, next the contractor and builder, followed by the carpenters, bricklayers, masons and decorators, and various grades of unskilled labour. Nor must we forget the materials of stone, brick, marble, granite, mortar, sand, water, etc., which are also necessary. It is a triumph over material obstacles carried out by material means; a slow and painful struggle. At no stage of the process is it possible for material obstacles to be overcome instantaneously by will power, or thought, or any process save the material one. We do not mean to suggest that thought does not enter into the construction of houses on the earth plane, it is present at every stage, but what we mean to emphasize is that at no stage in the whole proceeding is it possible for thought to subdue matter to its will; there is no alternative to the process we have indicated, i.e., the gradual

uprearing of a house by the united efforts of many skilled craftsmen.

Here, on the astral plane, everything is different, as is perfectly natural it should be. Here matter is subservient to thought, which can bend it to its will. You have previously read in these pages that you have only to will a certain thing and it is done, but while you have not demurred to the truth of this perfectly amazing statement, we are convinced you have not fully realized its full and real import, and the great part it plays in the affairs of everyday life on our side. It is no exaggeration to say that the practical application of this principle marks a tremendous revolution in the affairs of mankind, but perhaps we can best impress this great truth on your mind by a concrete illustration.

The choice of locality having been agreed upon, and ratified in friendly council between the Administrator of the region and the leaders of the colony, the task of building is immediately faced, and it usually proceeds in this wise.

In the case of the dwelling-houses for the individual members the choice of type, etc., is left entirely to the future inmate. He can choose any kind he likes, and to aid him in his decision experienced architects, builders, and craftsmen are on hand with all necessary information, counsel, and technical advice. All labour being done for love, and not for material gain, the vexed and unending disputes between capital and labour never crop up on our side. All labour is done for its own sake, is voluntary and unpaid (in the earth sense), and there is never any lack of workers for any task that may be going on. Each inmate of the colony is assisted in his task from beginning to end by a host of willing and able workers. So far so good, you will say, but what about the materials? You cannot build houses, without the necessary materials, even if you do possess the power of making matter subservient to will. True enough, my earthly friend, that thought is worthy and typical of its origin. It is the old material problem of the earth plane cropping up again, you cannot make bricks without straw, but it is cropping up this time in a land where its demands are very summarily dealt with, and in a manner totally different from that which prevails on the earth plane.

It is true we cannot build houses without brick and stone and marble, but we can produce the brick and stone and marble, not through buying it at an enhanced price from a building contractor, *but by the sheer process of will power, as manifested through the power of thought.* Call it a miracle, if you will, but it is merely a plain, bald statement of an everyday occurrence on our side. When the plans are ready, the site chosen, and we are waiting for the materials wherewith to build the house, the whole company of colonists, Administrator and his helpers, together with all the skilled craftsmen called in to assist, meet together on the site of the proposed house, and *mentally concentrate upon the production of the necessary materials.* The response is usually not long in coming, the interval corresponding to the strength of the mental power put forth but the company persist until the whole of the things they have willed appear before their eyes. We are aware it reads like a fable, but it is

the bare truth we are stating.

The assembled company unites in mental concentration until the whole of the materials necessary for the building of the house appear in front of them. No magician's wand has been waved, unless the prayerful concentration of thought may be so described, but it is merely a concrete example of the complete supremacy of thought over matter, which formerly you were neither able to understand or believe.

The materials having been produced and placed before the company, next comes the task of building, when precisely the same process is repeated. As a result of similar concentration the foundations of the houses are dug and laid, next the floors, after which the walls are put up one by one, and after that the roof. Next in due sequence comes the building of the separate rooms, and finally the decoration of the whole building. At each and every stage of the building the experts responsible for that part are consulted, and, under their guidance, the necessary mental concentration is carried out until the whole scheme is completed and the house is ready for habitation. No need to weary you with minute details, it is the *Principle* of the whole proceeding that you want to grasp.

The instance we have given relates to a dwelling house for an individual. Public buildings, whether for worship, education, or any other purpose, and emulating if not eclipsing the grandeur of Rome, Greece, or even the modern world, are constructed in much the same manner, the only difference being that the whole community unites in mental concentration.

A "thought" house does not mean that it is constructed of airy, filmy matter such as the substance of dreams, but a house of concrete materials such as you use on the earth, *but created by the power of thought*. It does not mean that the practical materials are wanting, but that they are procured by processes of thought. A full realization of this chapter will enable you to understand the principles we have always emphasized in these pages – the tremendous power of thought, and also the basic fact that the astral plane is a world of thought, where only moral values count for progress.

It follows, from the winnowing process that has already taken place, that the spiritual tone of life on the 2nd Sphere has reached a higher level than on either the earth plane or the 1st Sphere. Fully conscious of their new conditions and powers, the new colonists will also have awakened to the fact that their further progress rests with themselves. They will have hearkened to the advice of their instructors regarding the development of their mental and spiritual powers, and also to their choice of suitable work, or profession. For the first time in their lives, probably, they will be at perfect liberty to select the work for which their hearts have craved, and for which they are best fitted. Any choice, however high, however humble, is open to them. If they choose to become artists or doctors, carpenters, or bricklayers, they will be furnished with every facility to carry out their wishes. Here there are none of those nice, easy distinctions which obtain on the earth plane, here all work is

ennobled. "All service ranks the same with God," says your great poet, Robert Browning, and nobler, truer words were never uttered by mortal soul. "All service ranks the same with God," might well be written on the portals of all the spheres, from the highest to the lowest, and a bricklayer on our side is regarded with as much respect as a barrister or an artist on yours.

The choice, not the enforcement, of a profession having been made, every educational facility is placed within their reach. Classes, schools, colleges, lecture halls, universities, or Halls of Learning, as we choose to call them, are at their service, unlimited time is theirs in which to avail themselves of the opportunity for study, and the services of the greatest experts in all the various branches of learning will be entirely at their disposal. Furthermore, they will have been liberated from the supreme disability which hampered their aspirations on the earth plane - the drudgery of earning a living. For the first time in their lives they will be free - FREE - in every sense of the word - to pursue the vocation nearest their hearts, with boundless facilities at command. Highly-gifted teachers from Higher Spheres will be on hand to teach them; what would you say to a lesson in Art actually given by Turner, or Michael Angelo himself, a lecture on Evolution by the famous Darwin, on surgery by Sir Edwin Lister, on statesmanship by Mr. Gladstone or Abraham Lincoln - to mention only a few of the names that occur to us?

But you must never fall into the error of imagining that it is only intellectual progress that counts. Far from it. We would go as far as to say that without spiritual progress, intellectual achievements will not take you far. With you the head is often reckoned greater than the heart; here the order is reversed. Here the heart comes first and only secondarily the head. It is more difficult to cultivate a pure heart than a wise head, schools and colleges can furnish the latter but they cannot achieve the former. The cultivation of the Christian graces as enumerated in the Sermon on the Mount is a surer guide to progress on our side than the possession of a mountain of learning. Not that we despise, or underrate, the latter. But it is character that is the supreme test of all progress, and it will have soon dawned on the colonists that not all the facilities for learning which are showered upon them on all sides will compensate for the lack of the Christian virtues.

When Jesus of Nazareth preached His famous Sermon He was not indulging in platitudes or rhetoric, He was merely stating truths that are daily translated into action on our side. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." These are the things that count for progress with us.

A change of body, to correspond with the change of atmosphere, takes place on transference to every finer texture than that of the preceding Sphere. It is lighter, finer, more spiritual, and these qualities will be found to obtain in greater degree in every successive sphere upward. It is made of the same matter as composing the Sphere - and since the matter of which every sphere is constructed becomes finer

with every upward transition, so does the body of the dweller herein. And so *ad infinitum*, until matter will have given way to light; a radiance such as we read of in connection with the Christ and other high souls.

Things are not necessarily easy upon transfer to a new sphere. The new dweller does not find his feet, as it were, for a time. Upward progression is mainly a matter of vibrations, and so the soul only accustomed to the grosser vibrations of the old Sphere at first finds a difficulty in adapting himself to the finer vibrations of the new. For vibrations mean light, and his vision is unable, for a time, to stand the new light. But he is never left to struggle alone. There is an abundance of teachers and counsellors at hand to instruct and help him, and to cheer him onward when he fails.

The 2nd Sphere is a world much like your own, only with certain refining elements which penetrate through the whole fabric of life. The men and women dwelling on it are not saints any more than you are, they are only two steps removed from the earth plane, but they have been subjected to a winnowing process and deemed fit subjects for promotion. They are perfectly aware of the conditions on which they inhabit the 2nd Sphere, and those upon which they will quit it for the next sphere above. For they are the Children of Evolution, and this is not their final home. But they have this conviction to support them; they are answering to the law of their being, and they know that if they live as well and wisely in their present sphere as they have done on the last; their transfer to a higher one is only a question of time. And time with us, who have Eternity to face, is a matter of very little import indeed. A day were but as a thousand years, a thousand years but as a day.

The 3rd Sphere differs from the 2nd mainly in a higher moral standard of life; physically, save that the air is more refined, the vibrations quicker and more powerful, it is much the same. New arrivals experience considerable difficulty in adapting themselves to the changed conditions. It is a physical, and not a moral truth, we wish to convey by the use of those terms "changed conditions." The vibrations of light are so powerful that they can only stand up to them for very short intervals at first. Why were these people transferred to a higher sphere before they were fit for it? our friend mentally asks, and the explanation is this. A colony in the 2nd Sphere, having so far advanced in spirituality as to outlive the spiritual demands of their present abode, have thereby qualified for promotion to a higher sphere, where new spiritual tasks await them which will call into being all the resources of their spiritual nature to successfully meet. As children of evolution, they are subject to change, to advance, and change and advance, in other words, progress, is the law of their being, as such. There is no progress without change, or advance; to remain still, in an evolutionary sense, is to retrogress, change and advance is the essence of the whole scheme. If this colony, having done all that was asked of it, had to remain stationary, sloth and inertia would have set in, and the possibility is that, instead of receiving promotion to, the 3rd Sphere, it would have

been reduced to the 1st until such time as its dormant energies would once more have been roused into action. For God loves not the sluggard; bear this well in mind. He is far more ready to forgive a fault due to over-eagerness than a lapse due to inactivity.

There is a sense of adventure present even in spiritual matters. Did not one of your great writers refer to Death as the greatest adventure of all? Transference to a higher sphere is not, of course to be compared with Death in the earth meaning of the term, but the spirit of adventure, of daring, of risk, of experiment, with possibly hardship and trial as concomitants, is not absent. And the man who is not prepared to risk this stands virtually self condemned, he is no fit subject for promotion. But it is not the case, however, that the colony would rush blindly into the new project. It is unwise to emigrate into a new country without some information as to the conditions prevailing there, and all its members would be advised beforehand of the principal features of the change. But even so, theoretical knowledge does not alter the fact that a practical change of conditions is a change none the less, and hardships and difficulties are bound to happen at the outset, to be met with a stout heart and front. And with what courage you meet new obstacles marks the mettle of the man.

The new colony, which is in the position of having to face the conditions of Sphere No 3 with the weapons of No. 2, is unable to make any progress at first. Progress cannot come with a knowledge of theory only, it must take its own time. They are confined to their domicile because they are inured only to the conditions which they find therein, conditions which they have brought with them, and which are not really proper to their new home. That temporary expedient is a dispensation of the Creator to meet the case of new emigrants on arrival. For the first few weeks, or even months, they are unable to venture far from their precincts because of the strong light which would blind them. For this reason they are unable to clearly visualise the human side of the new sphere, its dwellers may come and go all day, but they can only dimly see them. The new sphere does not appear very great, or very grand, at this stage. This handicap, however, does not extend to the physical side of the new country, which would be completely visible at all times.

There may be design in this idea of trial at the outset - probably to test the spirit of the new-comers. Gradually they are enabled to emerge from their temporary seclusion, by slow degrees at first, then, as their vision becomes stronger, and they are enabled to withstand the greater light, their horizon becomes enlarged, and life daily more interesting. The dwellers who had passed them by unseen are now completely visible, and intercourse becomes possible. The beauties of the new sphere gradually sink into their awakened consciousness, and they thank God in their inmost hearts for the great blessing He has vouchsafed them. They are now living on a higher plane, mentally, morally, spiritually, and a deeper, holier joy suffuses their whole being.

The 3rd Sphere possesses no special characteristics, it has no special virtues, no special aim, no special lesson to inculcate, it is merely a step upward in evolutionary sequence. A step upward in that sense, however, means far more than the words imply. But although the standard may be higher it is still based on the teachings of the Christ. Those teachings have been before the world for 2,000 years, but they have never yet been fully realized on the earth plane. They can never be fully realized until they are practised in daily life, until they are transferred into action. We venture to think that only one human being has ever understood them in their fulness and that is He who first uttered them. Mankind on the earth plane can never hope to realise them, - were any of them able to, they would have conquered Eternity. For them there would be no death, but prompt transfer to the sphere of the Christ's. Before such a being as can fully realize Christ's teachings all material obstacles would vanish as a dream. We do not infer that the laws of Evolution would be suspended - even such a being would have to traverse the usual journey through the gates of death to the first sphere of the astral plane - but the great white soul would henceforth promptly wing its way to the Christ Sphere, to be among the Elect.

It is only by climbing upwards through the spheres that Christ's teaching can be realized and understood. Higher than His teaching mankind cannot soar; it represents the topmost Pinnacle of Spirituality. Knowledge, which always marches hand in hand with it, may continue to expand in all directions, and soar to heights undreamt of, but the Crowning Heights of Spirituality are already known to mankind. And the difficulty of attaining them may be better realised when you consider that it is necessary to sojourn and pass through so many different spheres for a period of, perhaps, thousands of years in earth time before those hitherto inaccessible heights are scaled. And this although the climber lives in better conditions, and is granted more powers, more faculties, with every upward flight. What chance, then, has the poor earth toiler, hampered by material obstacles from the cradle to the grave, to attain this great ideal? But, all ye earth toilers, take heart, God is not only a God of Mercy, He is also a God of Love.

Save that it marks an upward step from No. 3, there is not much to chronicle concerning the 4th Sphere. Physically, it presents much the same features as those we have been discussing, the atmosphere is more rarified, the vibrations more brilliant. More is expected, and more is obtained from its denizens in the way of moral rectitude and intellectual progress. Its inhabitants are more spiritual, their outlook on life is broader after their experience of the other three spheres; they are beginning to grasp some little of the true inwardness of God's wonderful creation. His great goodness to the whole race of mankind, His purpose and His methods. But still as regards a full comprehension of the whole vast subject opened out by these vistas they are but as little children. And little children we must all become if we wish to learn the ways of the Father; not without method or reason did Jesus of Nazareth emphasise the point whilst on the earth plane.

The 5th Sphere is a realm of pure gold, calling for a high standard of all round development of Character and efficiency in all its inmates, who will be found to mark a great advance on their predecessors. They will have developed an inward grace no less than an outward beauty, using the latter term in its deeper sense. Outward features respond to inner characteristics, and there is a gentleness and refinement in their attitude towards each other greater than mere courtesy of manner, and indicating a deeper origin than a mere desire to be outwardly polite. From long meditation on the greatness and the holiness of God, as exemplified in His Creation and His attitude towards His people, and from frequent contact with fellow beings in a highly developed state, they have inherited a serenity of disposition, combined with a full measure of true knowledge, as to make them delightful companions and advisers. They do not often speak in anger, or rashly, and they are ever prepared to take a compassionate view of another's failings. In fact they are beginning to learn the great Christian virtue of meekness and humility, becoming as little children once again, and if we were to describe in a word their characteristics, we could employ no better term than that.

Physically, the Sphere exhibits some rare developments in colour; the sunrises and sunsets have to be seen to be appreciated - mere words could do no justice to their glory. The heavens seem clothed in more wonderful hues when seen from here; the glory and wonder of the stars are greater. Whether they in reality remain unchanged, or whether they change is in the beholder, we cannot here determine, but certain it is that the whole realm of Nature seems more lovely, more wonderful, when seen from the 5th Sphere than when viewed from others lower down the scale.

The joy of life is felt more keenly in this sphere; here at last you meet with real intelligence, disrobed of passion, bias, or bigotry. Here we can face facts in all their nakedness and all their beauty, see them and discuss them with able minds for the first time in our upward career. The whole range of knowledge, extending from that known to you in its crude form on the earth plane, to that rare and radiant revelation vouchsafed to us by the Higher Intelligences of the advanced Spheres, seems to have taken an upward turn, to have lifted itself on to a higher plane. The grossness of materialism has vanished from life and all that appertains to it, spirituality, intelligence, and deep knowledge have taken its place. The development in the arts and sciences is so great that you will scarcely be able to identify them with your primitive studies in the same subjects whilst on the earth plane, and to those you already know there are others to be added, Creative Science, for example, truly one of the wonders of the world beyond.

By Creative Science we mean that adaptability of matter to mind which results in the immediate and full realization of your wishes, and no better example could be given than the building of the house in the 2nd Sphere. But the subject is so important, and its implications so many that particular attention is given to it in this sphere, and special Courses of Study in Creative Science figure in the curriculum of the

Colleges and Halls of Learning. By implications we mean that so many arts and sciences, trades, occupations, and professions are involved in its application, that a large measure of study is necessary in order that all exercising this wonderful faculty shall do so successfully. Architect, builder, mason, carpenter, bricklayer, etc., etc., were all concerned in the building of the house, and before the art of Creative Science could be so applied, it was necessary that the people concerned should have full knowledge of the working of those trades and professions, in order that there might be no hitch, and that the house be well and truly built. Hence the necessity of the Colleges, etc., attendance at which is a delightful proceeding, a veritable labour of love.

The advance represented in all departments of learning in the 5th Sphere would confound most instructors on the earth plane, and we could only wish that your materialistic professors who contend that all ends with physical death could be temporarily transferred to a class room here. But as that is impossible, even such highly specialized scholars having to undergo the same process of evolution as the humblest denizens on the earth plane, we must forego that pleasure until such time as they will have reached the 5th Sphere in ordinary course. That they will not be penalized for their opinions so long as they are sincerely held, God not only being broad minded but a lover of an enquiring spirit that dares to find the truth, needs scarcely be added. Sufficient for them will be the mortification of finding that the theories they advanced will be proved worthless when the day of sifting comes, and that any explanation of the survival of life after death which does not admit the spiritual element is but a fabrication and a dream.

Concerning the 5th Sphere we could write volumes, and our only regret in leaving the subject is that, in this brief survey, we have not been able to do justice to its many wonders as a temple of spiritual beauty, true knowledge, and rare comradeship. Here you can stand and survey the long, dreary way you have already travelled; from this rare vantage point you can see faintly, as through a mist, the majesty and glory of the life that is still before you; here, while still gazing at Eternity, you can thank your Creator and Father that you have come so far on the road.

The 6th Sphere is devoid of any special and distinctive features - it being of near kin to that great sphere which precedes it, and in relation to which it more nearly represents a suitable territory for expansion than an advance in any other sense. But the 7th Sphere is as noted in its own way as the 5th, standing out from its predecessors as another realm of pure gold from which all dross has been purged in the fires of Evolution. Here are sent, direct from the 1st Sphere, all those truly great souls whose reputation on our side is far greater than on yours, and whose moral worth and rectitude is such that they are spared the usual intermediate stages of promotion. On its roll are mustered names which will greatly surprise earth children, whose estimation of their owners was of a vastly different kind, and it

throws much light on the statement of the Christ that the first shall be last, and the last first. In many other respects, also, the 7th Sphere presents startling surprises.

It is the seat of government for all spheres below the 7th, including the earth plane. Here sits the great Administrative Council of the Spheres, presided over by the Chief Administrator, and from its stately portals issue, daily and hourly, decrees for the governance of all the realms beneath it. The Council and its Administrator are fully worthy of the great trust reposed in them, fully equal to the stupendous tasks they have to carry out. Its members are famed, not only for their high moral standing and rectitude, their extensive knowledge of the spheres, but for their administrative abilities. They are not all dwellers in the 7th Sphere, but include specially selected visitors from other higher spheres. They meet daily at the great Council Hall, where, by means of the special reports, tables, charts, maps, and mental pictures supplied by an expert Intelligence Department, they can see at a glance how their dominions are faring. Events as they occur are immediately thrown on to a screen in the great Council Hall; Contour maps depicting not only the scenes of a disaffection but the actual disturbance itself, are immediately available, while the legislators are also in the happy position of being able to get into instant communication with the seat of danger and so deal with the situation without delay. Were their duties and deliberations subject to the delay which frequently hampers earth legislators, and their Intelligence Department ever so little at fault, it would be well nigh impossible for them to cope successfully with their great tasks.

The powers of the Council are practically unlimited and touch inhabitants at every stage of their existence. No happening in the spheres or earth plane is left unnoticed, however trivial it may appear to you, and the Council has always its hands on the pulse of the people, wherever they may be. All petitions from them to the Supreme Being are remitted to the Council for attention, and it is from them that the answer comes, and after due deliberation; nothing is done blindly or in haste. Each supplication to God is dealt with on its merits, and on that alone. Similarly all public movements are carefully supervised, any unwise tendencies being discouraged, and all worthy ones acclaimed. The control of Nature, in their dominions, is also vested in the Council, and Creative Science is often impressed into service. Reports from all districts are continually received, and after due consideration the Council takes action. The education and enlightenment of the people, their encouragement in all good designs, their spiritual and material welfare, so far as the latter term may be held to apply to a spirit realm, also come within its province.

To you who hold that Nature always goes her way undisturbed, immune even from God's intervention, the above statement may come as a surprise, but it is perfectly true. While there are laws regulating Nature with which many of you are fairly familiar, it must be thoroughly understood that the interpretation of those laws rests with God and His Ministers. That is not to say that miracles are resorted to; they never are. Nature has its laws, but it is the duty of God's Administrators to see that

those laws are correctly carried out, and for the greatest good of the greatest number. A certain sphere having a season of very bad weather has to be recompensed in some way or other, and to this end the Council works, compelling Nature to do the will of God. Within the Spheres, of course, this can be left to the operation of Creative Science, and this is often done, but sometimes the remedy lies in a direct control of Nature, which is not quite the same thing as Creative Science, the difference being very difficult to explain in your language. But the fact remains, Nature is moulded to God's will for the benefit of His people, when circumstances require it.

As regards the earth plane the most we can do, Creative Science not being applicable to that region, is to endeavour to impress earth children with our thoughts. But although the results may not be apparent to you, our operations being entirely unobserved, our influence on human affairs is considerable, none the less.

To sum up, the 7th Sphere, in virtue of the lofty character of its inhabitants, the vast extent of their learning, a bare repetition of which would stagger humanity, the glory and beauty of its physical features, which constitute a great advance even upon the 5th Sphere, the sheer loveableness of its inhabitants, their broad outlook of life, their toleration towards others, and last, but not least, their meekness and humility, is fully worthy of the great honour of being the seat of Government. Worthy also of this great purpose are the superb Halls and buildings, redolent of the greatest in Art and Science, in which these activities are housed.

Our survey of the Spheres has rested so far on the solid rock of actual observation and personal report, but the higher we ascend beyond those spheres with which we are personally familiar, the more difficult becomes the task of describing them. Beyond the 7th Sphere the personal contact of this band of communicators comes to an end, and we have to rely for our information upon what we can glean from those all too rare visitors from the higher realms whom we are sometimes privileged to meet. The little we can give you, however, can be relied upon to be accurate.

There is nothing startling to chronicle regarding either the 8th or the 9th Spheres, but the 10th marks a landmark in the Evolutionary stage. The higher we ascend the nearer we get to the God Head, and the 10th Sphere is distinguished by its being the abode of those very highly advanced spirits by whom we usually allude when we refer to the "Higher Intelligences." Yes, the 10th Sphere is the abode of the Higher Intelligences in very truth and word. Knowledge of such a delicate and advanced texture that we can hardly describe it to you in earth terms. We can only indicate it by saying that it exceeds in profundity, variety, and depth, anything known to the most brilliant scholars on this side of the 10th Sphere, and in saying this we have more than covered the highest flights of knowledge yet made on the earth plane. Spirituality of an order and a purity equally unrealizable to earth children also finds its fitting home in the same Sphere, which may well be called a temple of God, rather than a habitation of man, however advanced. For the nearer the approach to

the God Head the greater the knowledge and the deeper the spirituality; inversely, the higher these attributes the less the chance and tendency for human frailty and error to obtrude itself.

All knowledge and all virtue arises from the same source, are but different expressions of the same principle, and we have now reached a stage where they seem to blend together, and be as one. Since man is not naturally sinful, and since lapse from virtue is due, not to an evil nature, but to a lack of accurate knowledge, it follows that where knowledge and spirituality are blended in the same character, sin, i.e. ignorance, has but a poor chance to exist. This is the view of sin which finds credence in the 10th Sphere, but it is not really new. Nothing is. Did not Socrates give expression to the same opinion 2000 years ago, an opinion that cost him his life?

This being the key to the opinions held in the 10th Sphere, you can imagine the high, broad, tolerant plane on which they live. Man - a true son of God - winging his way upward towards his Maker, redeeming his birthright with every upward flight. The whole plan of the ages, by which Evolution has brought him to his goal, made plain to the understanding. The whole tragedy of his career traced to its true source; want of knowledge, not want of goodness. Truth and light radiating in all directions, can you wonder that the atmosphere of the 10th Sphere is too exalted for the coarser clay of mankind, and that he must be doubly, trebly, purified in the cleansing fires of Evolution before he is able to maintain his foothold on its blessed soil.

There are spheres beyond the 10th, as you are well aware, there are hundreds of spheres, but as we are anxious to maintain this narrative on the solid rock of Truth, we will not venture far beyond its borders. There is too much hazard, too much guess-work, involved in the description of those spheres passing current even on our side to allow us to pass them on to you as the solid truth. There are spheres with special characteristics; there is the Sphere of Peace and Contentment, the Religious Sphere, where religious questions are mainly dealt with, the Sphere of Intellect where are foregathered in one brilliant band those great geniuses that enlightened mankind in past ages with their immortal works, the Sphere of Music where the past Masters of Melody are apt to foregather, and to give a fresh taste of their genius, the Sphere of the Poets and the Artists and the Sculptors and the Great Thinkers. No need to venture on a catalogue of their names or to hint at their exact location in the spheres. The law of like calling to like acts as the great classifying medium on our side. Not for everybody, even on our side, is the society of these great geniuses made free; to enter into their company you must become attuned to their great minds. That is the price you have to pay, but knowing the reward we cannot say that it is too high, since the fruits of intellectual companionship are rich beyond compare.

CHAPTER XI

THE CASE FOR MODERN SPIRITUALISM

Although the case for Modern Spiritualism has been often and ably stated during the last few years, we do not feel the need for any apology in bringing it to your notice once more. For a movement more pregnant in its bearings upon the fortunes of the whole human race, whether it be in the material world or in the world to come, can never be conceived. Beginning with a few isolated rappings heard by two young American girls some seventy years ago, it has since made such headway, in spite of the most strenuous opposition from all grades of human society, until to-day its repercussions are heard all over the civilised world, and it has developed into the most powerful, revolutionary, and all embracing movement in the world's history. Its followers, which to-day are numbered by the million, embrace all classes of society, from the highest to the lowest, and include in their number some of the brightest ornaments of the professional world; on the other hand it has commanded the devotion of millions of what you, using material standards of comparison, would term the lowest strata of mankind but what we, by an inverse process of reasoning, would dignify by quite another name. And without instituting any invidious comparisons we would like, at this stage, to emphasize the fact that it is to these so called lower strata that mankind owes the priceless blessing of this new revelation which has brought endless consolation to the minds and hearts of millions of earth children living on the globe to-day. It is these lowly pioneers, poor, illiterate, but unswervingly true and sincere, that have kept the torch of Spiritualism alive through an epoch that has been distinguished by the virility and venom of its opposition to any movement that did not rely for its appeal upon materialistic standards. Anything that savoured of the spiritual that was not frankly associated with a material foundation and support, was taboo to the unthinking millions who, although they worshipped the same God as the Spiritualist, would hold no communion with him, but regarded him and all his works as the tools and emissaries of the Devil himself.

But it is in no spirit of reprisal that these pages are written. Far from it. If Spiritualism is to be worthy of its high mission, its followers cannot afford to regard with anything stronger the regret, the opposition of those who have never fairly or seriously considered its tenets and claims; the religion which is based on brotherly love cannot countenance any hatred or dislike of those of opposite views, but while earnestly and humbly endeavouring to correct those views, would strive to live at peace with all mankind, demonstrating by action rather than speech, the principles on which it is based. We will therefore endeavour, with all the sympathy and humanity at our command, and without in any way outraging the views of other people, to trace the origin, development, principles, and implications of the movement known to you as Modern Spiritualism.

Even as the mighty river springs from a tiny stream, so does Modern Spiritualism

owe its origin to small, insignificant happenings in a North American village 70 years ago. Nothing more and nothing less than repeated tappings on a wall, detected by two little girls, *but which could not be traced to any material source*. That small beginning is significant of the spirit of the new movement which was later to overwhelm the world of religion and science - *its disassociation from all material sources*. It is this trait which distinguishes it from all other movements - its origin is not of your world - and probably accounts for the violent opposition it met with, for man is a jealous creature, and what cannot be traced on earth must of need have an evil source. But those rappings were understood by a few, and from them sprang a mighty movement. By slow and sure methods it forced itself upon the attention of the world; the rappings grew into séances, the séances into circles - private at first but public afterwards - the circles grew into societies, the societies into churches. With it grew apace a great literature. It never lacked for leaders, and so torch bearers kept the flame alive and carried it to all parts of the civilized world. Men of science were attracted to its extraordinary phenomena and extraordinary claims, and while the majority of them were too materialistic in mentality and outlook to allow for the existence of a spiritual - they could believe in nothing they could not detect with their senses - there were always a few who understood its message and championed its claims, to whom, considering the ignominy to which they were subjected, every honour is due. For while it owed its origin to the unlettered many who instinctively *felt* its truth rather than understood it, and who were frequently unable to give a reason for the faith that was within them, it was necessary that the weight of the great thinkers and intellectuals should be thrown into the scales in order to impress the middle and higher classes who scorned to take their lessons from their inferiors in rank and ability. To-day, while some stupid legal restrictions, relics of a past ignorant age, still remain, the spiritualist can proclaim his beliefs from the housetops, and be listened to, if not with understanding, at least with respect. Only the most bigoted amongst earth children of this enlightened 20th century still continue to refuse it a hearing, or who insist on the old heresy that anything that is not demonstrable to the senses must spring from an evil source.

Its origin, then, was on our side. It was from us that the rappings came, and they came in that simple manner for the simple reason that that was the only way in which we could attract your attention. We succeeded in drawing your attention about seventy years ago, but we had been engaged on that same apparently hopeless task for thrice that period. Nay, we have been engaged on that task since the world began, and even if it had been necessary to go on tapping for another thousand years we would cheerfully have done it. It was irrevocable, it had to be. But why, you may well ask? Why, having shaken off all mortal coils, should we trouble about the stage that has passed? Why rap at all? Why not leave the poor old earth plane to its own devices, to go its own way, according to its own light? That is a formidable question to which we have a thousand reasons in reply. First of all, we did it because we had to, because under the orders of the Most High God we had to draw the attention of

earth children to our continued existence. But lest this element of compulsion should rob the attempt of all its merits we hasten to add that we did the work out of sheer love of it as well. But what was the necessity for the rapping? It was to convey to earth children knowledge which was concealed from you, knowledge that was inimical to your best and truest interests, and knowledge which we were never possessed of until we had crossed over to this side. Our mission was twofold. It was not only to impart new and correct information to you about your future life, but it is was also to supplant the incorrect information on which you were basing your hopes of future welfare. The message of the Most High God was: Get in touch with earth children, show them the light, and the errors of their ways. And that message had to be obeyed no matter what obstacles stood in the way, what time it occupied, what trouble it involved.

But set aside for a moment the fact that we, as servants of the Most High God, were merely obeying His instructions, and place the situation on a human footing. Have you forgotten the fact that most of us here have someone dear to us on the earth plane, someone in whose welfare we are deeply interested, and what would you think of us, if, as ordinary human beings, knowing that our loved ones on the earth plane were living and dying in ignorance of the truths of the after life, what would you think of us if, having through crossing over become possessed of this knowledge, we had not made some attempt to pass the information on to you? Would it be a man's part who, being able to swim himself, would look on at a non-swimmer in peril of drowning, and not jump into the water to save him? From a purely human standpoint, to put it no higher than that, the least we on our part can do is to try and pass the information on to you, so that you, at least, may profit by our teachings, and avoid the errors into which, in ignorance of that teaching, we fell into ourselves. We ask you, can we put it any fairer than that?

It is not that we wish to establish Spiritualism as a rival religion on the earth plane; there are plenty of those already, but that we want its teachings and truths to permeate every religion known to man. It is the TRUTH we are anxious about, not the strength or survival of this or that religion or denomination. To a certain extent there is good in the many schisms that religion has created, it has introduced the element, or stimulus, of competition, of rivalry, of which man is so fond, and which has acted as a spur to his efforts throughout his whole history. God does not despise any religion, there is some element of good in each, each carries a certain proportion of Truth, and God, so far from discouraging or censuring their efforts, allows each a certain amount of rein, taking care, however, to extract the good from each, for universal application. That is the view taken on our side of the various religious rivalries on the earth plane. They are all productive of some good, and for the sake of that good, God forgives and forgets - a great deal. Methods are employed on the earth plane, and to a certain extent justifiably so, which could not for a moment be allowed on our side.

All these schisms, these paltry divisions amongst the churches on the earth plane, find no repercussion here. The religion which finds acceptance here is what, for want of a better name, we call Spiritualism. Not that the “ism”, so dear to earth children, finds much favour on our side. What we aim at is not so much Spiritualism as *Spirituality*, carrying out the will of God, and embodying the Spirit of Christ, not as a specific religion but as the expression of our whole lives. The “ism” may be necessary to you to connote the truths of Spirituality, but it is the latter truths we are concerned with, not the name. It is quite immaterial to the Creator what religion you profess, what creed you believe in; you are never asked when you cross over to our side: What is your religion? Are you Roman Catholic, Church of England, or Nonconformist? Neither are our coloured brethren asked on arrival whether they are followers of Budha, Mahomet, or Confucius, or any other religious leader? To Him, as to His Ministers, these terms are wholly devoid of meaning when it comes to the question of a man’s salvation. What is far more important for you is whether during your earthly career you tried to do your duty in the sphere in which you found yourself, that you tried to be kind and considerate to the people whom you came in contact with, and that according to your lights, you lived a straight life, gave in charity to those worse off than yourself a little of what you could spare, *after paying your just debts*, and that you had a smile and a kindly word for those less fortunate than yourself. The number of times you went to church or chapel, the prayers you uttered, the charities you gave so that the world should know it, will avail you nothing when you have crossed over to our side if you have neglected those little duties to which we have just drawn attention.

For be it known to every man, woman, and child on the earth plane, the whole creed and motto of Spiritualism is embodied in the following three negations: -

NO CASTE, CREED, OR COLOUR

and whoever comes across to our side under the belief that his special brand of religion or creed, his nationality, social status, or colour, whilst on the earth plane, is going to ensure his salvation upon landing on our shores, let him or her be instantly undeceived. There is no distinction of creed, caste, or colour on our side; here we start on a footing of perfect equality, without the slightest regard to those distinctions which meant such a lot on your side. For the spirit of Modern Spiritualism is that of Universal Brotherhood, and thus is it fulfilled: the dark man and the brown man and the yellow man are on the same footing as the white man, brothers all, each to each, without a hint of distinction and disparity. And to do the white man justice he is the first to see, once his eyes are opened, that it must be so. How can it be otherwise if this world is to redress the grievances of the old? How can we start life on our side save on a basis of perfect equality - One Father - a loving, forgiving, indulgent Father - and one Family of Brothers and Sisters embracing the whole of the world’s vast population.

The last sentence brings us to another point - the Universality of Spiritualism. It has

no limits, no bounds, only such as those of the universe can set to it. It embraces every race on earth independent of every other consideration, it never stops to ask: are you a Hindoo or a Zulu or a Britisher, it simply asks him if he believes in the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man? It never asks to what religion do you belong. You can belong to any religion so long as it is consistent with the above great Truths; worship in any form you may, form is quite immaterial, it is the spirit that counts. Can any man who reads the Scriptures not fail to see that Christ's life on earth was one long struggle against the supplanting of the spirit by the form? He found it in every situation in life, and opposed it for all He was worth. He found it in the Temple, in the market, in the home, in all man's transactions it was deeply embedded, and He did His utmost to drive it out. What about those who prayed aloud and in public, who gave alms so that all should see? Have you forgotten with what a passion He scourged all such practices, and can you wonder at the importance He attached to the spirit as against the form? Yea, it is the letter that killeth.

Although Modern Spiritualism is not intended to supplant, but rather to revivify, the older forms of religion, it is significant that its appearance on the scene, in an active and intensified form, coincides with a period of decay in the latter. There never was a time when more interest was felt by the man in the street in the great question of religion, and yet there never was a time when the attendance at the orthodox Churches had reached a lower ebb. The churches are empty, and yet the Ordinary man is consumed with a longing for spiritual consolation. Why does he not take his place in the Church as did his forbears for generations, when he, not less than them, is as vitally interested in the worship of a living God? The Churches have not changed an iota during the centuries that have passed, they cling as passionately as ever to the old time-worn dogmas and creeds and ceremonies, but they have failed to capture the heart of the new corner. Their appeal has lost its fire and force, the altars of the old religion have grown cold, not one spark of response can they evoke in the minds and hearts of the new generation which prefers to remain outside its folds. Surely something is wrong here. When two parties meet, and one, although hungry, is not satisfied with the sustenance offered by the other, then something is wrong with that sustenance. That is why the churches are empty to-day, it isn't because they have changed - that is the tragedy in the situation which they are unable to perceive - but it is because the other, the man in the street, the would-be worshipper, has changed. He is not satisfied with the food which they offer him, and they, seemingly, have no other to offer, hence the impasse: an altar that has grown cold, a service that has become barren, a church that has become empty, with the hungry worshipper outside the gates.

That, in a nutshell, is the tragedy of Modern Religion. The generation that has grown up since the war is a new generation in more senses than one. It is a thinking generation, above all things it is thinking on its own, objecting to being spoon fed. The enormous advance in general knowledge which has penetrated every strata of

society is mainly responsible for this upheaval, this revolution - for it is no less that we are faced with to-day - and in consequence of the great light which has penetrated into almost every cottage in the land, people are asking questions and shaking their heads. They want to know more about the religion which has been left them as a legacy, a heirloom, and they are not satisfied with the usual humdrum, orthodox replies. In the light of the flood of new knowledge which science has let loose upon the world, the old answers are not considered satisfactory, and they want to know more. The Church, hidebound by its musty textbooks, its ancient dogmas, its outworn creeds, its mediaeval methods, is unable to give any other answer, however much it may wish so to do. If it does, it means going back on itself, its own teachings, it means that it will stultify itself; the impasse continues; the Church repeats its meaningless message, its ceremonies and sacraments, while the would-be worshipper - never more hungry for spiritual sustenance - stands outside at the gates.

He will stand there until the Church is able to give a satisfactory answer to his questions, until a religion will have been evolved which will satisfy the intellectual moral, and spiritual needs of an educated man. There was once a time in the history of the Church when she was the custodian - and worthy custodian - of all knowledge, when she was fulfilling her great destiny in the life of mankind, but the times have changed. The layman has outstripped the priest in the race for knowledge, and it is Education once one of the Church's props and stays - that now stands between her and the man in the street, and until his demands have been satisfied the latter will remain where he is.

Whose is the fault? We are reluctantly driven to the conclusion that it lies with the Church. For 2000 years she has held sway over mankind and mankind has broken away at last. Outwardly she is prosperous, but inwardly, alas, she is poor. If the Christ who founded her came back and visited your fashionable churches with their mysterious ceremonies, their unintelligent creeds and dogmas, do you think He would be able to recognize them as His spiritual home? Through all glittering ceremonies, her gorgeous vestments, her superb architecture, do you think He would be able to discern an echo of the voice that cried out: Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Would He be able to discern any affinity between the sumptuous palaces which house her prelates and the stable at Bethlehem, or the little cottage at Nazareth? Amidst all this riot of pomp and splendour and stateliness would even His piercing eye be able to detect a stray gleam of the gospel of simplicity and love which He once preached on the earth plane? We doubt it, farseeing and sympathetic as is His gaze, and we have an impression that He would be sorely tempted to act as He once did at Jerusalem, when He strove to cleanse His Father's House of the many abominations which time and man's errors had accumulated in its once holy precincts.

It is at this juncture, this grave crisis in the orthodox Church, that Modern

Spiritualism steps on the stage, and this is its offer to the man in the street. It offers him a religion that is not earth born, but has come direct from its Author, the God Head Himself, a religion that has been cleansed of all the errors that have contributed to the failure of the Church. It offers him a religion as wide in its conception, and as pure in its intent, as the Heavens which declare His glory. It offers him a religion as pure, as simple, and as sweet as that which the Christ Himself preached on the earth plane - the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of man, with Love as the Corner Stone. It makes a clean sweep of dogmas, creeds, sacraments, ceremonies, form of any kind, and offers him a religion which will appeal to his intellect no less than to his heart. On the basis of ordered Evolution it will give him a clear, logical explanation of his birth, development, and progress from the beginning of time through all the aeons that the universe shall last. It makes a clean sweep of sect and schism, all restrictions of caste, colour, and creed, and places the whole vast human family on the same equal footing. It is prepared to guide him through the swamps and thickets of this material existence, which is but a prelude to Eternity of which he is the heir, and to show him the way of progress by means of Evolution through the spheres until he will have reached his goal, the abode of the God Head Himself. It will make all possible allowances for his many limitations during his stay on the earth plane, and will await his crossing over to the spheres, where it will supply all his wants and instruct him step by step in his new abode. And it will never forsake him, no matter how often he may fall, but, obedient to the commands of the God Head, will strive to rescue him from his errors, and place him with his face towards the light. Step by step it will guide him through all the intricacies of the new life, until he will be able to stand on his own feet. And all this it will do for him without fee or reward, content only to carry out the command of its master, the God Head Himself. For we who write this are His Servants, and are prepared to spend our time, day or night, in the service of our brothers and sisters on the earth plane. This because of our love towards our Heavenly Father, and also to his children on earth.

We have access to information which is denied to you on earth. Modern Spiritualism can answer the question of the man in the street, and set at rest his doubts. To begin at the beginning, we are in a position to assure him that the story of the Creation as set forth in Genesis is not only a myth, but has not even the merit of being original, it having been handed down to the Hebrews by another race which existed thousands of years before them. It stands to reason that if the Hebrews received it, as claimed, orally and direct from God at the beginning of the world, then theirs must have been the first race to inhabit the earth. But how does this agree with the fact that the Hebrew race was anticipated by several races which flourished thousands of years before them? Again, according to the Old Testament, the age of the human family would be about 4000 years B.C. whereas modern science demonstrates that mankind must have inhabited your earth for at least 150,000 years.

No less a myth, we can assure him also, is the story of the Fall, which automatically disposes of the necessity for the Atonement. Equally mythical, and equally pernicious, are the doctrines of Original Sin and Eternal Punishment. That the theory of a Redeemer, or Messiah, is not new, but was handed down to the Hebrews by other and far older races, has also been conclusively proved by the discoveries of Modern Science.

As with the Old Testament, so with the New. The life of Jesus of Nazareth, than whom no man spoke more truly as the mouthpiece of God, has been misinterpreted from the cradle to the grave. It is in no spirit of irreverence that we again assert that the story of the Virgin Birth, the Espousal of the Holy Ghost, the genealogical descent from David, a very doubtful honour, even if proved, the purpose of His death on the Cross, in expiation of a crime that was never committed, to be a pure fabrication of man. We have, then, to consider Him not only as a human being who, by His own acts, qualified to be the Son of God, but as a great Spiritualistic medium whose every deed and word whilst on the earth plane can be fully explained by means of its teachings. No one has fully realized what a flood of light can be thrown by Spiritualism upon the career of Jesus of Nazareth, and it was our intention to have dealt with Him from this standpoint in this book, but greatly fearing our ability to do justice to such an exalted character in the space our disposal, we have decided to forego our project, and to allot our next volume to a life of the Nazarene.

The time has thus arrived for us to part, and if only for a short while, we have to bid our readers farewell. With the earnest hope that what has been written herein, dedicated to the sacred cause of Truth, may offend no man, and that the seeds which have thus been scattered, may fall on fertile soil.

THE END.