

LIFE BEYOND DEATH WITH EVIDENCE

by

The Rev. CHARLES DRAYTON THOMAS
[1867]

With Introduction by

The Late VISCOUNTESS GREY OF FALLODON

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INTRODUCTION

By **VISCOUNTESS GREY OF FALLODON**

This will be a useful book if it falls into the right hands. There are many to whom it may bring a measure of comfort, who feel an intense and despondent longing for word or sign from "precious friends hid in Death's dateless night"; but, let it be added, only to those whom the obtaining of this through a medium does not fill with the sense of insuperable repugnance that it arouses in some. This book is not likely to be of use to such as find a more sublimated union through the channel of the Holy Eucharist; nor will it be congenial to Theosophists, or those followers of Rudolf Steiner, who so rightly teach that we should dwell beyond the psychic, pressing on into those higher reaches, which are the more celestial development of our nature. To many, however, this is a counsel of perfection, and it may well be that this book will reach a wide public of its own. Think of the great crowd that watches a football match, or sees a race run, or one that lines the route of some royal wedding, or state funeral, and ask yourself how many illumined minds, how many elevated religious minds, even how many minds simply intuitively convinced of survival, are there in that sea of faces? A small percentage. It is this other vaster portion of our fellow creatures that those of us who believe we have spoken with the risen dead, want to reach. And it is for these that such books as this are published.

The author has observed a rigorous method of investigation that puts high value on his work. Readers will find the subject dealt with in thoroughness and integrity. Spiritualism has not been too rich in wise adherents. Sir Thomas Browne says that if the banner of Truth trails in the dust, it is the fault of the standard bearer. And this subject, of all others, has had its full quota of ensign bearers that have been either strangely clumsy, or unworthy of their trust. So, to find someone willing and capable of working along the lines of the Society for Psychical Research, combining sympathy with their rigour, is no small good. Mr. Drayton Thomas is known to me through our common interest in Psychical Research; and we have had more than one interesting case of cross-correspondence, in our work, as recorded in my book *The Earthen Vessel*.^{*} These devices of Book Tests and Cross-correspondences, to the casual observer so unnecessarily complicated, were invented, it is believed, by a band of psychical-researchers on the other side of death, in order to counter the objection so commonly made, that all simpler communications arise from mind-reading. Many people think that it is we, spiritualists, who thrust these kinds of complicated methods upon our communicators, making, in a most repellent lightness of feeling, a kind of "pencil and paper game," out of this spiritual bond. Not at all. "Book Tests" and Cross-correspondences," and the still more puzzling Newspaper Tests," have been given us from workers who have progressed further along this subject than have we. It was a great moment when, in the curious phenomenon of Cross-correspondences, it became apparent to the pioneers on our side of the grave, that they were not working alone. When in the midst of irrelevances, truncated quotations, and snippets from the Classics, there emerged something, fragmentary but insistent, which suggested the thing being part of a scheme,

devised by those on the other side, to get messages through in a way that could not be attributed to any activity on the part of the medium, nor to any mind-reading between the medium and the person receiving the message, by any of the ordinary channels of sense. The moment when this first was apprehended, may be likened in Myers's fine image, to the thrill in the heart of the worker tunneling through some dark mountain's centre on hearing the first faint ring of the picks of the approaching party, working from the other side. In years to come, when people now unborn, shall look back upon this Age, to view its promontories, this outcome of the work of the Society for Psychical Research will stand as one of the Great Peaks. It is not that communication with the dead is any new discovery; it has been an old tale in the long Story of Man. The Folklore of every country is charged with it religions are based on it and vitalised by all it implicates but for lack of verification, all this has gone down the wind. Now, in this modern movement, the thing is being built upon a rock. There has been instituted a system of evidential investigation. This is brought to bear on such psychological material as may be presented to the test. Anything that has not passed through this mill is disclaimed; nothing is rightly held of value that does not bear the hall-mark of this trained scrutiny. And the work grows.

** Published at the Bodley Head.*

There have been some in all ages who have held they spoke with the dead, and who have given us their message.

It may be the message is being recorded, fruitfully, at last.

PAMELA GREY.

PREFACE

But what avail inadequate words to reach
The innermost of Truth?...
Yet, if it be that something not thy own,
Some shadow of the Thought to which our schemes,
Creeds, cult, and ritual are at best but dreams,
Is even to thy unworthiness made known,
Thou mayst not hide what yet thou shouldst not dare
To utter lightly, lest on lips of thine
The real seem false, the beauty undivine.
So, weighing duty in the scale of prayer,
Give what seems given thee. It may prove a seed
Of goodness dropped in fallow-ground of need.

WHITTIER. Utterance.

This book explains how I became assured that I was speaking with friends who had left earth. It also outlines their description of life in realms beyond.

The whole evidence is too voluminous to print, but sufficient is given to indicate its variety. I have selected striking instances among many of equal value. There is little mention of failures, because these have been relatively few. My friends enjoy testing their powers and some experiments have not been entirely successful.

The book and newspaper tests (explained in chapters XI. and XIII.), were experimental, and in these there were usually some failures. Both success and failure have been carefully analysed-the former by Mrs. Henry Sidgwick in a paper which appeared in the Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research for April, 1921; and the latter in my book, *Some New Evidence for Human Survival*.

The impressive force of evidence personally received is difficult to convey in print. My book is, to the actual fact, something like a collection of butterflies in a museum, arranged and motionless, while away in the glades of the forest the air is full of joyous life, flashing and flitting from tree to flower under the blue sky. Those who know the life of the forest can best realise the significance of pressed specimens.

In addition to proofs, my friends tell something of their life and surroundings since leaving earth. But they remind me, from time to time, that they are unable to say all they wish, and that speaking through a medium is analogous to passing stones through a sieve; part will go through while the residue will not. I discuss the causes of this limitation in chapter XIX, and elsewhere.

In my opinion information about our future life, with its practical implications, is the goal to which all psychic phenomena and evidence should lead. I have so arranged the following chapters that the evidence and the description alternate. This has a

double advantage: it avoids the monotony of following one line of thought too continuously, and it also produces that intermingling of proof with description which characterises my sittings. Since the evidential matter proves accurate it gives added probability to the descriptions which accompany it.

Further light upon such obscure subjects as the medium's faculty and the methods of communication will, doubtless, be obtained by continued investigation. One of the hopeful features of Psychical Research is the increasing number of qualified students who are now entering the field.

I am indebted to the Society for Psychical Research, from whose literature I learnt how to appraise and discriminate in dealing with psychical evidence.

But special gratitude is due to Mrs. Osborne Leonard, through whose kind co-operation the material of this book has been obtained, and to Viscountess Grey of Fallodon for many helpful suggestions, as well as for the Introduction to this volume.

January, 1928.

CHAPTER I

THE ARGUMENT

THIS book is founded upon personal experience during eleven years of study with a highly gifted sensitive, Mrs. Osborne Leonard. The messages were received while Mrs. Leonard was in trance. As the methods of trance communication are becoming familiar to the more intelligent part of the reading public, it may be unnecessary to allude to them here; especially as they are fully described in subsequent chapters.

My purpose is to give numerous examples of the evidence which has satisfied me that I am in conversation with my father and with my sister, Etta. The former was a Christian Minister who passed on in 1903; my sister, who had shared my studies for three years, passed over in 1920. As they both have told me much about their experiences since leaving earth, I devote several chapters to their descriptions of life as they find it in realms beyond death.

Before presenting the main body of evidence it may be useful to illustrate that spirit of cautious discrimination and suspended judgment which should mark a student of psychical phenomena. I shall, therefore, review a few examples of the messages received in my sittings with Mrs. Osborne Leonard, criticising them in turn and opposing to each some hypothesis other than the seemingly obvious one of "spirit return." I shall then adduce further examples which exclude those alternative hypotheses. Advancing in this manner, we shall come to cases for which there would seem to be no reasonable explanation but that of actual communication from one's friends in the unseen.

1. I was repeatedly informed of events in our home which were unknown to me. On inquiry, these messages were found to correspond accurately with the facts.

But might not this information have reached the medium's mind by some kind of telepathic message from my wife who had occasionally accompanied me to Mrs. Leonard, and who knew of these household events?

2. Many such messages related to events in our home, of which my wife was as entirely unaware as was I.

But might not these incidents have been observed personally by the medium during the condition termed "travelling clairvoyance," or even seen by her while achieving some sort of television? This is met by a consideration of the next type of message which introduces information which could not have been ascertained by the medium, even had she been residing in our house.

3. On my mentioning that I was interested in the Leys School at Cambridge, the communicator, who claimed to be my father, remarked that two people whom he knew had taken great interest in it. He was unable to transmit the names in full, but

said that they commenced with the letters R and P. This puzzled me until I found that Drs. Rigg and Punshon had been prominently connected with the opening of the school.

Clearly this was beyond the medium's discovery by clairvoyance, but might it not have been read from my mind? I had no conscious memory of the matter in question, and was but eight years old when the Leys School was commenced. Granting the possibility that I retained a subconscious memory of the event, there remains the difficulty of supposing that the medium's mind could select such apposite information from my subconscious memories, and could do this at a moment's notice.

4. Immediately after the departure from our house, of a guest who had spent a good deal of time in my study, I was told that the letters M and D, representing two names, had been noticed in my room. On my next meeting with this guest he informed me that, during his stay with us, he had been thinking very much about the advisability of applying to his former chief to replace him upon the staff of his newspaper. The initials of paper and chief were respectively M and D.

Here was something impossible to have been obtained by any means known to science. Is one to suppose that I had subconsciously obtained this information from our guest's mind and that Mrs. Leonard had then read it from me? It is difficult to feel comfortable about such a slender hypothesis, even though it be admitted that the powers of mind may be greater than we have supposed.

5. A stranger wrote asking me to obtain news of his son in a remote part of Mesopotamia, who had been missing since a skirmish with the Arabs. The letter gave his full name and the circumstances in which he was last heard of. I asked my communicators if they could help. They suggested that I should think and pray about the boy for several mornings before my next sitting, and mentally ask him to come to my study. They said that they would be present and would notice if any stranger came. During my next sitting they said that the lad had been to my study and that they had obtained information from him. They proceeded to give some particulars which agreed with what I had learnt from the father's letter; they also added a full personal description and several evidential items. At subsequent sittings more information was forthcoming. I first forwarded the description of the boy's personal appearance, asking the father if he recognised it. The reply stated that it was more detailed and exact than the father himself could have given; a photograph was enclosed so that I might satisfy myself of the extraordinary accuracy of the description. Encouraged by this, I sent the evidential messages; these included details of the boy's home life, which proved to be true. It was thus established beyond possibility of doubt that they related to the boy in question, and that he had been killed in action.

Is there any explanation other than that of spirit agency? It might be suggested that I had subconsciously psychometrised.* the father's letter and so learnt particulars

which were within the father's knowledge. But it so happened that the letter sent me by the boy's father was typewritten, so that if psychometry came into action at all it would seem to have been confined to the signature alone. Faced with this alternative, one finds the spirit explanation far the likelier.

** For definition of Psychometry, see page 77.*

6. I was told that my mother was to receive at Christmas a bag of unique design, and this article was somewhat minutely described. No such present appeared at Christmas, but, at the sitting following, the communicator expressed certainty that it would reach my mother soon it did; it arrived on her birthday, which was four weeks after Christmas. On meeting the lady who gave this present I learnt that she had made it specially for my mother, intending to give it at Christmas, but later decided to reserve it for the birthday. Full details are given later in this book. Where is the link in this case? The lady lived at a distance, and we had neither seen nor heard of her for many months; neither had I any reason to think she would be giving a present: nor did she know Mrs. Leonard.

It would, I think, puzzle anyone to discover an alternative to the explanation given by my sister, who was the communicator in this instance. In earthly life she had known the donor of this present; also, she tells me that she is often with our mother and able to notice, the thoughts sent out to her by friends. Such a thought she had noticed in detail before making her prediction of this present. First, she caught the intention to make the gift at Christmas, and was still confident that it would arrive, although the giver changed her original plan about the date.

7. My father showed much interest in a book I was writing and became impatient for its publication. He said, at one sitting, that if I looked on the second shelf behind my study door, fourth row up, and tenth book from the left, I would find, towards the middle of its fourteenth page, words forming a message which he would like to give out to the world. Exactly where described I found the following appropriate sentence, this suggestive little book has appeared.

That book was published in 1922 under the title, *Some New Evidence for Human Survival*, and in it will be found numbers of similarly verified book tests. It may be asked whether I had any idea of what might be found in the designated place. I had no idea whatever. The book in question proved to be one I had not looked at for ten years, and I failed to remember having noticed the sentence in question. If it be suggested that this was only a happy coincidence, mere chance, I would reply that I, and other investigators, have had too many such coincidences to credit their being the result of chance. In the chapter on Book Tests attention is drawn to an investigation by the Society for Psychical Research which decides this matter definitely. For where chance coincidence produced 4.7 per cent successes, the book tests given in trance messages obtained an average of 36 per cent., and my own communicators, who had practised this type of experiment, achieved a considerably

higher percentage of success. The investigation established conclusively that chance coincidence did not explain the book tests.

8. Certain experiments which extended over two years were named newspaper tests. They were a development of the book tests, and consisted of references to items which would be found in some public journal on the morrow—most frequently *The Times*. They were ingeniously devised by my father to prove his independence of any information which might be in my mind, or in the medium's. He also used them, now and again, to give additional proof of his identity; for he interwove incidents connected with 'his life on earth with names to be found in some clearly defined part of the morrow's paper. Here is one such instance: On January 16th, 1920 at 3.20 p.m., I was asked to examine the morrow's Daily Telegraph, and to notice on its first page, near the top of the second column, the name of the place where I was born. The message continued, "He is not sure if it is given as a place name, but the name is there."

There appeared next day, four lines from the top of that column, the following advertisement in which "Victoria" might be either a personal or a place name. Victoria Send by return. Most anxious second message. I had always thought of my birthplace as Taunton, never as Victoria, but recollected having heard the latter name used in connection with Taunton. So I wrote to my mother asking for particulars. She replied that at the time of my birth they were living close by the Wesleyan Church of which my father had charge in Taunton, that it was always called Victoria to distinguish it from the larger Church at the farther end of the town; and she added, finally, that his Church was situated in Victoria Street, and that the house where I was born was in Victoria Terrace. Comparatively few persons now living would remember that I was born at Taunton, fewer still would be aware that I was born at Victoria. Yet this is just the kind of fact which my father could not possibly forget. I may add that this advertisement had not appeared in the Telegraph of the preceding day.

This class of test was, as I have said, devised to demonstrate independence of any telepathy from human minds. No person on earth knew the solution of the tests at the hour when they were given; and even the operators at the printing works could not be sure of the position any particular advertisement would occupy when the paper was finally made up some hours later. Two separate strands of information were combined by the communicator, who brought into definite connection some fact from his earth life and some name, or statement, which was being prepared for insertion in the morrow's Press. It was my invariable custom to post a copy of these tests to the Society for Psychical Research on the day they were given. I have therefore independent witness to the fact that these tests were actually received by me on the day before their verification became possible.

Although Newspaper Tests have been before students of Psychical research for several years, I am not aware that any criticism has succeeded in casting doubt upon their validity. It may be confidently said that they provide definite proof of

communication from some mind other than that of any person on earth; and that they sometimes contain evidence that the communicator is one of the sitter's departed friends.

Glance backward now to the simpler tests from which we started and which we sought to explain in this or in that manner, without attributing them to the action of the discarnate. Having at last proved that the discarnate are indeed speaking, we shall find it reasonable to think the earlier evidences were also originated by them. Spirit intervention being finally proved, all our earlier and tentative criticism must be revised in the light of that fact. It is wise to ask how far each result might have been achieved by a medium's unaided faculties, but we should be as wary of attributing all phenomena to the medium, as of placing everything to the credit of spirits. Both these causes may possibly come into action at different times and in varying degrees.

It may be said that the instances adduced deal with trivial matters, yet it would be untrue to say that they have been used in a trivial way. Not only were they accompanied by messages dealing with matters of highest interest, but they were so used as to demonstrate important facts, and to lead onward the thoughtful observer. Do we deride the specialists for counting the hairs on gnat', and dissecting the entrails of mosquitoes? Not if we recollect that it was by so doing they checked the fevers of Panama and thereby made practicable the cutting of its canal. To a casual observer that minute attention to insects might have seemed trivial, but it had in view the making possible of a waterway between two oceans. Where there is intelligent purpose small things may be used for great ends, and in selecting evidence from trivial items a very remarkable intelligence has been shown in these communications. If they are what they seem to be they are the calculated effort of some who have passed beyond the limited life of earth to bring us into a closer and more intelligent relation with the boundless life beyond it.

CHAPTER II

COMMUNICATIONS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SUBJECT

I AM aware that some persons are nervous of psychical phenomena in any form. In some instances this is due to their having been told terrifying tales, or perhaps they recall some chance supernormal experience of which they did not realise the significance. To such minds the whole subject seems related to a mysterious and dark region wherein lurk unknown perils. And so they not only turn away from it themselves, but urge others to do the same.

Yet in knowledge there is not only power but also safety. In our investigations we shall find nothing which cannot reveal something further of the beauty and entrancing wonder of God's ways. Darkness is but the earth's shadow, and there are always the stars above it. And what seems to us to be mysterious is only beauty, hidden for the moment in the shadow of our ignorance. Communication with our loved ones in the life beyond, should be a step upward in our realisation of the approachableness of Jesus Christ, who was the expression in human form of the Highest, and who is "Our Friend, our Brother, and Our Lord."

The following extracts from conversations with my father and sister will indicate their view of the importance and helpfulness of such intercourse.

April, 1917. Through Feda (Mrs. Leonard's "control")

Your father thinks that Spiritualism can be very dangerous if not properly explained. People should be taught to understand it. Some who accept the fact of spirit return, on finding that they get good advice from a medium, go again and again, asking guidance in all sorts of circumstances about which they ought to use their own powers. This is bad. We are placed on earth to develop ourselves. Such persons need to learn how rightly to use the privilege of communication, and not to remain too dependent on others.

July, 1917. Through Feda.

Your father considers that this communication might not be good for everyone. Some are not ready for it. The more one realises the reality of the spiritual life while on earth, the better is he able to live, and the more is he fitted to benefit by this kind of communication. The subject has come to grief repeatedly because the wrong sort of people took it up and dealt with it in a wrong way.

December, 1917. Through Feda.

We are very ready to give any information which we think may prove helpful. I am aware that there are those on earth who consider they have no need of us. But in these difficult times there is a widespread need of that which will elevate life,

augment and help a true faith, and prompt men to realise the higher self. When men have no ground for their faith they gradually become slaves to lower influences.

January, 1918. Through Feda.

He has already warned you about the danger of bringing this subject (i.e. the reality of communication) before undesirable people.... His mind has changed about Spiritualism as a whole, but upon the one point he is stronger than before. It has been misused by some; not only by the foolishly curious, but also by those who took it up for bad ends.... It is like playing with a sharp weapon; they cut themselves badly, but, unfortunately, they often hurt others first. Such people give the whole subject a bad reputation. But, used wisely, it is a great power for good, as you yourself have already experienced.

December, 1919. My father controlling.

Certainty about a future life will bring into the Kingdom of God many who are now outside. It was a shock to me when I realised how many had discarded the Christian faith on reaching manhood. Although I had some idea of it before, I only knew it fully after my passing. I then saw that relatively few, in their mature years, held the full certainty and truth of Christianity. But they can be brought back, and, further, we might make it certain that they would never again lose their faith, if facts were offered them at their critical period. I consider that the educational system is wrong; for the brain is developed at the expense of the soul, and superficial knowledge usurps the place of more important things. People need something they will really believe; they are ready for it. Those of you who know are responsible for giving them some proofs of the next life before they pass over. Fifty years back, our eyes were not opened to these truths relating to the next life. I heard something about Spiritualism, but did not think it sufficiently important to make it a study. So many things stare us in the face, to the importance of which we are not awake. I have talked with many here who tell me exactly the same thing.

October, 1923. Through Feda.

Etta says, I should not like to be back again in the body; I should not welcome it for myself, save that you might see and hear me. This is such an interesting life. When on earth I learnt something of it through psychic studies, and you know what joy it brought into my life. It opened up such a wonderful new mental life in me.... Compared with this, my interests on earth seem so small. It will be delightful when you come here.

Father speaks of the prevalence on earth of the dread of dying, of passing into the unknown. But it need not be unknown and we are working to make it known.

November, 1923. My father controlling.

I wish that the Churches were exercising a greater influence upon the minds of men, so that they might be led to consider and adopt a spiritual aim in their lives. I have no wish that Spiritualism should become a fashionable craze, yet better that than the present widespread indifference to all that concerns the soul and its after-life. I observe an absence of high aim and intelligent anticipation of future destiny in many to-day whose predecessors were, at least, regular attendants at church. If Spiritualism became popular, many might be influenced by the mere force of example, even if not thinking things out for themselves. But better that, rather than remain as they are; better come in like sheep, than stay away from spiritual and uplifting influences. There are different ways of arriving at spiritual knowledge, but the great thing is to arrive. I think that this communication is indeed a real method of acquiring spiritual knowledge, and for some people it is the best method.

January, 1924. My sister Etta controlling.

Father thinks that there are now many ministers who would thankfully welcome this subject of communication if they were only sure that others would not spoil it and do hurt by it. But he remarks, we cannot afford to consider only the people who would do harm with it. That would be like hiding all the knives and forks and everything else that could possibly be used harmfully. There are really very few things which could not be misused if people chose to make wrong use of them.

August, 1925. Etta controlling.

Our passing was not all loss to you, for we can now bring you into touch with higher things than we could have done while still on earth. This communication opens out things so; it did for me. I wonder if you realised how much it meant to me. My knowledge and interest in it came to me at a time when I greatly needed it. I had been feeling a need for something more, as if something vital were missing, notwithstanding my happy home life. Then this came to me just at the right time, bringing something more into my life, not only something fresh, but of more vital interest than I had ever known before. All my life afterwards was so full of interest. I notice that it has done the same for you. Also, I see that it has already increased your usefulness and will do so still more. So you can imagine how very happy I am about it.

January, 1926. Father controlling

Spiritualism is important to the world for the help it will give in knowledge of God and in self-mastery. We see the difficulties besetting men, and their need of hope. The hope which Spiritualism gives will do more good than all the intellectual wrangling now in progress. People have strayed into agnosticism or worse, appalled at the imagined lack of interest in the future life. We do not condemn, for we understand their difficulties, but to know the truth would help them.

April, 1926. Through Feda.

Your father says, I am very hopeful about the future. When men understand the nature of life in the Beyond, the aspect of the country to which they must inevitably go sooner or later, they will make up their mind to prepare for it. That is my belief; if a man understands, he will prepare. He has not understood so far. What has he been taught, save that there is another life? He does not know of what sort, nor what it is like, nor what is going on there. All is so vague that his ideas of it are vague, too. We wish to make known what it is really like, and what man has to prepare for. As you know, I was always a great believer in personal responsibility. We need to bring that home to men in a practical and spiritual sense.

September, 1926. Etta controlling.

I think that the wonder of this communication between the two worlds increases for both of us. While on earth I read of those who said that, after a time, they found they could get no further with the subject. It was their mistake; for it unfolds new wonders continually. I think that the cause of their getting no further was their not marching with it, not permitting it to unfold in their own mind at all. Such persons look at it through a narrow opening only, and then are surprised that their view does not expand.

There is no doubt that when one takes up this knowledge of communication and its benefits, something further is expected of him. He is, in a sense, obliged to think more and to do more. You have found that you cannot keep it to yourself, as some do.

November, 1926. Etta controlling.

I used to think death rather dreadful, but that was before learning about psychical communication. Perhaps it was an idea of being hurt in getting rid of the physical body. There are many here who are convinced that there will not always be this difficulty in death; that a time will come when men gradually prepare for leaving the body, and will then go and later return in a transmuted body. That may be thousands or even millions of years ahead. Before it can come to pass, men's lives and bodies must become much purer. When men can go and return, to be seen by their friends, death will not seem so sudden a break, and others will realise that they can do the same when sufficiently developed spiritually.

When we descend to spheres lower than that on which we dwell, we coarsen our body. "Coarsen" is scarcely a pleasant word, and my meaning is simply that we, to some degree, solidify it. That is accomplished by thought. Jesus did it at will on returning. He did not leave his physical body behind, it was transmuted. Father thinks that this is what will happen to all mankind eventually; what Our Lord (Iid was a sample of what we might do. In the far future one and another will begin to do it,

then many will follow suit. The human body can be made so much better than it is at present. Perhaps that is why the phrase, "Body, soul and spirit," includes the body; for the body is worthy of being prayed about and of the Divine care.

Ours is a wonderful life, Dear. I would not come back now. Look upon death as an opening, and not as a closed door. We used to regard it as an end, even Christians did so. Many think that they will have to sleep, and sleep a very long time. I think those are the happier who can just trust and hold on, whatever comes. If only all could do that it would be all right; but there are always some who cannot do that, they require knowledge. Although a real faith is much higher than knowledge coming through Spiritualism, yet many need the latter.

November, 1927. Father, through Feda.

What a change your knowledge of my presence makes. Your consciousness of our lives, companionship and nearness has made a difference to you. I was as near before, but it did not affect you because you were not conscious of it in the way you now are. And so with the Heavenly Father's love, and His Spirit presence, the more you are conscious of it, the more you can receive and benefit by it.

CHAPTER III

EVIDENTIAL MESSAGES

THE following references to my father are taken from notes of my first sittings with Mrs. Leonard. It will be seen how his identity became more and more definitely established.

My letter of introduction to Mrs. Leonard was given by one who, at that time, had only the slightest acquaintance with me. Neither he nor Mrs. Leonard have been to our house. None of the references to my father were elicited, or assisted, by "fishing" for information; to that process I am most sensitive and never fail to discount anything which might possibly be attributed thereto. It will be seen that many of the statements made concern matters which could not easily, if at all, have been ascertained by inquiry, whether among my acquaintances or from books of reference.

1st sitting. Feb. 3rd, 1917.

Feda said:-

"There is an elderly man with a beard here. The beard is grayish, his hair is thin at the top and rather sticking out at the sides. He has a moustache, the brows are prominent and gray. His face is good in shape. He is fine-looking and he held himself up well."

This is an accurate description of my father in his later years.

"He shows himself as if in a large photograph, the face full and looking thoughtfully. One hand rests upon something, while the other is out a bit away from him. There was something dark at the back of this picture."

We have a photograph corresponding to this description. It represents my father in early life and, as it used to hang in his study, it would have been strongly impressed on his memory. At the date of this sitting it was in my mother's house at Bournemouth. Mrs. Leonard was then living in London, and did not know my mother.

"He had been used to a room with books, it was a study and there are shelves of books. On the table were books and papers. The furniture was solid and dark. This man had met many people and had helped many. He must have been a fine character. The initial 'J' comes with him."

This accurately described my father's study and his character. His first initial was "J."

"His throat was frequently husky, it troubled him, for his voice would go thick sometimes and he would try to clear it."

Here followed an imitation of clearing the throat by a series of small, rapid coughs, and it was at about this point in the description that I realised its relevancy to my father.

"His end was sudden. He had not been very ill. He was surprised, and not too pleased, because there were things he had been accustomed to look after and he wished to attend to them. He was very methodical and liked to see to things for himself. There was a paper referring to some money that was 'put out,' he was rather worried about it; the matter could not be carried through before he passed over, but it was completed afterwards."

These remarks are correct. The money formed part of a Trust which he managed, and at his death a considerable sum had been removed from one investment and was in course of being transferred to another, He was most punctilious about such matters and always prided himself upon being minutely accurate and methodical.

"He is a very fine spirit, has much vigour and force. He would talk direct to people and always meant what he said. He would not allow himself to be talked over; he had his own ideas and stuck to them. He would have been very wary of this subject of communication, but now he knows more than he did then and understands it better. Feda feels that it was the throat and not the chest which used to cause the voice trouble. He would continue talking when it was out of order and then had to suffer for it afterwards."

All this is true of my father as I knew him on earth.

Readers who are unfamiliar with the difficulties incident to transmission of messages through psychic channels will ask why my father was introduced in a way so roundabout, and not simply as John D. Thomas. This peculiar difficulty with names is discussed in chapter XXV.

2nd sitting. March 23rd, 1917.

"He left three important papers in a bureau.... He left some paper in a drawer, not a will, but 'Guarantee' is the word which fits and in a way explains it. It looks to Feda to be a paper about so long and so broad (hands indicate 12 inches by 4 inches) and in three or four folds, perhaps. It is a financial paper representing a good sum of money. It was left there and is important."

I omit a striking description of the bureau and the room where it stood for interest centers in the statement about the papers. Three important papers in a bureau "correctly describes securities for the Trust money which he had invested in three directions. The other paper, or "Guarantee," was a Certificate of Shares in an Educational Company, which were his personal property. On examining this

Certificate I found that it was doubled over once and then folded thrice. Its dimensions as folded were those indicated by Feda.

My father had usually called my mother by her name, Sarah. Remembering this, I asked if he could "give any information which would be proof to Sarah," whom I was seeing shortly. Immediately came a number of descriptions which, it was said, she and I would be able to recognise. There was no hesitation in giving the reply and not a trace of angling for clues.

"There was a room with a great deal of wood in it. Put this down especially."

Now, I could think of no room in his house to which this description applied, so I asked if further details could be given:-

"It was the only room in the house with so much wood-work, a sort of paneling on the walls."

I was left as much in the dark as before, but when my mother read this she described to me the front room of a house in which they had resided at Great Yarmouth. This room was oak-paneled from floor to ceiling. My parents had frequently spoken about it to each other at the time, and they never had anything like it in any of the dozen houses they moved to in later years. I was aged four and a half when they left Yarmouth, and my recollection of this wood-paneling was confined to a dim idea of moulding around the cornice.

"Near the bureau, but above it, and easily seen when sitting at it, is the picture of a man, elderly with fine face, a splendid character."

This was the position occupied by a picture of John Wesley, in his later years. My father would certainly have described Wesley as "a splendid man." He was one of that great preacher's ardent admirers.

"A big sideboard, old, dark, and long, projecting out from the wall. Underneath are cupboards and drawers, and at the top are cupboards again. In the centre is something raised, making the middle look higher."

An excellent description of a sideboard of quite unusual pattern which my parents had bought seventeen years previously when retiring from the itinerancy and furnishing their own house.

"A table with a shelf upon the top of its back this shelf juts out from the back, as he describes it to Feda."

There is a bookcase bought at the same time as the above sideboard. It is distinctly unusual in design and is accurately described by the above words.

"There is something there that he thought a lot of. It is one of those glasses (here the medium's hand indicated the overmantel of looking-glass in the room where we were sitting). Very fine; perhaps not everybody's taste, but he liked it much."

My mother recognised this as indicating the overmantel in my father's study. From her I learnt that he had bought it at a sale and had re-enamelled it himself, and that he admired it more than did my mother.

"Sarah has a screen with birds upon it."

I had no recollection of such a screen, but on hearing of this test my mother produced two such and remarked that they were used during the last six years of my father's life. They are Japanese work, with birds figured in gold thread.

There is shown to Feda a pedestal on the ground with a figure upon it. Pedestal about four feet high and white, the figure of good size."

My mother recognised this white pedestal and statue which used to stand in the dining-room at Gosport, where they resided for two years, leaving in 1873. It had been my mother's purchase and was often the subject of my father's humorous criticism.

"There was a model of a horse in dark colour, standing on a shelf."

This answers to the rocking-horse which I played with in 1870-1. It stood upon a substantial wooden platform, and being unusually large, was the most conspicuous object in my play-room.

3rd sitting. April 21st, 1917.

The chief indications of personal identity given in this sitting were the following:-

"He has met 'B' there, one who was connected with us in a certain way, but not in the latter part of his life, nor under recent conditions. It was away from here and in a place where the air was fresher and the surrounding country beautiful. The house was closed for a time."

The initial given is that of the surname of our family solicitor with whom we formerly had business relations extending over many years in the Isle of Wight. He had passed over two months before this sitting, as I was aware from press notices. We had not heard from him for some twenty years. The family residence at Newport, I.O.W., had been given up, and remained closed for a period before being let to strangers. "Away from here" is correct as this sitting was held in London.

"This 'B' went to a building of grey stone, he went there regularly." The description then proceeded to indicate a little mannerism habitual to 'B,' and which I instantly recognised.

The building of grey stone to which "B" went regularly fits the church of which he was one of the oldest members and a prominent supporter. All these references pertained to matters which would be very familiar to my father, as they also were to me.

"This 'B' was ailing for a long time, but passed suddenly the trouble was connected with his heart."

On this point I was without information, but on writing to his family discovered that it was true.

At one period of this sitting the medium gave a number of little coughs and Feda remarked that the communicator used to do that. This was a repetition of the coughing and throat-clearing in the first Leonard sitting. She then remarked that he smiled at this imitation. I inquired whether he still continued to cough. She replied, "'No,' he says, 'I am now hale and hearty, looking a young man in the prime of life. Were you to see me as I really am, it is possible you might not recognise me. My appearance is more like the early photograph which shows me without a beard, but with rather prominent whiskers. Have you that photograph?'"

I recognised this description. The photograph, which had been mentioned in the first sitting, was then in my mother's house at Bournemouth. Mrs. Leonard had not been in that house and did not at this time know my mother.

At another part of the sitting, and following references to friends of my wife, Feda several times repeated in an inquiring whisper, "The twenty-seventh? The twenty-seventh?" And then, speaking to me, proceeded, "It is not to do with them, but he is reminded of an anniversary which falls on a 27th. Ask your mother about it."

I replied that my mother would certainly be a most suitable person to ask, as her birthday falls upon a 27th. Feda then remarked, "He is laughing and seems pleased."

At five previous sittings with Mr. Vout Peters, my father had established his identity by many correct references to his earth life, including a statement that he had invested money in mines. Peters said, "He laughs about the mine, your mother was against it." This remark was made four days before the present sitting with Mrs. Leonard in which Feda suddenly said:-

"He is sure that something better could have been done with those mines. They were not carried on in the same way as when started. Everything got at sixes and

sevens. All would have been right if only managed rightly. He says, 'I am as convinced of it now as I was then.'

This is precisely the manner in which my father habitually alluded to two investments in mines which he had made against advice.

4th sitting. May 12th, 1917.

A few days before this date I had been speaking at Luton. Much of this sitting was occupied in giving proofs that my father had been present there observing my movements and surroundings. There were also a few allusions bearing upon his identity, and these are given below.

Feda said that my father had recently been with me at a place which he formerly knew, but that it was greatly changed since those days.

My father had twice visited Luton. The first time was in 1871 when we stayed with my uncle, the Rev. Nicholas Kelynack, who was then stationed there. In the year 1900 my father was living with me at the neighbouring village of Toddington, and we occasionally went to Luton. Luton's population has doubled since those early days so it was correct to say that it had greatly changed.

"Someone else has come here to-day with your father and they have been discussing the changes; this second person used to have a public position there and knew many of the people. He was useful in different movements started there, to which he lent his name and support; he was in a representative position."

This seemed so accurately to fit the Rev. N. Kelynack (he died in 1910), that I assumed he was the person intended, and remarked to Feda, "This person was related to my father." She at once replied:-

"'Connected' rather than related, they say. Connected by marriage and not related by blood."

This was true; he and my father had married two sisters.

"Was there a family 'H' in that town? He says he knows, he gives Feda the name Hunt. Also another of three letters, 'L' is the first, not quite Lee, sounds like U."

The name of three letters sounding like Li is correct. Mr. Lye was well known to us when we were residing at Toddington, and Mr. Hunt had been prominent in Luton during the period of my uncle's work there. Both gentlemen were closely connected with our Church and known to my father.

There is frequently a difficulty in transmitting names through Feda. It will be alluded to in a later chapter.

To save time and facilitate her task she usually gives only the initial letter.

"There is a place to which he saw you go for a meal. He used to like visiting that place 'D.'"

The "D" would stand for Dunstable which is a few miles from Luton, and to which place I went and dined with old friends. My father frequently walked into Dunstable when living with me at Toddington and certainly enjoyed doing so, as it was the chief place in the Circuit and the centre for important meetings. Added to the above reference to the town "D" was a minutely accurate description of the room in which I had dined with my friends, as well as several identifying descriptions of the town, such as could be given only by one who had been personally familiar with it.

It is important to add that throughout this sitting I gave no clue to the names of Luton or Dunstable, and that Mrs. Leonard was most unlikely to have heard of my visit there. Even had she known, it can scarcely be supposed that information relating to my uncle's connection with the place, or the room in which I dined at Dunstable, and other details so accurately stated during this sitting, could have come before her notice normally. As given, it sounded exactly like reminiscences from the distant past, combined with personal observation of my movements a few days previously.

5th sitting. June 14th, 1917.

In the early portion of this sitting several references were made to my mother, all of which related to the days when my father first knew her, and the early years of their married life. Among these were two about which I was uncertain. One was a detailed description of a walk by a river, the other referred to a red rose. My mother agreed with me that the river walk suggested either Newport or Taunton. Her one outstanding memory connected with a red rose was that she had worn such a flower in her hair on the occasion of Garibaldi's visit to Newport a few weeks before her marriage.

It was in the September following this sitting that I had my first table-sitting with Mrs. Leonard, and noticed that by this means of communication there was less difficulty in obtaining names. I therefore took occasion to put questions as follows:-

QUESTION. I wish to ask father about tests which he gave for mother. One was something about a red rose which he thought would be remembered. Had this anything to do with the visit of a noted personage to the place where she lived?

REPLY. The table immediately, by tilts while the alphabet was spelled, gave the name GARIBALDI.

QUESTION. The other described a walk by some river where you and mother went in the early days. Where was it?

REPLY. Again the table tilted to the alphabet, giving the word NEWPORT.

To go back to my account of the trance sitting: I asked if my father could recollect how mother used to wear her hair. At this Feda (for so I must term the medium while under control), appeared to listen intently for a few seconds, and then twirled the medium's first two fingers round each other exactly as I remember seeing my mother act when doing her curls. Then after this dumb-show came the words, "Corkscrews, ringlets, not just one but several and down the shoulders. The hair was drawn sideways from the forehead and then went into ringlets." This is as accurate a description as could have been expected from my father who was not proficient in feminine terminology. My mother would have said that in those days she wore her hair parted in the centre and with long curls. At the date of this sitting Mrs. Leonard had not met my mother.

There were two further references bearing upon personal identity:-

There is a Mr. Jones whom he has met there." Five items were given which served to distinguish this Jones from others of that name. We had no hesitation in identifying this description of a brother-minister with whom my father had been closely connected in a particularly difficult period of his work.

I then mentioned the fact of my working in London at a Mission which had been founded by the old boys of the Leys School, Cambridge, and was surprised to hear the following remark: "There was someone 'R' who took great interest in that school, also 'P'." Now the school was founded while I was a child, and I knew only two names among those who had worked for its establishment, and neither name commenced with either "R" or "P. After making futile inquiries among those who might have been expected to recollect, I finally procured a copy of the Leys Directory. Its pages recorded that two ministers had been closely connected with the school's inauguration, viz. Morley Punshon and Dr. Rigg. Both took prominent part in the opening services and the first Speech Days. My father always took special interest in such matters, and his recollection of the part taken by these two in the school affairs is very natural, for he had greatly admired them both.

6th sitting. July 12th, 1917.

My mother accompanied me on this occasion and was introduced to Mrs. Leonard without being named. Feda's first remark was that my communicator was present. She continued:-

"He has gone over to that lady, he is patting her on the shoulder; he is sitting by her and looking pleased. He is putting his arm over her shoulder. I wonder why? It is a strange thing for him to do. He says, 'Not at all; his conduct is quite in order.' He seems quite pleased. He won't come away from that lady. He touches her hair at the back. She used to do her hair quite differently many years ago (here was repeated

the finger pantomime of curling the hair, as at a previous sitting). Twisty, curly things, several of them, not just one or two."

My mother's hair was up and no curls showing on this day.

Feda proceeded:-

"There was a photograph taken of her with the curls. Her hair was smoother upon the top; not curly there, but banded. Feda thinks that gentlemen do not know how to describe ladies' hair properly."

We have, not one, but many photographs showing my mother with curls in her earlier years, and one of these answers to the term "banded"; for it shows a thick band of braided hair passing over the head. I refrain from further attempt to describe, lest I give Feda additional justification for her criticism.

"Does she laugh about the mines still, and persist in thinking they were no good? Everyone said there was nothing in it. He asserts that they were badly organised, that the wrong set of people were in control and that this was the cause of the failure. He does not worry about it now, but it made a great impression on his mind at the time."

All this was appropriate, for my mother had been strongly opposed to these investments.

"Someone proposed that he should not grow a beard; nevertheless, he took to one."

This was a second playful reference to my mother, as she had been averse to his growing a beard. It now occurred to me to inquire at what place he resided when commencing to grow the beard; I did not myself remember, but was certain that my mother would be able to tell me afterwards. The name could not be given beyond the initial letter "R." I learnt afterwards that the place was one which we alluded to as Rasen, the Lincolnshire town of Market Rasen. However, the failure to give the full name was atoned for by a convincing description of the place and of his church there.

This concludes the selection, from my first six sittings, of references bearing upon the identity of the communicator. Many more were given subsequently, to some of which allusion will be made in later chapters. The above will afford readers an opportunity of judging how far I was justified at this early date in assuming that my father was originating the messages which Feda transmitted to me through the medium's lips.

CHAPTER IV

THE EVIDENCE CANNOT BE EXPLAINED AWAY BY TELEPATHY

It was in 1882 that F. W. H. Myers suggested the term telepathy (feeling at a distance) to designate the transference of thought from one mind to another. He and Sir William (then Professor) Barrett found evidence that in certain circumstances the ideas or feelings of "A" were caught by "B," quite apart from any known means of communication. The Society for Psychical Research, founded in the above year, published a careful examination of telepathy. But despite the strength of the evidence telepathy was rejected and even derided by the scientific orthodoxy of that day. People in general followed the scientists in refusing to believe that thought could pass from mind to mind apart from the usual channels of sense.

Eventually a change came. It was seen that telepathy explained the results of certain experiments, and that it might possibly account for many curious happenings which had hitherto been regarded as mysterious.

Telepathy is still denied by some. But the work of the Society for Psychical Research has established the fact that there is occasionally a communication between mind and mind for which we cannot account, and which seems to be direct thought-transmission. Maybe it happens but rarely, and the method of its operation remains obscure.

However, like other things which are not fully understood, telepathy is credited with accomplishing far more than it really does. Just as novices will watch a clever conjuring performance and remark that the baffling results are due to hidden springs and wires, so is it supposed that all our asserted communications with people who have died are nothing more than instances of telepathy between minds on earth.

It is suggested that our own thoughts, and those of other people, are being unconsciously broadcast, and that the sensitive brain of a trance medium "picks up" these impressions, giving them out as veritable communications from the dead.

Some who have read the preceding chapter may think that this hypothesis offers a sufficient explanation without supposing any intervention from another realm of existence. I am not of this opinion. Years of minute inspection, with ample opportunity for study, testing and experiment, has convinced me of the contrary. I will touch on two lines of evidence:-

1. The newspaper-test experiments so fully elaborated in the second portion of my book, *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death*, prove that my communicators can give information which is unknown to any minds on earth. Memories of personal and other matters are there interwoven with names and sentences which are not in print until some hours after the test messages are given.

This selection and interweaving is completely beyond any results attributable to telepathy.

2. Shortly after the sittings recorded in the previous chapter, I commenced a series of experiments. These experiments were altered and made increasingly rigorous until I was completely satisfied that my communicator was able to obtain information about objects which had been placed within envelopes, and the latter so mingled that I had no idea what any particular one contained until the test was given and they were opened and examined.

A mere description of the contents of a sealed packet, or locked box, might be achieved by some form of clairvoyance on the part of a gifted medium. This has been repeatedly accomplished when mediums have been permitted to touch such packets. But in my experiments the envelopes and boxes were always twenty miles distant from the medium, and yet details of their contents were given by my communicator and proved to be correct.

In the experiment about to be described, it should be noted that the essence of the test was that the communicator, claiming to be my father, should state his message in terms personal to himself.

From my collection of cabinet photographs I took six and placed them side by side in an iron box. My precautions included closed eyes and a perfectly dark room, so that I might not see the pictures. Lest touch should convey information to my subconscious mind, I had attached spring clips to each picture; holding them by their clips I was able to avoid touching the actual photographs while mixing and placing them within the box. I thus avoided any knowledge, conscious or subconscious, of the order in which they stood. The box was then locked and placed on a shelf in my study; the key was put in my pocket; both box and key remained where placed until the experiment was concluded.

At the next sitting my father told me, through Feda, that his own photograph stood first on the left.

On opening the box that evening I found that my father's portrait was the first on the left. Further, his descriptions proved unmistakably that he had obtained detailed knowledge of four of these pictures, yet, as they were known to me, this can be disregarded for our present purpose. But one outstanding item of special significance was given in his opening remark, Feda said:-

"He will take them from left to right. One of himself is there. He laughs; he felt it."

Now, I had not said that his photograph would be included, yet he not only asserted its presence, but also its correct position in the box.

On completing his description of the content of this box, he added, through Feda:-

"Next time he will try to give the order in which they all stand. He does not know if he can do it, one has to try these things. People may ask, why do they try book-tests and such like in which they sometimes fail? We have to attempt, or we could accomplish nothing. You were not sure when first you ventured out in the car, whether you could get back again. One must learn, and that means some degree of venturing."

The experiment was therefore repeated, the procedure being the same as before. On this occasion it was asserted that his portrait was placed third from the left. Subsequent examination proved this to be correct, as also were other details relating to the order and contents of the pictures.

Now, among the six photographs chosen for the experiment, three were of men; one of these looking slightly younger, the other slightly older, than my father. Mrs. Leonard had seen neither my father nor his portrait, nor had she visited our house. I have no reason to suppose that, at this early period of our acquaintance, she was even aware that my father had been a minister. But what do we find? My communicator, who asserts that he is my father, unerringly designates the exact position of the photograph representing my father. No one but myself was aware that this portrait was being used for the experiments, while neither I, nor anyone else on earth, knew the position which his portrait occupied, relatively to the others, within the locked box. This case, therefore, presents no loophole for thought-transmission. Yet, under these circumstances, my father's portrait was recognised and its position among the others accurately stated.

This surpasses any result of telepathy as known to us whether in experiments or in spontaneous happenings. It demonstrates an entire independence of thought-transference, whether from my own mind, or from the minds of others living on earth. It is, in my opinion, a sufficient answer to the suggestion that the numerous and accurate references to my father's earth memories, instanced in previous pages, originated in telepathy between incarnate minds.

CHAPTER V

IDENTITY SHOWN IN REPLIES TO TEST QUESTIONS

THREE questions, which would be meaningless to strangers, are answered by my communicators in the manner I would expect from my father and sister.

In the autumn of 1920 I decided to give my father and sister an opportunity of showing how appropriate an answer they could give to questions relating to a town of the north in which we had lived for three years when I was a boy. It was essential to this experiment that I should so phrase the questions as to give no clue or information. I therefore asked them to tell me what was suggested to their minds by the words I was about to say, and proceeded to name the title by which we had habitually alluded to a popular social function in my father's church in that northern town. I coupled with it the name of a friend who used to add to the gaiety of those occasions. I also asked for facts relating to the colleague who had occupied the house adjoining ours, and about "The little hurt bird." This was a name we used for my sister's little playmate there.

The replies, given partly through Feda, and partly through direct personal control, left no doubt as to each question being fully understood. Twenty-three statements were made, and these included descriptions, initials, and names of persons connected with the town in question, all correct, and entirely appropriate in their setting. Nothing was said which was contrary to my recollection of the facts, although there were seven further statements which, at this lapse of time, I have no means of verifying. These may or may not be correct. They, were matters likely to have been within my father's or my sister's recollection, although not in mine. Their reply comprised-

3 Surnames. 10 Initials. 10 Facts or descriptions, 7 Unverified items.

It is important to note that no name or clue, other than the above three questions, had been given, and that, from first to last, I did not mention the town to which my questions referred.

Immediately after my father had replied to the first question Etta took control and gave a correct name, and two initials, all three being perfectly relevant. She then added the following description of a walk, well remembered by me on account of its being a trespass, and therefore always undertaken with a feeling of apprehensive delight. I give her exact words, to show that they pass beyond vague description.

"Do you remember being near a railway embankment? There was a bridge further along. Do you remember walking along a short cut which one could go from another road? I cannot quite recall how we managed it, but there was a short cut near the embankment. You could go down a short cut by the railway from the road a little way from where we lived, and so get into another road without going all the way round."

In the accompanying sketch all the above features are shown. In the foreground is the house in which we then lived. Between it and the railway line is the embankment, at the end of which a railway bridge crosses the road to the left. The walk described is indicated by broken lines. We started from a gap in our garden fence, and crossing private property, where there was no right of way, climbed up an embankment and reached the railway station. From the station we then crossed the line and passed the station-yard, after which we trespassed over fields until reaching a high road which was our objective, it being one of our favourite walks. We thus saved a somewhat long detour. My sister was very young at this time and particularly nervous about trespassing. She would frequently ask if we were likely to be prosecuted. Hence this walk is the more likely to have been impressed on her memory.

In his reply to my question about the colleague in the next house, my father gave, through Feda, several descriptions which correctly outlined certain marked characteristics. He then spoke of another who was there connected with their work, giving initials which were those of a third colleague living in the same town. First, he gave the letter B, which was the initial of this colleague's surname, then he added H. I remembered that Henry was this colleague's Christian name, and so, repeating the initials in the order given, viz., B. H., said that I recognised the name intended. Instantly came the correction, "Not in the right order, put them the other way, H. B." This was done so promptly and emphatically as to be most marked, and it was only after this correction that I noticed my having unintentionally repeated the initials in the order given by Feda, that is to say, B. H. instead of H. B.

This question elicited several remarks, all of which were correct, and there was no hesitation, no fishing for clues, and nothing in the least irrelevant.

During a sitting shortly after the above, they reverted to these questions, my father remarking that, "there was a Mr. Ward and a Mr. B-- in the same town at the same time, the Mr. B-- being an important person there." This was entirely appropriate. Mr. Ward had been my music master and occasionally acted as deputy organist in my father's church, while Mr. Bird (not to be confused with the above H. B.) was one of our chief church officials.

I had been careful to give no clue to the meaning of little hurt bird." But Etta had shown in the previous sitting that she understood its reference to her child friend and she now used an ingenious method of indicating the actual name. She said that she had noticed in my study something which would be, "a good reminder of this person. Look on the shelf behind your study door, the second from the top, and towards the right-hand side, and you will find a distinct allusion to her on the outside of a book." The pronoun showed knowledge of the sex, whereas the nickname gave no clue to this. From previous experience of the way in which they had practised utilising book titles, I gathered that some relevant name would be suggested, either by a title, or buried in it after the manner of the "buried rivers" game.

I was, however, curious as to how the name required, which was Eva, could be indicated by any titles known to me. I had never noticed anything of the kind among my books. But on examining the shelf indicated, I discovered that the sixth title, counting from the right-hand side, was, Man the Primeval Savage. The name Eva is "buried" in the word PRIMEVAL.

In order to discover whether this finding might be attributed to chance, I inspected hundreds of other titles, but no other provided the required name. Of all the books in my study there was but this one which would have served the purpose, and its position had been indicated by Etta.

The replies to my three experimental questions contained a number of perfectly apposite remarks. These pass far beyond the range of chance coincidence. No single one of all the thirty items given was inappropriate, although seven of them related to details which were outside my recollection. The facts stated, and found to be true, number twenty-three. Broadly speaking, they were not the memories which I should myself have selected as reply to these particular questions. They have all the appearance of independent memories culled from minds acquainted with our life and surroundings at a date when I was twelve to fifteen years of age, my sister Etta being seven years younger.

Etta recalled many matters which correctly related to Eva, and these were given as being her associations with the phrase, "Little hurt bird." To my sister and myself these two names would be synonymous. But they would not have this association for any now living on earth, save my mother (who was not present at these sittings) and myself.

My father gave suitable replies when asked about his old colleague whom I indicated in a manner which would be meaningless to anyone who had not been intimate with Wesleyan circles in that one particular town. I cannot accept the suggestion that this information was derived from my own mind, conscious or subconscious; for it entirely omits things which had especially interested me, and dwells for the greater part on matters which were of interest to my father and sister. No doubt, the replies would have been more striking had names been given rather than initials; yet these letters were not random guesses, but were given in correct association with the places and people to which they had reference.

The difficulty in transmitting names is dealt with in a special chapter of this book. It may suffice to say here that inability to get a name pronounced by the medium's lips does not necessarily imply forgetfulness on the part of the communicator, although that may occasionally be the cause. It is said by the communicators themselves, and reasserted by Feda, that the difficulty lies in transmitting to her an arbitrary sound in which she is not assisted by the context—a sound, moreover, which cannot be replaced by any substitute except an initial letter.

I have used the word "sound," because we think of a name in that way; but it should not be supposed that Feda hears vibrations in the air when communicators transmit their thoughts to her. Rather is their thought received in a way which, to her, seems like spoken words. When thought-transmission is at its best and strongest .Feda speaks of "hearing"; when it weakens she can no longer hear, but "senses" or feels the meaning. In the latter case names are particularly difficult to transmit to her.

After all, the important part of a message is that which conveys the intention of the sender, and in the above replies to my experimental questions I find evidence that my father and Etta are able to give information on matters had been familiar to them in earth life; information, moreover, which cannot reasonably be attributed to any other source, since the particular questions I asked would have suggested nothing relevant to strangers.

Four months later again referring to the same place, my father named two ministers, Kendal and Hardy. The former had a church there during the time of our residence, but the latter was associated in our minds with the place only on account of my father having endeavoured to arrange that Hardy should succeed him there on our removal in 1882. As some half-dozen details were correctly given about each of these men, in addition to their surnames, it was obvious that my communicator recollected facts which dated thirty-eight years before this sitting.

Three years after the foregoing, and during a sitting to which my mother had accompanied me, she inquired through Feda whether my father and sister had met Mrs. Palmer. This Mrs. Palmer was widow of the colleague already mentioned, and we had recently seen a notice of her death.

The reply was as follows:-

"It is curious that you should ask that, because Etta says she had intended to mention that lady to-day. Her husband has waited for her a long time. The letter E is connected with her."

The husband had died nineteen years previously, and the widow's name was Eliza. But the evidence became better still, for in further conversation about Mrs. Palmer, Etta volunteered the name of her daughter Florence, an old friend. She then said that among the people they had met in their new life was "old John Palmer" whom we might remember, although "not connected with the other Palmers." I had no difficulty in recalling this person, for, on the occasion of my first meeting him, sometime in my early ministry, he mentioned that he had been present at my parents' wedding. He had never been named or even indirectly alluded to in these sittings, nor had I thought of him for many years. The similarity of surname had no doubt recalled him to Etta's mind when my mother asked the question about Mrs. Palmer.

SYMMONDS versus SIMMONS

Confusion between the above similar-sounding names accidentally affords proof of my father's identity. For, while I ask about the former, he speaks about the latter, giving information quite unknown to me, but which had been familiar knowledge to my father before my birth.

In December, 1923, while my father was communicating, I asked him, by way of an experiment, to think over and let me know at a subsequent sitting "the associations in his memory with the name Symmonds whom mother used to know." He agreed to do this.

The person to whom I thus alluded was a Mr. Symmonds of Wimborne, a very old friend of our family. While visiting Mr. and Mrs. Symmonds my mother first met my father; it was this fact that prompted me to say "Symmonds whom mother used to know." In asking this question I was thinking of Mr. Symmonds of Wimborne and of no other person; indeed, it did not occur to me that there was anyone else known to my father whom he could possibly confuse with this friend. Needless to add, I merely pronounced this name and did not spell it. Had I spelled it the result might have been different. As it happened, events proved that my father mistook the question and thought of another person with whom he and my mother had been on close terms of friendship, one whose name was spelled differently but easily mistaken in sound for Symmonds.

At a later sitting Feda, speaking for my father, introduced the subject. She said:-

"He asks if you have quite lately heard of a death which has reminded you of Simmons? You may not have heard yet. This death has not to do with Simmons, but he thought you would have read of it. It is another name beginning with S. It takes your father back to a time long ago and to a place connected with Simmons."

In taking notes at this sitting I spelled the name Symmonds, supposing that the Wimborne friend was being spoken of. But as Feda proceeded I realised that what was being said seemed to have no connection with that person. While studying the reply on my return home I began to ask myself whether my question might have been misunderstood, and whether the descriptions given were intended to apply to someone else? Only then did I remember that my parents had spoken of a similar name in connection with their residence at Taunton, the place of my birth.

On asking my mother about this I learnt that a Rev. Samuel Simmons had been Governor of the Taunton Wesleyan College when my father went to live in that town, and they had been colleagues. Moreover, my mother recognised that some of the descriptions given through Feda would apply to this Mr. Simmons. I therefore wrote to his surviving daughter, enclosing a copy of my notes and asking her opinion about them. Her reply commenced as follows:-

"I was really startled at the first question, as to hearing of a death reminding one of the name Simmons; because only a week or fortnight previously I had read in The Times of the death of Mrs. Savery at Taunton. She was a Miss Carrie Sibly in your father's time there, and her father and mine worked together in those days at the college, Mr. Sibly being head master and my father the governor."

This established the correctness of my father's first remark in replying to my question. There had occurred recently-a fact unknown to me-the death of one whose surname had the initial "S." This name, moreover, connected with the Simmons of long ago; for, when my father went to Taunton, Mr. Sibly was headmaster and Mr. Simmons the governor of the college there. Thus it is certain that Sibly, Simmons, and Taunton would all have been connected in my father's mind with that distant date.

We find here a clear indication, supported by more to be considered immediately, that my thought of Mr. Symmonds of Wimborne had no influence whatever upon the reply elicited by my question. On the contrary, my father had followed his own line of memory and had given particulars about a person and place which were not in my mind.

Feda next described some work in which my father and Mr. Simmons had been mutually interested. This may be right or wrong; there is no way of deciding it after this lapse of time; it is likely to have been correct.

Feda next said that she was being shown the picture of a place, and this she described in a somewhat disjointed manner. When subsequently I visited Taunton it became apparent that part of the town near our church agreed in many features with this description.

She then continued:-

"Walker was connected with this place; he was one whom your father knew well. Ferren or Farren-though that is not quite right-also Fr--, a man who was connected with it. There was a place W-- near, rather a long name, which your father had much to do with."

In commenting upon the above sentences, Mr. Simmons's daughter wrote:-

"The name Walker recalled to me at once a college master who, I believe, was in the school at the time of my father's death; he was known by the boys as Sammy Walker. The name French, too, was that of an important family, and Mr. Henry French was a master at the college."

In the Taunton Wesleyan Circuit were two places of which the names commence with "W," viz., Wellington and Wiviliscombe. Part of my father's duty was to take services at both. A lady who had lived at Wellington while my father was at Taunton

tells me that in those days an important family of Wesleyans named Farrant resided at Wiviliscombe.

So here we find the name Walker given correctly and verified; the name Farrant obviously attempted in "Ferren or Farran"; while the abortive effort "Fr--" indicated the family called French. Of these three names the only one known to me was French.*

Two further items conclude this reply to my question:-

"We had a disappointment when at this place, although 'disappointment' is not quite the right word; a person's leaving was an important loss, it was a passing over."

On inquiry I learnt that the Rev. Samuel Simmons, Governor of the College, died during my father's residence at Taunton. My parents had been on terms of intimate friendship with the Simmons family.

The phrasing of the above sentence, in its vague commencement, and gradual approach to exact statement well illustrates Feda's method of obtaining from the communicator, first a general idea, then successive approximations, and finally the thought which it is desired to express.

"He feels a curious connection again between this place and you. You are going to have news."

As I was listening with Wimborne in my thought, it is certain that I could have had no clue to the meaning of this remark. But three days afterwards I received a letter from Taunton, written by one who recalled my father's residence there.

** It may be interesting to note that on another occasion Feda again failed to transmit this name French, although there was then little doubt that 'Fr--' was an attempt to transmit the sound French. (See Chap. XXXI).*

The chief interest of the above experiment turns upon the fact that the two names, Symmonds and Simmons, although different in spelling, are sufficiently similar in sound to make confusion likely. When asking for associations with a Symmonds whom my mother used to know, I was thinking only of the friend at Wimborne, and it did not occur to me that this name could be confused with any other. But my communicator went on to give references which connect with quite a different person, one with whom my father had been on terms of intimacy some fifty years earlier. The items mentioned include several which had never been within my knowledge. As received by me at the sitting they seemed wholly inaccurate. I could

not connect them, even remotely, with the person about whom I had asked. This experience is valuable, therefore, as it affords no support whatever for the suggestion that the medium was tapping my subconscious mind.

CHAPTER VI

THE HYPOTHESIS OF IMPERSONATION

"HAVE we any guarantee that the communications which seem to come from our friends beyond death are not concocted by impersonating spirits, or by the devil himself?" This question is asked by some who think that certain isolated texts of Scripture warrant their fear. Others go further and change the question into an assertion. This may be termed The Devil Impersonation hypothesis.

Before adducing specific reasons for its invalidity, there are two considerations which these objectors will be well advised to ponder.

Firstly, it must be emphatically stated that, if appearances of the dead and messages from them are, in these days, the result of impersonation, it is open to anyone to assert that such appearances and messages as are recorded in the New Testament were likewise impersonations and deceptions. But this is a *reductio ad absurdum*. No evil personality would have wrought deception for such ends as were achieved by the founding of the Christian Church. Our Lord's own test can be here applied, "By their fruits ye shall know them." More than once He had to deal with minds similarly hesitant as to the good or evil origin of what they heard. He directed their attention to the results. "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." The appearances and messages recorded in the Gospels were instrumental in founding a religious movement which has endured through the centuries with ever widening blessing. The fruit has been good. Who dare suggest that it sprang from an impersonation?

Secondly, it should be realised that present-day messages from those whom we identify with our risen friends have led to good. Multitudes confess that they have been turned thereby from doubt to belief, from agnosticism to faith: in short, the religious instinct has been enriched and intensified and in no wise lessened. The fruit has been good. No one who is aware of the uplifting influence which many have proved in their lives will suggest that this is the work of deceiving spirits who desire to neutralise the influence of Jesus Christ, or to degrade man's thought and life. If evil powers were the source of these communications they would be doing the work of God's ministering spirits and undermining the hold of evil on mankind.

The impersonation hypothesis is founded on an unworthy conception of the world unseen. It pictures evil spirits permitted to impersonate one's risen friends, while these are unable to intervene. Such an idea can only arise from the assumption that the frequent, if temporary, triumph of evil over good, of falsehood over truth, so often observed on earth must still prevail, even in higher realms. But have we any reason for supposing that evil is more triumphant there than it is here? Even in this life truth comes into its own; falsehood is self-betrayed, the will towards good is supplemented by unseen powers and slowly wins its widening way.

To believe that our messages are the work of deceiving spirits is to suppose that the evil beings are more powerful than the good. It assumes that evil intelligences, bent upon the misleading and degradation of humanity, have embarked upon a systematic venture which, in complete variance from their intention, is leading men to a more spiritual conception of life, to keener and more determined aspiration after righteousness, and to a more reasoned trust in Jesus Christ.

For such nightmare fancies there is no foundation in observed fact. Those who speak with us from across the borderland of life are just the same lovable, faithful friends whom we knew before death took them from our sight. They display the same solicitude for our welfare, moral and spiritual, as they did when here. They give numerous and convincing proofs of their identity, both in the definite tests which they volunteer, eager to convince us that they live, as well as in those which we demand of them in order to establish this truth. There are the subtle touches of character and the mannerisms which friendship unfailingly recognises. They show the same love and reverence for whatever is good and honourable; and I bear witness to the fact that my friends retain the same reverence, love and devotion for God and for Jesus which marked their lives when I knew them here on earth.

Throughout eleven years of frequent converse with those beyond the veil I have found nothing to suggest that they are other than they claim to be; nor have I ever observed the slightest indication that those speaking to me are animated by anything save the sincerest desire for my betterment. If, throughout these years, I have been speaking with those who wish to amuse themselves by deceiving me, or to do me hurt by impersonating my loved ones, then the only possible conclusion would be that they are taking considerable pains for no intelligent end. Such amusement must have palled on them long ago. The dullest of them must have perceived before this that instead of doing me harm they are helping me to rise beyond possibility of being hurt, either mentally or spiritually, since they have led me nearer God. In short, the devil of this hypothesis would be neither evil nor clever, but sufficiently inane to be undertaking an immense amount of pains to defeat his own ends by raising me towards a plane of thought and aspiration in which evil has no place.

Let us now regard the situation from another point of view. Supposing Jesus did come back and speak to His friends on earth; supposing Peter, Paul and others were truly favoured with communications from heavenly helpers; supposing my own friends are enabled to speak with me by psychic means, so that I receive the purport of what they wish to say; then all that I have met with during these years of experimental study is intelligible. Indeed, it is exactly what one would have expected, provided one had realised something of the difficulties of transmitting thought through imperfect channels. The occasional confusion in the messages, together with the inability to get certain names and words correctly reproduced, are precisely what must result from the limitations of the method used. Like the blurrings of celestial objects in the earlier and imperfect telescopes, which were easily resolved into clear definition by the employment of better instruments, so do we find that

confusions arising with poorly developed mediums are made clear when the communicator speaks to us through a more gifted and practised human instrument.

I doubt if any impartial seeker after truth could retain the devil hypothesis after studying the *modus operandi* of trance messages with a medium of fine power and high mind. By such study one learns experimentally some of the difficulties under which our friends work while communicating, and how greatly they are limited in expressing themselves by the mental resources of the medium employed. One discovers the causes of confusions and mistakes, and how to apportion these between communicator, medium and control. But such study does not explain to any logical mind why, on the devil hypothesis, these particular classes of mistake and limitation should be present. For the mistakes and confusions are not such as would happen were the speaker reading our thoughts at the moment. For example, I am frequently aware of the name which would clinch the message, or of some fact which has been misstated. But my clear thought upon these points does not help the speaker; it is rather the rule that the less one thinks of what ought to be said, the more likely is it to be correctly given. Again, I am frequently aware of items which, if stated, would greatly add to the completeness and convincing character of the evidence which is being given; but the speaker does not avail himself of my recollections; he gives his own ideas of the matter and not mine.

Just as I am always careful to consider how much of the information given might have been obtained by the medium through normal channels, so also do I ask myself how much of it existed in my own mind, whether conscious or subliminal. My interest would not have been sustained through years of study had I found that the medium was weaving messages from material obtainable from outside sources, or that the communicator's conversation was composed of my own memories. I have found that the medium freely transmits what could not have been discovered normally, and that my communicators consistently give their own ideas and draw upon their own memories. They also reveal those characteristics with which I was familiar as pertaining to my friends during their earthly life, and each remains true to himself; their respective individualities never blend. All happens as if I were conversing with those whose names the speakers claim; and, so far as I can see, the happenings are quite unlike attempts at impersonation. I speak, of course, of my experiences with capable mediums. The confused messages in elementary experiments with automatic writing, planchette, Ouija, or glass-and-letter methods of communication, are frequently baffling and open to doubt. These are best studied by giving the communicators an opportunity of clearing them up while speaking through more satisfactory channels.

If our messages originate with deceased friends then the latter do remarkably well, considering the difficulties under which they have to work, difficulties which must continue while our ability to provide them with adequate channels of communication remains so limited.

In discussing the devil impersonation hypothesis one cannot forget that Our Lord's critics raised the same cry of "Devil." Unable to disabuse their minds of fear, even in presence of His blameless personality and beneficent activities, they attributed his works to diabolic co-operation. "Thou hast a devil," was their reply to his teaching. A similar trend of mind now regards with suspicion communications which do not conform with conventional ideas about our relation with the world unseen.

My father speaks of Our Lord Jesus in terms which would satisfy orthodoxy. He and my sister, as well as others who have conclusively proved their identity, describe occasions on which they have seen Our Lord and have heard Him speak. Is this the action of a subtle enemy who desires my undoing? It is not what one would expect from diabolic agencies. On the other hand, it is exactly what I should expect from those who claim to be giving these teachings. Why should I doubt their bona fides? I have never found the slightest cause for so doing in all the years of my intercourse with them.

The devil hypothesis has no basis in observed fact conscientiously interpreted, nor is it held by those who have first-hand experience of these studies. I recall with amusement the solemn pronouncement made by a minister of religion who told me that he was sure that all these communications were the work of the evil one. He described how he had proved this by his own automatic writing; for as soon as his hand had acquired the power of writing without his conscious volition and had scribbled messages purporting to come from deceased friends, he had gravely demanded, Are not you who write really a devil? To his great satisfaction the word "Yes" was written in reply. And so, for him, the matter was settled. Had he cared honestly to study the subject he would have learnt that his reply was the reproduction by his subconscious mind of an idea which he had committed to its keeping. A genuine devil would have replied in the negative.

I believe in One God, maker and ruler of this world and the next. I entirely disbelieve in any omniscient and almighty evil spirit. Evil there must be in the unseen; for multitudes of evilly disposed people are continually passing thither from this earth. I know no reason for supposing that their power for evil is increased when they change this life for the next, nor do I believe that they will perpetually retain the state of mind in which they pass over. In the clearer light of the Beyond, evil loses the disguise which hid its real nature here, and it then appears in its essential hideousness and folly. Also, it brings home to its devotees, by the stern logic of cause and effect, the disqualifications which it has imposed upon them. This painful revelation ultimately prepares misguided souls for appreciating the guidance and help which He, who is Infinite Love and Wisdom, places around his backward children. Such is my faith. It is not contradicted by any Scripture intelligently interpreted, nor by the divinely implanted instincts of the human soul; it lies implicit in Our Lord's Words concerning the Heavenly Father, and is confirmed by the experiences transmitted to us by those who speak from the other side of death.

CHAPTER VII

THE SLEEP OF DEATH AND THE AWAKENING TO GREATER LIFE

DEATH has been a mystery. The lifeless body of a friend has all the appearance of profound slumber. But it speedily undergoes chemical changes which ultimately destroy it. The cage is empty, its tenant has escaped elsewhere.

"How shall we bury you?" asked his friend, as Socrates was about to drink the hemlock. "just as you please, if only you can catch me, and I do not escape you," said Socrates, "for when I have drunk the poison I shall no longer remain with you, but shall depart to some happy state of the blessed."

A greater than Socrates assured His disciples that when He was crucified He would pass into another state of life. His subsequent reappearances created in those who loved Him an invincible enthusiasm; they saw that death was a step upward into greater life.

Some who have experienced the earlier stages of death, and then revived, have given an account of what, at the time, had seemed to be their last moments on earth. Their story is tranquillizing and encouraging.

But we learn much more from those who, having finally crossed over, are able to return and describe their falling asleep and the subsequent awakening beyond bodily death.

My father once said:-

I wish you could come here for a week and remember it on returning to earth. But there is a subconscious awareness, even with some who have heard nothing about life on our side, but who are doing their best, notwithstanding absence of knowledge. I am certain that when they come to the end of physical life they have some intimation of what awaits them here, and this brings them a more wonderful knowledge than they had ever dreamed of, even if it comes only a few seconds before their transition. It is something like approaching a bridge in a thick fog, and the fog lifts suddenly so that the opposite bank is clearly seen. You will have known instances where those previously passed over have been seen by the dying, who exclaim, "I can see so-and-so." It seems unfortunate that so often there is no physical strength left to tell what they see. But I think they do see.

C.D.T.: Did you yourself see just at the last?

Father: (The reply was given with unusual solemnity and emphasis). I did. I felt not one presence only, but several. At the time one does not reason about it, and may be unable to ask oneself why it is so, being able only to realise, "They are here."

Speaking of his earliest consciousness after death my father remarked on his surprise at seeing trees, flowers and birds. It must be remembered that his passing had been as sudden as it was unexpected. Owing to what seemed a temporary indisposition he had spent the day in bed. The doctor saw nothing serious in his condition, and he was able to do some writing. Towards the close of the afternoon my mother left him alone for a while and on returning found him in the act of expiring.

He tells me that, following his surprise at seeing trees and flowers when waking, he had a hazy recollection of a proposed absence from home. It occurred to him that he must have already made the journey and commenced the visit for, had he been in his own room, neither flowers nor trees would have been visible. Presently he rose and walked out among the trees. In the distance he observed a house standing on a grassy slope. While wondering as to his whereabouts he was joined by one who, in friendly conversation, made him realise what had taken place.

Not long afterwards he was enabled to return and view his earthly home. He could see the familiar rooms and realise the sorrow we were feeling. He longed to be able to prove to us, what he was aware we all believed-namely, that he still lived and that his love for us was unchanged. Fourteen years later there came the opportunity for which he had been waiting: I commenced a course of psychical investigation.

My sister died shortly after a serious operation. Being aware of her approaching transition, she discussed it calmly with me during our last interview. Having to some extent shared my psychic studies, she knew that she would be able to communicate with me, and this knowledge softened for both of us the pain of parting.

Some months later she described to me her awakening in the new life beyond death. It was, in substance, as follows:-

From where she found herself reclining she looked through an open doorway into a garden of flowers, and realised that she was in the home which had been described by her father in his communications. While gazing out upon the scene of beauty and light she became aware that her father was standing near. They did not immediately speak in words, but it seemed to her that they were thinking to each other, exchanging ideas mentally without spoken words. When, presently, he spoke she found it delightful to hear his voice again, and to be able to reply in the old, familiar way.

She added, that to find herself there did not seem so strange as might have been expected. Memories came to her of having been there previously; the place was not wholly unfamiliar. Later, she learnt that at times, during sleep, her soul had visited and grown accustomed to the place; although, when waking from such sleep, no normal consciousness remained of what the soul had enjoyed. Her physical brain had not been able to share the experiences of the soul.

Seven months after her passing, she again alluded to this experience:-

"It is difficult to realise I have been here so long a time, it seems no more than a few weeks; for there is so much to do, to see, and to learn. I am glad to have known before my passing something about this life and the possibilities of communication with you. Before finally leaving earth I seemed to be dreaming, and yet it was not wholly a dream. It seemed as if I had come here before the final separation from my physical body. I was only partly conscious towards the last, only half within the body; for my soul was already freeing itself. Nor did it seem wholly strange to me when I found myself here. I must have frequently come during sleep; for I could now remember that I had been here previously." *

The following account of death and awakening was given by one whom I had known for many years, and who had passed her last hours in unconsciousness. To those who were watching her it seemed as if body and mind were in extreme discomfort, and only a few isolated sentences, uttered amid the ramblings of delirium, hinted at the experience which the soul was then enjoying. I had been told of these hints-references to seeing her parents-and so took occasion to inquire, during her first communication with me, whether in her last hours on earth she had seen the friends who had gone before. She replied:-

"You ask if I saw anyone before passing. I seemed lifted above the usual things and surroundings, and I had a dream or vision, I do not know what you would call it. It seemed at the time like a very wonderful, happy and peaceful dream, in which I was with, not only those who had passed over recently, but with father and mother and many relations whom I had not seen for a long, long time. Now you ask: Did I see them? Yes, I saw them, though not with physical sight, but I saw them. They were as satisfactory to me, as clear and distinct, as anything I had ever seen in my ordinary earth life.

**See Chap. XXX for discussion of sleep experiences.*

"Now I was not conscious of any change, or anything abrupt, but from that very happy dream I seemed to pass into a peaceful sleep, and I think I emerged into a more or less conscious state, now and again, because I seemed occasionally aware that there were people whom I knew and loved who were near me, and taking care of me, and I was quite content to let it be so.

"I hear now that I slept for three or four days. But when I woke, completely awake, I felt refreshed, and so much younger and better in every way than I had felt for many years....

And now, here we are all together again, all the people I used to know and love; all are here at their best, best time, best health, best everything.....

We get a glimpse from a slightly different angle in the experience of G. M., who had been a life-long friend of my father and who was welcomed by him on his passing. My father and sister, in describing his awakening, said:-

"He has been rather surprised to find how extremely natural it all is here. At first he could scarcely realise it, but on the whole it has been a great relief to him. It is intensely interesting to welcome people like G. M.; for, beside the pleasure of having them with us, there is the extraordinary interest of observing their surprise on awakening. They always exhibit relief at finding themselves in a tangible world. Many people fear death owing to an idea that they are about to exchange the tangible for the intangible. It is not fear of finding themselves in a bad place, but rather a dread of the unaccustomed. In this case, G. M. was particularly pleased to find tangible things and people around him, and scope for activity."

A few weeks later G. M. was again spoken of. G. M. is getting on remarkably well and quickly picking up the new conditions. He is most interested in everything. He has now ceased to question the reality of what he sees around him. At first, he was inclined to say, 'Well, what I see cannot be really present.' But after a short while he had to admit that so many different things could not exist merely in his imagination, and that the most vivid dream could not go on so long. He tells us that, having now relinquished that mental attitude, he feels pleased and enthusiastic about everything, and insatiable in his desire to see and know more. He says that again and again he stops to ask himself, 'Why did we not know this while on earth?'"

Expressed concisely, and omitting personal details, the usual testimony of those who, in these communications allude to their passing, is as follows:-

"On awakening from unconsciousness I felt free from pain, quite strong, and full of gladness. It was a great relief to know that death was past. My new-found happiness was increased by the sight of old friends who gathered around and who gave me welcome. I then wished to return and see those left behind; after some little time I was able to do this."

The collective testimony of those speaking from the next life is remarkably consistent. It is frequently intermingled with convincing proofs of the speaker's identity; I am therefore left without a doubt that these descriptions represent, so far as language makes possible, the actual experience of death.

CHAPTER VIII

WHAT OUR FRIENDS IN THE NEXT LIFE KNOW ABOUT OUR SURROUNDINGS AND OUR THOUGHTS

PART 1. CONCERNING OUR SURROUNDINGS

DEATH implies separation. To some this separation seems complete: it is assumed that we can know nothing of our loved one's doings, and that he is possibly in a like ignorance of ours. The heart asks questions which neither Church nor Science can answer. We are free to hope, to imagine, to philosophies, but it is assumed that none can know.

I have written elsewhere on this question and shown that those in the life beyond death are able to come to us and inform themselves of our doings. (See chapter "Our Unseen Observers" in *Life after Death*: edited by Sir James Marchant. Cassell). The data at disposal may be briefly indicated as: -

1. That which is told us by those who, in their last hours, attain some degree of clairvoyance and who recognise deceased friends around them. The exercise of this clairvoyant faculty by other persons provides evidence supporting the reality of these visions seen by the dying.
2. The experience of trance mediumship and other methods of psychic communication; for many of those who speak with us tell how they were welcomed after death by friends who had anticipated their arrival.
3. The statements of our communicators, who repeatedly claim ability to observe us and to know many things about our life.
4. The proofs of this claim, found in collections of verified facts observed and recorded by conscientious and independent investigators.

In my earlier researches I found my father eager to show his intimacy with my inner life and outward circumstance. Proofs were given by means of clairvoyance, clairaudience, the direct voice, and trance utterance. When I commenced my series of sittings with Mrs. Leonard the proofs increased and ultimately convinced me of two facts. Firstly, that my father and others in the Beyond are able to observe my actions and my surroundings; also, to visit others they love and acquaint themselves with their daily life. Secondly, that it is easy for them to keep in touch with our inner life; that they can perceive one's thought, mood, emotion and aspiration in a degree seldom or never achieved by those among whom we live. As my sister once remarked, speaking for herself and others, "We know those we love so much more and better than we did on earth."

Let us consider first a few simple instances relating to objects well known to me. Scores of such are summarised by saying that I have received descriptions of furniture, pictures, ornaments, the interior of our house, books, papers, etc., and that these descriptions often included details which I had not previously noticed. This evidence was given that I might realise my father's minute acquaintance with our home. As we came here some years after his passing, he had no earth memories of it.

It was on my second visit to Mrs. Leonard that her control, speaking for my father, described an illuminated address which hung in an obscure position in our box room.

He shows Feda a framed pattern. It is something in your house. Feda wonders why a pattern should be put in a frame. But it has a frame, and the pattern seems to be in writing. The frame is narrow and has glass over it. There is a white margin, and a thin line round the edge. This writing is not ordinary, but scrollified, the letters are elaborate and look slightly twisted. At the bottom, near the corner, is some different small writing.

C.D.T.: Is my father interested in it?

Feda: Yes (emphatically) and you should be so, too. He is smiling as he says this; for he knows that you are interested, too. This writing has more sense in it, and means something different from ordinary framed things on walls. He says that you can always feel pleased at it. It was not a bought thing; it was handed to one like this. (Here the medium went through the action of a ceremonious presentation). It was not just passed casually, but presented.

This description was more accurate than I could then have given from memory. Its only error related to the small writing at the bottom, which was said to be near the corner, whereas it is exactly central. Only when Feda said that "this pattern seemed to be in writing" did I think of the illuminated address given to my paternal grandfather, and which had come into my possession eighteen months prior to this sitting.

The following was prefaced by a description of my study, with special reference to the particular corner in which was hanging the picture now described.

Feda said:-

"You have a portrait there. A lady is shown three-quarter face. It was done many years ago. Her hair is done in a queer way, standing out towards the top back of the head, sticking out there and made to look as if there were a good deal of it. The bodice is dark and rather tight fitting. The face is nice, medium full, between round and oval; the nose rather straight, the chin round yet not prominent, and slightly receding. The brows are rather arched, and the eyes a little full. The face slopes down toward the chin, yet is rounded. Has she not one arm across the lower part of

the breast, with the wrist a little bent down? The head is slightly on one side, giving a questioning look. Something on the frock looks like lines coming down from the shoulders and approaching from each side as they descend. There is a dark shadow behind the shoulders and neck, but not behind the head. Her hair is down a bit on one side as if she wished to show it off.

[missing illustration]

The Illuminated Address, of which this is a photograph, had come into my possession eighteen months before I first went to Mrs. Leonard. It was mentioned at my second sitting, and the description included the following items:-

"Narrow frame, a pattern in the frame, this pattern is in writing, there is a white margin and a thin line round the edge, the writing scrollified, letters elaborate and looking slightly twisted, at the bottom near the corner is some different small writing. Not a bought thing, but presented."

Note that the small writing at the bottom was wrongly stated to be near the corner.

I realised this reference to a Presentation which had belonged to my father's father, but I was not sufficiently familiar with it to check these points at the time. Only on returning home did I discover the surprising degree of accuracy. The medium had never visited our house, nor had this article been consciously in my thought for some months. It would seem natural that my father, in his attempt to show that he was conversant with my surroundings at home, should mention this Illuminated Address.

For a full account, see page ??.

A comparison of the above with the picture itself revealed its general accuracy. I have italicised the words which proved incorrect. My own effort would have fallen far short of this.

For purpose of a test I had alluded to my study in the following words, "Upon the top of a bookcase there stands a bronze monkey." When this had been dealt with, Fedra remarked that Etta was showing her another monkey. I replied that I had no second monkey. Fedra continued, "She shows one to Fedra and is sure she is right. You have it." I replied that perhaps I could find one pictured in a book. But this suggestion was refused. Fedra said, "No, not in books; she means elsewhere. Had she meant books she would have said so."

On returning home I added the following note to the above record, "I doubt if we have any picture of a monkey in the house." Three days later there came suddenly and sharply into my mind the recollection of a very small monkey in stone which had been brought from India and given me by an old soldier. I knew it must be somewhere in the curio cabinet which stands close by the bronze monkey. On inspection, I discovered this stone monkey in the cabinet, and its position was only twenty inches from the one in bronze.

And so my sister was right, although I had failed to discover that fact until the third day after the sitting.

Let me here reply to a question in the reader's mind, -Could the medium have known of these articles? The medium had not been to our house, and I am confident that no one there could or would have given her information. But I need not labour this point; for the argument I am presenting is so strong that it will stand without depending upon evidence relating to our home. If anyone thinks that trickery might have accounted for the instances given above, let him disregard these instances and consider only those to be recorded later. And similarly, to those who suggest telepathy from my mind, I would say, disregard all evidence which seems inconclusive and consider the following instances to which the telepathic hypothesis will not apply easily, if at all. Had these descriptions been limited to objects known to me I should have been compelled to consider, long and carefully, whether or not leakage from my unconscious mental activity had been caught and correctly interpreted by the medium. Evidence of such leakage would have been valuable; for if it could be shown that the human mind can thus unconsciously throw off information, and that another human mind can receive and interpret such "broadcasting," we should have a proof of telepathy which might go far to convince orthodox science of the reality of that much questioned hypothesis. For while, thanks to the laborious work of the founder of the Society for Psychical Research, telepathy is now popularly accepted as a fact in human nature, it is not as yet acknowledged by orthodox science which, on the contrary, either denies it or considers it unproven.

But we need not, at this point, discuss the possibilities of leakage from my mind; because I am about to give instances of information which had not been within my knowledge.

[missing illustration]

The above is a photograph of the painting in my study which was described at a Leonard sitting as follows:-

"A lady is shown three-quarter face, hair done in a queer way, standing out towards the top back of head and made to look as if there were a good deal of it, the face medium full and between round and oval, nose rather straight, chin round but not prominent, and slightly receding, brows rather arched and eyes a little full, the head slightly on one side giving a questioning look, something on the frock looks like lines coming down from the shoulders and approaching from each side as they descend, a dark shadow behind shoulders and neck, but not behind the head, the hair is down a bit on one side as if to show it off."

Two items were incorrect, viz.: "The bodice is dark and rather tight fitting." "Has she not one arm across the lower part of the breast, with the wrist a little bent down?"

Had I been asked to describe this picture my attempt would have been less accurate.

For the full account, see page ??

Such cases have been very numerous. Sometimes there were allusions to events in our house of which my wife was aware, then to matters about which neither of us had any knowledge whatever. And there have been several instances in which the matters related were known to the maids, although not to us. Here are two examples:-

Feda once said, "Your father mentions a ceiling in your house, as if some mark needed to be covered up."

As neither my wife nor I could understand the relevancy of this, the housemaid was asked. She replied that during our recent absence from home there had been an accident in an upstairs room, when a quantity of water had been spilled on the floor. This percolated through the boards and reached the ceiling of the room beneath which it marked conspicuously. After a few days the dampness disappeared, leaving so slight a stain that it was not discernible unless pointed out. On hearing this we proceeded to inspect. The mark was fairly large, but would not, I think, have been noticed in a casual glance, for the discolouration was of the slightest. Certainly it had not been observed by either of us, and would not, but for my father's allusion, have been brought to our notice.

During the autumn of 1921, our two servants, who are sisters, had their mother to stay with them. While at our house one of her friends brought her a fine pear. This was put away for safe keeping at the back of a cupboard. There it lay forgotten. It was near the end of November when, in cleaning out the cupboards, the pear was discovered in an advanced stage of decay.

Of this trifling incident neither my wife nor I knew anything. But about two weeks later, namely, at my sitting on December 9th, the following remark was made:-

"Ask Clara what has gone wrong in the cupboard; we got an idea that something had not been keeping well. We heard of it lately."

This was a puzzle to me, and my wife could throw no light upon it.

At the next sitting, December 20th, Feda said:-

"They think there is something in that remark about the cupboard. Has Clara solved the mystery yet?"

I had to reply in the negative, but subsequently the above facts were ascertained after inquiry made in the kitchen.

I took the first opportunity of reporting this to my communicators. But this was not the end. During the next sitting it was worked ingeniously into a Times test, thus:-

"In to-morrow's Times, page one, column two and near the top, is a word-it is really a name but one which he is making into a word to describe the mystery of the cupboard."

This was given on January 20th, 1922, at 9.5 p.m. I sent a note of it to the Society for Psychical Research that evening. Next day I saw, at the top of column two of the Times, first page, the name Pearson. It will be noticed that the first four letters of this name form the precise word which was wanted.

In the above we see trifles used for specific ends. I wanted no information about these trivialities, but I needed evidence that my father and sister were familiar with our home. And by such allusions they convinced me more quickly than had they confined attention to important matters within my knowledge.

My father knows that a shallow criticism may object, "It is strange that one who returns from heaven should pry into cupboards, etc." He reasonably remarks that, in pursuit of his purpose, he utilises whatever may serve, not disdaining references to homely objects and unimportant events. Since his avowed object is to prove continued nearness and awareness, only those who fail to see the value of that proof will be offended by the means employed in achieving it.

We now pass to a consideration of incidents relating to places at a distance.

In 1917, while my mother was residing at Bournemouth, my wife and I had a sitting with Mrs. Leonard, during which my father urged me to advise my mother to take special care while going up or down stairs. He then added:-

"She had a near shave the other day. If she chooses to remember she nearly slipped a few days ago.

She must be very careful. Although I should be very glad to have her with me, I do not wish her to have any accident."

Apart from my mother's age we had no reason to be nervous, but I wrote a guarded letter asking her to be careful, and adding that I had an impression that she had, only lately, narrowly escaped a fall. In her reply she confessed that she had fallen recently, through tripping over a wire mat at her greenhouse door.

My mother returned to Ramsgate in 1919, and five years later my father gave the following description. Feda said:-

"There is a purse which he used and your mother has kept it. He shows it to Feda, it looks an old leather purse, a fairly large one; it is not square in shape; it comes out a little broader at the bottom. It has been kept and you can find out about it. It was much cleaner and better in colour one side than the other. It is very smooth, green leather of rather coarse grain, or else grained artificially to form a pattern. It was quite a good purse, except that just where one opens it the stitching, not the material itself, but the seaming, was coming undone for about half an inch. Etta has seen it too. Your father feels that this purse can be easily found, and he is quite sure that it is exactly as he says. Notice particularly the difference in colour between the two sides; it was all the same at one time."

My mother said that she had no such purse. For my part, I was unable to recollect it. At my next sitting I said no purse could be found. On which my father repeated that he was quite sure about it, and that it could be found.

I therefore wrote asking if a further search could be made, and this resulted in a find of two of my father's purses, one of which answers almost exactly to the above description. This purse is old and made of leather, rather large for a man's use, being 4 by 2 1/2 inches, and somewhat thick, owing to its having six compartments. The back is comparatively clean, while the front is rubbed and faded. It is made of smooth, green leather, the graining now scarcely perceptible, though the condition is still fairly good. Inside the flap are my father's initials in his own writing.

The reference to a broken seam is striking; for the covering flap has one side broken for about one quarter of an inch.

Here we find seven statements, only the last of which is inaccurate.

1. His purse has been kept and can be found.
2. It is old, fairly large, not square.
3. Very smooth, green leather.
4. Coming undone for half or quarter inch just where the purse opens.
5. Quite good, but for above defect.
6. One colour, but one side better preserved.
7. Either coarse grain or artificially grained to form pattern.

Note that the words, "Etta has seen it too," indicate that the description is not based solely upon earth memory, but is the result of recent observation by both my father and sister.

Occasionally my maternal grandfather will speak at these sittings about my mother. Looking through the records I notice that he once provided a particularly neat proof. It was prefaced by recollections of her love for music, and by the remark:-

"She has not all her music in the room where she plays. She was saying, very lately, that she must find the other music which she keeps in another room. He hopes she will get it out."

Most of her music was, at this time, stored away in another part of the house, and my mother had recently promised to look out some of her old favourites and play to me when next I came to see her. I now noticed that Feda several times repeated in whispers the words, "Prince Albert." She then said aloud:-

"He keeps repeating 'Prince Albert' and it seems to come out of this talk about music. Then he builds up, for Feda to see, a picture of Prince Albert which he says your mother has; but in some way this is connected with music, or there is music near it; for that picture and music seem to come to his mind together."

[missing illustration]

This purse had belonged to my father, whose initials, J. D. T., can be seen on the flap. It was in the possession of my mother, who had forgotten its existence until making search for it at my request.

For an account of the way in which it was spoken of at one of my sittings, see page 71.

The description given was surprisingly accurate. Note especially the broken half-inch in the left side of the flap, which was indicated in the following words: "It was quite a good purse, except that just where one opens it the stitching, not the material itself, but the seaming, was coming undone for about half an inch."

I was sceptical about this picture for I knew of no such thing in my mother's house. We visited there on the day following this sitting. To my surprise, on entering her drawing room, I saw, in a place of prominence close to the music cabinet and the Piano, a copy of the celebrated engraving which represents Queen Victoria and Prince Albert with their young children clustered around them. Moreover, I learnt that this picture had been brought by a friend only the week before. Picture, music cabinet and piano stood in line close together. The claim of my grandfather that he had been to the house was thus substantiated. Mrs. Leonard was then living at Barnet and my mother at Ramsgate.

The following references are selected from among a large number which related to my sister's house at Folkestone at a period shortly before her passing.

My father had alluded to the inspirational writing which my sister was at that time practising regularly. I was aware of the writing, but did not know in what part of her house it was done.

Feda: When she writes has she often something red in front of her?

C.D.T.: I have no idea.

Feda.: Good, then ask her. Also, is there a photograph near in what is either a metal frame or one with a metal rim?

C.D.T.: Do you mean standing, or hung on a wall?

Feda: He thinks on the wall. Near her side something seems to be dangling, as if hanging down loose, much as a rope would do.

C.D.T.: Can he be sure what that is?

Feda: He knew exactly before coming here. Also, he has the idea of a bell near her.

C.D.T.: A bell to take up and ring, or a push in the wall?

Feda: He thinks the latter.

On my next visit Etta showed me her habitual position when sitting for inspirational writing. Always exactly in front of her was a little clock in bright red leather frame. Standing on a table at her left and close to her is a photograph of her daughter; it has a metal rim surrounding it. Immediately behind her head there hung from a shelf several inches of silk cord terminating in a tassel. In the wall to her right there was an electric bell.

It was impossible to compare this corner of the room with the above description of my sister's surroundings when writing, without recognising that it came from one who had personally observed. My own mind, as already said, was not in possession of the information.

After my sister's passing she became a constant speaker at my sittings, and frequently told me of incidents happening in her home. From a considerable list of such I select two—one trivial, the other important.

Speaking of her younger boy one day, Etta suddenly suggested that I should ask whether he had new handkerchiefs, as she thought she had noticed quite lately that he was using one which was not the usual white sort, but one with spots upon it. Replying to my inquiry about handkerchiefs, the boy wrote that he had lately procured a black silk handkerchief with white spots, for use when conjuring.

Etta's husband, after having been unwell, had taken a holiday and we heard that he had returned feeling better. I was surprised, therefore, when Etta told me, through Feda, that he was again unwell, run down and over-strained; that he was taxing himself too much and that she was afraid he might have a break-down. His symptoms were then described with much detail. I delayed for two days before sending him a copy of Etta's remarks. Then I received a letter from him which had crossed mine in the post. It was written from bed and stated that he had been to a Harley Street specialist who found that he was suffering from nerve exhaustion and had ordered him to have a period of complete rest in bed, and then a quiet time in the country. It proved to be a serious nervous break-down.

The above selections from hundreds of examples will show that information which was not within my own mind has been obtained by my communicators quite as easily as were facts with which I was familiar.

In case any reader may still incline to think that telepathy from human minds may have been responsible for these results, I invite him to consider the newspaper tests described in another chapter of this book.

Abundant evidence, extending over the eleven years of my investigation, has convinced me that friends who return to earth can observe my actions and also something of my surroundings. One cannot but wish to know more of the matter, to hear from them what the experience is like. For an account of it, given from their point of view, will enable one to glimpse for a moment somewhat of that life which will presently be our own, to realise in some degree the experience of making contact with earth by means of faculties attuned to another state of existence. From the accounts given me I select the following:-

Father: Objects on your plane are not so real to us as those where we dwell. To us they appear misty and cloudy. You have heard of the aura. We can see your aura when we cannot see you, and we can see it before we see you.

At times I am only just able to see your chair, or perhaps a corner of something which I guess to be a table; things sometimes are very vague to our sight.

C.D.T.: Am I seen more clearly than objects in the room?

Father: Much more so. I think we often see the things around you through a power of your soul which illumines them.

C.D.T.: Are you sure about that?

Father: I think it is so, because there are others to whom we have gone and we found that we could not so easily see them. If it were our own power we should be able to exercise it whenever we like. I think this accounts for some people from our world being able to describe so little of what they have seen around a sitter at his home. There has not been the illuminating power around that person, and so his communicators could see but few things to describe when they came to a sitting.

In speaking of newspaper tests my father remarked that one of his difficulties was a frequent inability to actually see them, and the consequent necessity of falling back upon sensing. He proceeded:-

"The difficulties are interesting. Your plane is not our plane. We are limited directly we try to touch and understand the merely material things of earth. If I know that you are sitting down I often may not know whether you are on a stool, chair or a sofa."

In the following Etta describes an attempt to make me think of her.

"You were in your study, standing near the table on which were several books. You were too interested in what you were doing to think of me. I stood near you by the

comer of the table, but you did not feel me in the least. I wondered how it was that you did not feel my presence; I had forgotten that I was not trying. Then the guide who had come with me said, 'Concentrate.' I calmed myself and tried for the time not to feel too loving, not to want to touch you, but to will that you should feel me. You did not at first; then you suddenly thought of me and forgot what you were doing; at least, you closed the book you had been looking at, placed it on the table, and sighed, thinking of me very strongly. You then turned round and faced me, but you did not see me and, of course, thought it quite natural that the thought of me should come in and interrupt what you were doing. I did not mind your not seeing me and had not expected you to do so. My studies of the subject on earth had helped me in understanding the difficulties. I felt rather glad that I had made you think of me suddenly."

One of my sittings was near the third anniversary of Etta's passing. The previous evening I spent a quiet hour in the garden thinking of her. Etta commenced her controlling by alluding to my walk in the garden, and introduced allusions to my actions and surroundings there which were perfectly accurate. Among other remarks, she said:-

"You were looking at some small yellow flowers while you thought of me. You went back into the house for something and came out again. You knew that I was with you there last evening. Part of the time we were near a comer where something cast a shade on one side. I like that comer, it is so peaceful, and one seems more alone there. Father was with us also, but you felt it was more for me that you had gone out. You had thought of poetry earlier in the day, and I thought your quotation was appropriate to meeting me in the garden later. I have been so eager to tell you that I was there with you."

C.D.T.: I so wish I could have seen you, Dear, but it is something to be sure, without even seeing.

Etta: To be sure with the mind and soul is the chief thing. Some whom you could touch are not so close to you in spirit; bodies may be present while thoughts are far away.

Through Feda:-

"Etta finds that your father is right in thinking that Clara* is a good subject; for they are able to get information easily in her vicinity. That is owing to some quality which Clara expels normally. Etta thinks that while many people have more of this than Clara has, yet they do not throw off so much of it. They would find it easier to obtain test information in Clara's vicinity than with others who threw off less of this peculiar emanation."

* *My wife's name is Clara.*

At the Paris International Congress of Psychical Research in 1927, I read a paper dealing with the question of this semi-physical emanation. We are told that it is thrown off by mediums during the special conditions of a sitting, and that there is reason to believe that some persons normally throw off a limited amount. Traces of this emanation left in a room, or upon objects, enable visitants from the other world to see and hear more easily. As the foregoing quotations show, my father and sister are of the opinion that it is largely owing to the presence of this emanation that they have been able to observe so minutely those material objects which they have afterwards described to me through Mrs. Leonard. The inference seems sound that, if such observation depended solely upon a communicator's own unaided ability, he would be able to obtain such information where and when he chose. My experience indicates that this cannot be done at will; the evidence supports the assertion of my communicators that while it is comparatively easy to see in some places and with some people, it is difficult with others. In this connection one recalls that the word "light" is applied by some communicators to their medium. Do they speak thus because they find themselves clairvoyant for material objects while in the medium's vicinity?

I believe the following remark of my father's gives the key to many of the problems which relate to interaction between the two worlds: "When we do something on your plane, which is not our plane, we have to make use of that in you which corresponds most closely to our plane, but which is not ours."

PART 2. CONCERNING OUR THOUGHTS

Throughout my sittings there has been frequent evidence that our thoughts are perceived by our unseen observers. This is a fact of much importance. For if our thoughts, plans and motives are open to their eyes, it follows that we have the power to gladden or sadden those whose love brings them back to watch us. But I shall touch on this again. For the moment we are to consider the evidence.

Such evidence need not relate to matters important in themselves. A glimpse of straws on a river will show which way the current flows. The drifting leaves and branches seen by Columbus when on the point of turning back were trivial in themselves, but became of importance when he saw in them evidence upon which his decision to proceed might be logically based. Similarly, the incidents now to be recounted are redeemed from triviality because they offer evidence of a truth which it highly imports us to know.

I commence with notes from a recent sitting in which my sister was controlling. She asked:-

"Do you remember thinking of me in the early part of yesterday?"

Although this was probable, I could not at the moment recollect. When, however, I was typing notes of the sitting and reached this point, it occurred to me to look up my engagements of the day before. I then discovered that the morning had been occupied in preparing a speech, of which the leading idea was a remark about psychical research which Etta had made in a letter before the subject had gained her interest. It was to the effect that she had no wish to be "a spiritual Columbus." And I had thought of her change of mind, of her subsequent interest in this subject, and of her enthusiastic co-operation in my investigations, both before and after her passing.

Etta next put a question which took me back to the previous sitting at which I had momentarily received an emotional shock. I had not thought of it since, but Etta now inquired:-

"Do you remember in a past sitting, did you think father was going to say something to you about mother having passed over? Father saw the thought in your head; we read that thought in you; you did not speak of it. Father was so surprised. We were able to add things afterwards which cleared it up."

My records of that sitting show that, while taking notes for the friend who shared it with me, I had suddenly heard Feda pronounce this sentence, quite unrelated to what had gone before, "Sarah is passed over." My father had habitually called my mother Sarah, and for an instant my mind leapt to the conclusion that he was now announcing the sudden passing of my mother. I undoubtedly experienced a wave of emotion which was only checked by noticing that Feda's next words precluded any reference to my mother.

It will be seen that the foregoing extracts appear to be precisely what one might reasonably attribute to unconscious telepathy from one's own mind. I might have thought this myself were it not for long experience in receiving similar messages which were not capable of that explanation. Etta frequently tells me things which I do not know, and the remarks in question were such as she would quite naturally bring up in conversation with me. And so I see no cause for supposing that my own mind had any part in originating the above remarks.

But I refrain from further instances of this character and proceed to recount allusions to thoughts of which I knew nothing and which had origin in the minds of other people.

There was an occasion on which my wife had arranged to accompany me to an afternoon sitting after taking lunch with a friend. When the morning arrived she changed her plans and decided to spend the whole afternoon with her friend. Scarcely had my sitting commenced, when Feda asked: -

"Where is Clara? Feda had an idea she was coming. You had the idea, not many days ago, that she would come with you. Your father says that you could not bring

her to-day, but that just a few days back you thought that she would come to the sitting. And Feda got it from you, too. Feda got an idea that Clara would not come here straight with you, but that you would meet her. Feda does not know if you really thought that, but that was what Feda got."

The above exactly expressed our original plan. Possibly it looks like telepathy from me, but note what followed. The sitting proceeded for several minutes, and Feda then suddenly remarked:-

"Your father has a thought-current from Clara. Ask her if she has forgotten something she wished to take with her to-day? Ask her if she has changed her mind about something she is wearing and had intended to wear something different? He feels sure something of the kind has happened. He wonders if the two ideas are mixed up."

I break off to explain the apparent source of this idea. My wife told me, later, that on proceeding to her friend's house she discovered that her umbrella was left in the train, and that during the afternoon she frequently thought about it. She had no recollection of changing her mind about clothing, and it would seem that my father's suggestion that he had confused this idea was well grounded.

To revert to the sitting: still speaking of Clara, Feda put the next statement in the interrogative form so frequently adopted in introducing afresh topic. She asked:-

"Do you know if Clara and her friend are talking about someone being ill? Someone connected with where she is gone to-day? Your father thinks that someone connected with that place is ill and that Clara will be talking about it."

C.D.T.: Has father become aware of that to-day?

Feda: Yes, a little while ago. This will be interesting as you can find out about it at once.

I learnt after-wards from my wife that her friend, who had been seriously ill, had given a full history of the recent sickness. When I next sat with Mrs. Leonard my father inquired (through Etta who was then controlling), whether I had verified this conversation about illness. Etta then added:-

"We did not know who had been ill till we heard them talking. We could not explain at the time why or how we knew. Were they in the garden?"

C.D.T.: Yes, they had tea in the garden and sat there some time.

Etta: I did not know about the tea, but sensed the garden most of the time.

It is interesting to note that my wife, on reading the above, pointed out that I was in error when stating that they had taken tea in the garden. The tea was indoors, though they had spent most of the afternoon in the garden. Here, as often, my communicators hold to their own opinion and refuse to accept mine. And they were right.

From my collection of records showing that my father and sister are frequently aware of my mother's thoughts and plans, even when these are unguessed by my wife or by me, I select the following:-

Feda: Did your mother wish to give you something silver?

C.D.T.: There is no reason for supposing it, so far as I am aware.

Feda: Your father thinks it is something that has been in your mother's thought. She seemed to be thinking, "I should like them to have this." It is something old, and she has had it a long time. Will you inquire about it?

My wife and I had that day returned from visiting my mother and could not think to what this might refer. I learnt later that my mother, shortly before this date, had decided to give me a set of silver spoons which had belonged to her mother and had been in the family eighty years. They were given me in due course.

In the above instances we observe that the thoughts described in my sittings had originated elsewhere, in the mind of my mother, my wife, or other persons. But what remains to be decided is the identity of the person who acted as receiver. By whom were noticed these thoughts? The list of possible receivers stands thus: medium, control, myself, friends in the unseen. Which of these first received that thought which was afterwards transmitted? Who had the strongest mental link, and the greatest facility for mind-reading? In my considered opinion it was my father and sister. If I am right, then we have in the above an illustration of that telepathy which is continually in action between us who remain on earth and our risen friends. We originate thoughts which they perceive.

It will be asked, why, if our thoughts can be observed by those in the Beyond, cannot those same thoughts be perceived by people on earth? I believe it is theoretically possible for them to be so perceived, but does this actually happen? How few indications of it come to our notice; how meagre is the experimental evidence for it. So meagre, indeed, is the evidence for telepathy between mind and mind on earth, that, as previously remarked, orthodox science does not yet accept it as proven. Personally, I accept it. The records of spontaneous telepathy, taken together with recorded experiments, and the unpublished experiences of my personal friends, seem to me to place telepathy beyond all question as a fact of mundane experience. But how few persons succeed in receiving at will the broadcast thoughts of others! And how bare and fragmentary at best are the ideas thus received! I incline to think that a faculty for telepathic reception lies dormant in each one of us, but that few

succeed in awakening that faculty to action. Daily we broadcast our thought, but those able to consciously receive and translate it are few on earth, although many in heaven.

Certainly, it would be theoretically possible that the above instances, in which I was correctly informed of thoughts which had been recently in the mind of my friends, might have been obtained telepathically from them by the medium herself. But I have not found, although carefully watching for it, any cause for thinking that this has happened. It seems to me that here, as in those cases where telepathy from human minds was clearly impossible, the mental broadcasting was received and interpreted by friends in the unseen.

This will be a suitable point at which to introduce some of my father's remarks on the subject.

At a sitting some time before my sister's passing I asked whether my father would be able to visit Etta and see what she was doing at the moment. He replied:-

"Yes, I could do so, although there might be difficulty in telling you here, in getting it through afterwards. I could get her thoughts more easily than her actions."

Then, touching on communion of soul, and contrasting it with verbal communication through mediums, he added:-

It Pure communion is that sort which you and I have in your study. This at sittings is helpful, indeed necessary; but, after all, it is imperfect, mechanical, almost artificial, although satisfactory beyond words and very necessary as a means of independent confirmation."

In the early days of my Leonard sittings I wished to be sure that I had rightly grasped the meaning of my father's remarks and therefore asked, "Is it right to say that our departed friends can often see us and be conscious of our thoughts and of what we are doing? Here, in substance, is his reply:-

"Yes, if you say often, and do not give the idea that we are always present. I realise your moral and spiritual actions, and should be aware, for instance, if you did anything very wrong. I should be conscious of it even without coming to see." When controlling he once remarked: -

"I can sometimes be with you in effect while a very long distance away. Though I were thousands of miles away I could get your thought if you were in need of help and thought of me. And I could send a helpful thought in response as easily as if standing by your side at the moment. I might not get your thought word for word, and yet I should get the thought correctly. It would be your subconscious mind that called; for the subconscious anticipates the conscious. The subconscious is aware first, and telegraphs to the conscious, and it might at the same time telegraph to me.

There have been occasions when persons felt themselves guided in moments of danger, and it has been concluded that therefore some angelic presence was with them at the time. I do not think it necessary. There is no such thing as distance where thought is concerned. A guardian spirit is near in thought. It would be absurd to say that he is in constant attendance and always near any one person on earth. One guardian may have several on earth to protect."

I here quote from my sister.

During her communication a few months after passing, I inquired whether she experienced the same sense of loss and separation that we were feeling. She replied:-

"No, no, we only feel as you may picture anyone feeling who had to go and live in a different house from the people they cared for, yet could see them and know all that happened to them, although not able to live in the house with them."

I said, "Then you have no sense of bereavement?" To which she answered:-

"No, Dear. You see I know that you are coming, too. It is only a case of waiting such a little time. Looking back now, it seems altogether so short a time we are on earth."

On another occasion, while we were comparing the respective advantages of wordless communion at home and verbal intercourse through a medium, Etta remarked:-

"I think that you get nearer to the real ME at home."

Once, while controlling, she said

"You know, Drayton, I can see you more clearly than when I was on earth; and I am more conscious that this knowledge has made you happier. I seem to see you more truly from this side than I did on earth, where we see only one side at a time. I now see you as a whole. We know those we love so much more and better than we did on earth."

I now come to a definite and conclusive proof that my father and sister are aware of thoughts which I address to them mentally.

A cousin in Canada wrote in great sorrow about the passing of his little son. In the privacy of my study I asked my father and sister to find the child and obtain from him a message for his parents, together with sufficient evidential detail to satisfy them of his identity. I added that he would probably be with his grandfather, my uncle Fred. At my sitting a few days later they told me they had been talking with Fred; and then, as I had expected, came what I wanted. They described incidents connected with the child's passing, some dozen facts in all, and these were afterwards verified by

the child's father. Also, at subsequent sittings, further messages and evidences were given for the parents, the evidential items eventually numbering more than fifty, not one of which had been known to me, or to the medium.

But on this I do not dwell, since our present interest is with the first sitting, which proved that my request had been understood. The proof that my private appeal had reached my communicators is found in the fact that they came to the next sitting fully Prepared with the information for which I had asked, information, be it noted, of which I had no knowledge, and which subsequently was proved to have been correct.

Let me now add a second case where, in like manner, my intentions were perceived, and accurate information unknown to me was obtained elsewhere.

(Pseudonyms are used in this instance).

My parents and sister had known intimately a Mrs. Sands. When she passed over I received a letter from her daughter May, whom I had not seen for thirty years. In that letter she inquired as to the possibility of obtaining some message from her mother. I mentally decided to invite May to a sitting with Mrs. Leonard.

The date for which I proposed to arrange it was still some weeks distant, when the following was given through Fedá:-

"Mrs. Sands has been to see May. You are bringing her. Her mother wants to speak to her."

C.D.T.: I will see what I can do.

Fedá: She seemed to get it from you. Etta is smiling and says, "Of course, he will. He says that in a noncommittal way." Etta and your father are laughing. They feel that May would be happier for getting into touch with her mother in this way. In a sense she is "alone," rather than "lonely." Fedá wonders what the difference is. Yes, they say that May has to think for herself and for others too, and is a good deal thrown back upon herself.

Do you know if she has glasses, or has been anxious about her eyes? Her mother says that May has been thinking about eyes just lately. Etta says that May is not really very strong; she keeps up the appearance of health, but is not robust, soon gets tired and does not really feel at all as she ought to.

When I subsequently met Miss Sands I found that the above correctly described her condition. She used glasses, and had recently been thinking of getting others. At the date of the above sitting, which was in the Christmas holidays, she had been speaking frequently about eyes and spectacles, and advising her hostess to visit an oculist. Being the head-mistress of a large school, Miss Sands certainly had to think

for others. All the above statements proved to be minutely correct, and I had known nothing about these particulars.

My studies have convinced me that those whom death removes can, if they so wish, keep themselves conversant with our life and surroundings. They can know what occurs in our home and in our minds. But between our outward and our inward life there is a clear-cut distinction of which they seem even more acutely aware than are we. Among those who pass from earth comparatively few feel the necessity for a minute observation of the material objects which surround their earthly friends. Here and there are a few who deem it their special work to do this for the purpose of giving evidence to those with whom they are in communication. But this is no more necessary for the majority there, than is a proficiency in, say, astronomical photography for the majority of people here. Most of those who visit earth can see to some extent, and many of them are able to see a good deal; but much depends upon individual differences, and upon conditions of which we as yet know almost nothing.

It is the experience of my father and sister-and they think it is the common experience of those who leave earth-that they ascertain most easily that kind of information about their loved ones which is of permanent, rather than transitory, importance. They know more about our character than about our clothing. It is so easy for them to know about our inner life that they can even learn it from afar without needing to come to us. But if they wish to observe our material surroundings minutely it may be necessary for them to exercise a special mode of vision, a kind of clairvoyance, and for some of them this is difficult.

I have allotted a chapter to this subject because of its practical importance. Is there not widespread uncertainty among people as to whether or not their departed friends know how it fares with them? I suspect that many doubt; I know that some deny. Then, too, do not some express the hope that those in heaven are denied the knowledge of what transpires on earth; that the mother is unaware of her son's wild living, that the father cannot see his daughter's struggle for bread? One may sympathise with the feeling which prompts that hope, without sharing the belief that parents are so changed by transition to another phase of life that they would prefer to be without tidings of children left behind. Uncertainty about the welfare of those whom we love is not usually preferable to knowledge. Do we not long for news of our sick child, the one travelling abroad, the hard-pressed and unhappy one? Why should it be supposed that death lessens our divinest instincts? The truth is far otherwise. Our natural preferences persist when we awake from death. The facts available leave me in no doubt that those we loved and lost have not lost us; they watch over us, they love us, they await the hour of our coming.

But, it may be asked, does not this intimate knowledge lessen the happiness of those who dwell in the realms of light? That must depend somewhat on what they see within us. To notice our degeneration must sadden them, as surely as our progress in character must give joy. It may well be that their scale of values is truer

than ours; that careless ease and prosperous enjoyment are seen to have but a passing importance; while our growth in sympathy, in fortitude, in likeness to Our Lord is recognised as a permanent enrichment and our true preparation for the greater life awaiting us beyond.

The truth to which the facts of this chapter point would, if recognised, dissuade the bereaved from yielding to a desolating sense of loss and separation. It would bring a new and heartening aspect to the "dark shadow of death," enabling us to see "the bright light which is in the cloud." Yet not only as a means to comfort is this truth being given. To face the truth is right and wise whether it brings comfort or suffering.

If we are causing a shadow to fall across the etherial landscape it is well that we should be aware of this. And if we know that heaven is brighter because some we love see that all is right with us, then that too is well.

Know we not our dead are looking
Downward with a sad surprise,
All our strife of words rebuking
With their mild and loving eyes?
Shall we grieve the holy angels?
Shall we cloud their blessed skies?
-WHITTIER.

CHAPTER IX

FURTHER EVIDENCE THAT THE DEPARTED CAN KEEP IN TOUCH WITH EARTH

THE previous chapter showed that departed friends can observe our thoughts. We are now to consider a class of incident pointing to an extension of this faculty.

During a period when I was working at the Leysian Mission, my father while controlling suddenly said:-

"Rickett...do you know such a name at the Mission?"

As this name was pronounced almost exactly like that of Mr. Ricketts, the chairman of the Mission Men's Club, I replied that I knew the name. My father proceeded:-

"Did you know that someone connected with his family passed over quite recently?"

Now, on casting my mind back I found only one relevant fact about Mr. Ricketts, namely, that I had visited an aunt of his in hospital and that she had died. So I replied that Ricketts had lost an aunt several years back. My father then said:-

"You met him at the Mission about three weeks ago.

I like him; he is one who puts his whole heart into his work. I should much like to know if they lost someone quite recently, say within two years, but not the aunt. I may have caught his subconscious thought."

Here was an experimenter who concluded that he had obtained certain facts in a certain way, and who wished to learn how far he had been successful. I made a point of interviewing Mr. Ricketts that evening and learnt from him that his brother-in-law, who had resided with them for the last twenty years and was greatly beloved by all the family, had died exactly two years before and was still greatly missed by them.

I here set down the above statements as given at the sitting, together with the facts which verified them.

1. You met him there about three weeks ago. On referring to my pocket-book I discovered that my last meeting with Mr. Ricketts had been in the crush hall of the Mission exactly three weeks and two days before the date of this sitting.
2. He is one who puts his whole heart into his work. This is so.
3. Someone lost recently, not the aunt, say within two years. This is correct, and the date is right, the family loss having been exactly twenty-four months before.

It will naturally be asked if I had not been aware of this bereavement. I had not, and the reason chiefly lay in the fact that the brother-in-law did not attend our Mission, but was engaged in Christian work in another part of London; moreover, I had never been to Mr. Ricketts' home.

4. I may have caught his subconscious thought. When, during the next sitting, I explained the accuracy of these statements, my father said:-

"I got the information from his subconscious self.

I have tried this before, as you may remember. Whenever I say that I got so-and-so from anyone, you may take it that I get it in this way."

There had been previous instances of a similar kind in which some of the statements made were within my knowledge, while others were not.

Here I make a digression by adding remarks which my father appended to the above.

"You may wonder, what about private thoughts? If I can get this from your friend's subconscious mind, are we able to keep anything to ourselves in our own realms? While in the body one has not control over the subconscious mind, but when one lives in the psychic body, as we do, it is possible to shut off the mind completely from others, if one chooses."

C.D.T.: But you have given me to understand that in your spheres a man's aura indicates to others his general character.

Father: Exactly, there are no hypocrites there; it is no avail pretending to be what you are not. Yet, if meeting anyone to whom we feel disinclined to speak, that disinclination shows itself; and the other person would not then wish to speak until conditions were ripe for it. We signal by thought, and, if one calls us, it is easy to signal back our good wishes and to say "Engaged just now." No one will simulate pleasure at seeing one who interferes with his work.

C.D.T.: That is often done on earth; it seems only polite, and kindness almost demands it.

Father: Yes, for your subliminal mind cannot give the true reason to them, and so you play down to the conscious mind. There is a great deal in recognising the limits of another's conscious mind on earth. But where we live there is only truth; nothing can be uttered or thought which is not true and good.

C.D.T.: Is that because no one would reach your particular sphere while they could wish to play false?

Father: Yes, exactly so. On the lower spheres they try it, but even there it is seen through. One who arrives there may not at first realise that his thought is known, but he soon notices that his duplicity avails him nothing, and he soon ceases to trouble to act in that way. While on earth that kind of thing often procures him what he seeks, and so he may make duplicity a habit. It is the worse for him if duplicity is allowed to "pay him." It would be far better were he sharply pulled up when first he tried it, and made to see that it availed him nothing. The sensitiveness of good people often keeps them from doing this service. I notice it in youths arriving over here; it would have been better if the truth had been shown them at first, so that they would have seen earlier that falsehood avails nothing in the end. We must be simple and truthful and leave the byeways alone.

To revert again to my father's remark that he obtained information from Ricketts' subconscious mind; this process is possibly analogous to that employed in psychometry. Psychometry has been defined as "The faculty of reading the characters, surroundings, etc., of persons by holding in the hand objects which they have had in their possession." The fact is common enough and any who care to experiment with those possessing this faculty can prove it for themselves. Nothing is known of the process involved; there are hypotheses, but as yet no knowledge. Without attempting to explain anything, I suggest that if my father, standing invisibly by my side while I converse with a friend, obtains information from the subconscious mind of that person, it is permissible to conclude that the process may be the same in essence as psychometry. In the latter case our hand touches an object associated with some person; in the former case my father gets into touch with the person concerned, dispensing with an intermediate object. In short, if objects can be psychometrised, so can persons. And just as a psychometrist will improve in accuracy with practice, so has my father become increasingly successful in obtaining information from persons in my vicinity. Needless to say, this faculty has on no occasion been used improperly; no secrets have been revealed to me, which it was in the interest of anyone to keep private. I do not say that my father could not obtain such information, but I am confident that he would not do so; such action would be as distasteful to him as to myself. But although ugly secrets are not given away by our unseen observers, they are noticed! Among the "cloud of witnesses" there are those who can be pained or gladdened, according to the nature of those thoughts which we deem hidden.

If our risen friends can read our thoughts, can they do more, can they ascertain what other people are thinking about us? My father has occasionally named matters which, as he said, had come to his cognisance while he was near me. He appears to have somehow become aware of thoughts relating to myself which had arisen in the minds of others, and of which I knew nothing. My father's rather quaint explanation is that he "found them sticking in my aura." Do such thoughts actually travel, possibly in some way analagous to that by which broadcast speech reaches our homes? If this be so, it may be proved some day.

It would be an interesting discovery.

Now, since I had not, in any such instances, been personally aware of the thoughts which my father had thus observed with me, it will be asked, how then do you know that there was substance of fact in your father's assertions? I only know that what he told me was in agreement with what came to pass immediately afterwards. For example, one day he said that I was about to receive an invitation to

Speak in Liverpool. I had no reason to suppose this was so, yet I received a letter from that place, written just before the date of the sitting in which it was foretold. On another occasion he said that I should have a letter from my publisher; I had no reason whatever for expecting one, but the letter arrived next day.

Now, I have frequently heard people, who made no claim to psychic faculties, recount instances in which they dreamt of having a letter from a certain person, and then actually received it by the morning's post. Others tell me that, on hearing the postman's knock, they have suddenly thought of a friend from whom they had not heard for many months, and among the letters delivered by that postman was one from the friend in question. These happenings seem too definite to be explained by chance coincidence. The psychic fact which accounts for them, whatever it may be, is probably similar to that which is in play when my father reads thoughts which he finds in my aura. Usually we are unconscious of thoughts directed to us by others at a distance, and yet, as I consider proved by experiments in telepathy, those thoughts reach us. The analogy of wireless is suggestive; broadcasting causes action in the ether around of which we are unconscious. But when a suitable receiving instrument is brought into the room, those unperceived etheric vibrations are interpreted for us. Similarly, as it seems, my father can interpret a thought which is active in my vicinity

Subjoined is a dated series of references to this question. It shows how, as time passed, my father and sister gained further understanding of this subtle process which, as they consider, enables them to ascertain ideas which have been, so to speak, picked up by my subconscious mind, without reaching my consciousness.

December, 1919. Through Feda.

"Sometimes your father gets the thoughts which are directed to you by people, even people unknown to you, who may have heard you speak or read your writings. When with you he can feel their thought directed to you, and can tell if the sender be man or woman, young or elderly."

Feda, then, on her own account, suggested that to do this my father must have gained an unusual proficiency, and one not possessed by the majority of communicators.

January, 1920. Father controlling.

"When with you I often get thoughts which people send out towards you. Those thoughts stick in your aura and I read them from it."

I suggested that this seemed to be psychometry.

"Yes, for when those thoughts are in your aura, I can become conscious of them and can disentangle them."

February, 1919. My father, speaking through Feda, explained that it was difficult to be a transmitter and a receiver at one and the same time. That if he wished to impress my mind at home, or to communicate with me at a sitting, he carefully refrained from "getting into my condition" sufficiently to be aware of my thoughts, or of thought which might be directed to me. He thus avoided mental distractions.

October, 1924. It was explained, through Feda, that my father had discovered that he could now detect in my mind, not only thoughts sent by others, but also ideas which I had myself acquired without having been conscious of them. Supposing I walked along a street and passed the place for which I was bound without realising that I had done so, this would be an instance of seeing without noticing consciously; and that, similarly, my mind could subconsciously notice ideas of which I was not consciously aware. It was these subconsciously acquired ideas which he was now able to interpret when finding them within me. He added that should I miss some point in a speech to which I was listening, he might be able to get that point from me quite clearly.

February, 1925. Through Feda.

"Many thoughts are sent to you daily, from friends and from those who have heard you speak; during the day many will at some time or other think of you. Yet out of all those thoughts how very little reaches your consciousness. I have occasionally succeeded in picking up some definite thought which I found directed to you, and of this I have sometimes given proof. But I rather incline to think that this may be owing to my having identified myself with your activities over so long a period. When I come to you I can sense some of those thoughts occasionally, if not often."

March, 1925. At this period I had been thinking much about a semi-physical emanation which was said to sensitise the medium's brain, and in other ways facilitate a communicator's intercourse with Feda. And I asked my father, during his control, whether he considered that one's aura, in a similar way, helped him to interpret thoughts which had been sent towards one by other people. He replied:- "Yes, your aura sensitises thoughts directed to you. To use a photographic analogy, it is like a plate sensitised to receive impressions and thoughts. You may not notice those impressions because you do not 'develop' them, although I may succeed in doing so."

April, 1925. Feda said that my father now realized that the thoughts from other people which he noticed in my aura had often arrived some time before.

May, 1925. Etta controlling.

C.D.T.: There have been instances of your catching a thought which has been directed to me by a distant person and of which I was entirely unconscious. How do you do it? Father once described such thoughts as "sticking in my aura." Can you explain more explicitly?

Etta: That phrase was not a good description. We psychometrise the thoughts in your aura, just as a medium can psychometrise a ring. You may notice when a medium does that, the fact obtained is not always an important one. It is a little like fishing; say that I put my net into your aura, and, finding a fish within it, bring up that fish; for if there is one fish in the net there may be others which I had not noticed. We take the small fact since a larger fact may be linked to it. We work by the law of association."

C.D.T.: It seems curious that you should be able to obtain ideas from my mind which I have not noticed there.

Etta: Ideas need to be watched for. They may have arrived like letters which remain unopened. If one watches for the postman's coming it is less likely that letters will be left unread.

These quotations will have served a purpose if they help us to realise that there exists in thought a greater power than is commonly supposed. We admittedly influence each other by thought which we express in words, or which we translate into action. We can easily notice how our own thoughts, be they wise or unwise influence our moods, our outlook on life, and even health. But it may be possible also that our unspoken thought reaches the person to whom it is directed, and that it may help or hinder him through the action of his subconscious mind, although never revealed to his consciousness.

The following account indicates that my sister succeeded in correctly interpreting a thought which had been directed to my mother in Ramsgate by a friend at Harrogate, a distance of two hundred miles.

At a sitting on December 22nd, 1922, Etta asked whether mother had received a gift of a bag.

I replied that I would inquire. Feda then continued:-

"Etta keeps getting an impression of a soft silk bag, and feels that it is not all one colour. She has a very strong impression that it was studded or dotted in design,

probably part of it so dotted. Etta likes to give her mother evidence of what she sees, as well as telling how much she is with her."

This seemed a sufficiently definite statement. A silk bag of unique design has been, or is to be, given to my mother as a present.

At the next sitting, January 5th, 1923, I announced that no such bag had appeared. Feda replied:-

"Etta's idea was that it would be a Christmas gift to her mother. It may have been delayed. For she still gets that idea, and feels that mother will have that bag."

This confidence should be noted. I next visited my mother on February 4th, when she showed me a gift from Mrs. Whitehead, a friend then visiting her. I noticed that it was a silk bag which answered to the description given by Etta before Christmas. Refraining from any mention of this, I casually asked several questions which elicited the following information. Mrs. Whitehead had made the bag at Harrogate during the previous November. She had at first intended to give it at Christmas, but later decided to keep it for mother's birthday on January 27th.

I then told her of my sister's remarks and pointed out how perfectly the present of this bag fulfilled the forecast made on December 22nd.

Let us compare it with the description given above.

Soft silk bag. The bag is made of exceedingly soft silky materials.

Not all one colour. The pocket of the bag is orange, its outer cover is black.

Studded or dotted in design. The outer cover is a network of black cord in knotted design and very open. This knotting of the cord makes an effect not inaptly described by the words "dotted or studded," the dotted pattern being conspicuous upon the orange background.

Probably part of it so dotted. The dotted portion is over only part of the bag.

How shall we explain (a) the accurate description of this bag at my sitting while it was two hundred miles away at Harrogate? (b) The statement that the bag was coming to my mother, and the assumption that it would arrive for Christmas, when it had actually been intended for a Christmas present? (c) My sister's impression on January 5th that the bag would yet reach my mother; Mrs. Whitehead having meantime decided to present it on January 27th?

Two years afterwards, when inquiring how certain results were achieved by my communicators, it occurred to me that I ought to ask how this forecast of the present

had been made possible. My question was put to Etta during her controlling, and elicited the following reply:-

"I am not sure now, as it is long ago and I have done so much since. But if it was done in our usual way, the thought must have been picked up with mother. Supposing the thought had reached mother, it would be there in her aura, as father has told you previously. I should fish it out, perhaps the day following. Some people cannot retain a thought in their aura for long, others can. We get things more easily from some than from others."

[missing illustration]

A work-bag of orange silk, the outer cover being black. It was described as:-

"A soft silk bag, not all one colour, studded or dotted in design, probably part of it so dotted."

The remarkable circumstances connected with its mention at a sitting with Mrs. Leonard will be found on pages 99-100.

C.D.T.: Do you obtain the information from the aura by sight, sound or sensing?

Etta: By sensing the aura when coming close to it. It is peculiar, but I know many on our side who cannot understand what we mean by that. For when they come to earth they are unable to sense things in that way. I think father and I have trained ourselves to interpret; there is a sense in which you might consider us mediumistic.

If this explanation correctly represents what took place when the coming of the silk bag was foretold, it would seem that Etta had no need to follow up the stream of thought and visit Harrogate. It was sufficient for her purpose to visualise that which she sensed in her mother's vicinity when, or immediately after, Mrs. Whitehead had been strongly thinking of the gift.

It should be added that Mrs. Whitehead had never seen Mrs. Leonard and had not mentioned this bag to my wife or to any member of our family circle; also, that we had not seen her for a year.

The foregoing instances have dealt with thoughts. The two following refer to those unseen presences which may often be with us while we are unconscious of their nearness.

It was once inquired, through Feda:-

"Have you been talking to some Americans? Your father was interested because he saw a very beautiful spirit with them. He did not know if she were a relation, or a

guide, but she was like an angel-girl hovering about, very happy and bright. There was also an older spirit-lady with her, and he gathered that they had both passed fairly recently."

Now, the only Americans with whom I had spoken for a year or more were a man and his wife whom I had accidentally met at the house of a friend. He had been introduced to them at a dinner the previous evening and asked them to call. He knew their name, but little more, not even their home address. Fortunately I gave them my card, and the next Christmas brought their season's greeting. This enabled me to send the above extract. The following was the reply: "What you write is most interesting; for every time I have been to a medium the beautiful young spirit spoken of by your father is always with me. My mother, whom I adored and do still, left me two years ago."

Another incident, similar in character, happened after a visit to Manchester. While there I spent an hour at the house of a psychic student. At the next sitting my father, speaking through Feda, referred to several things I had done while in Manchester, but the remarks which most interested me were those touching on matters of which I had no knowledge. Some of these related to the above mentioned call; he said:-

"There was a spirit-boy with them in that house, one whom I had not previously seen, a nice lad who seemed very much at home there. I gathered that he belonged to them. Do you know who Tom would be, someone connected with them? I kept feeling that name while there."

I break off here to say that on sending a copy of the above I received a reply of which the following is part: "I have no hesitation in saying that I know exactly who is referred to. Tom was an adopted brother of mine and was brought up with me in my home. Before my marriage Tom went to lodge with my mother-in-law; therefore he was also closely connected with my wife and mother-in-law through living in their house for two years. The description, "a nice lad," fits him exactly. He died of consumption at the age of twenty-four, and we continually, and almost weekly, receive communications from him."

The sitting continued:-

I had a peculiar feeling, while there with you, that those people had been worried, troubled, very recently, over something of quite a material nature, and that they had been undecided about it. I thought it was not altogether settled when you were there, but I did not hear them allude to it, so it may be some private matter. I am sure I am right about it, and that this was not an ordinary thing, but something which had much occupied their minds."

I quote again from the above letter: "This is perfectly true...legal complications did cause us anxiety. It is also true that the matter was not settled at the time you were with us, but it has since been satisfactorily settled." The letter gave further particulars of the law case involving a branch of the family residing at a distance from Manchester.

Of ten statements relating to this house, five were within my knowledge at the time of the sitting, the other five were totally unknown. All ten were correct in every particular.

From time to time my friends give evidence that they possess information obtained, not from minds on earth, but from those with whom they converse in the realms beyond death.

I select as examples the three following.

Feda, while transmitting for my father, asked:-

"Who is Salisbury? Do you remember one with a name like that? He has passed over and your father has seen him on the other side. This Salisbury asked to be remembered to your mother when he heard that your father communicated. Your father says that this Salisbury didn't believe in communication, and thinks it next to impossible, even now he is there. So your father promised to name him at this sitting. Was Salisbury very fond of books and papers? Your father says he showed some old magazines, or something of that kind."

I was aware that a gentleman of this name had recently died, and that my mother had known him slightly. But as I did not know any of the family it seemed unlikely that I should be able to verify the clue that he had been fond of books and papers, or that old magazines had any relevancy. Indeed, these clues seemed surprisingly trivial, and almost too general in character to have evidential value. It so happened that two months later I had the opportunity of attending a lecture at the house of Mr. Salisbury's son. Before leaving I alluded to the deceased and remarked that I had heard of his interest in some kind of book-collecting. Mr. Salisbury replied, "Yes, my father was a collector of magazines"; and leading me to a bookcase containing a number of substantial volumes in identical bindings, he explained that these consisted of sermons and magazines which his father had collected and bound together. Here was unexpected corroboration of the remark made at my sitting that Mr. Salisbury had been "very fond of books and papers-old magazines or something of that kind."

A man who had recently lost his wife and was in deep sorrow, accompanied me to a sitting with Mrs. Leonard. He received evidences of her identity, as well as of continued love and interest. During the next sitting, at which I was alone, Feda transmitted the following message:-

"Your father says he has seen the young lady who came here last time. She told him that, quite lately, there had been a sort of medallion found; it is a little oval picture, not for a wall, but an ornament. It has a little studded frame of fine workmanship. She thinks the sitter of last time will know, because she liked it, and used to handle it much. It is quite small, but not quite flat, the surface is a little convex."

When a copy of the above reached my friend he promptly replied that his wife's mother recognised this description, having unpacked the article, after changing residence, only a few days before. It had been one of the ornaments in his wife's home before her marriage, and had stood in her mother's private room. He added that, although it was just possible that he might have seen it some years previously, he had no recollection of having done so. He called a few days later, bringing the article. The frame is of fine mosaic work. Its size is 3 1/2 by 2 1/2 inches. The one discrepancy relates to the words, "not quite flat, the surface is a little convex." I should not have described it in that way, although the mosaic flowers are in high relief.

At the time of receiving the letter, my friend had not heard of the finding of this object, and doubts if he had ever known of its existence. I had not met his wife or her mother, nor had I been to their homes.

My friend's wife had been familiar with the ornament throughout her girlhood. Was it not natural that, when noticing it in her mother's new house, she should arrange with my father to speak of it, thus giving her husband a further evidence of her identity and nearness?

I close this chapter with an account of one who, from the life beyond, observed the peril of his widow and intervened. It illustrates again that those who depart this life can still keep in dose touch with those they leave behind.

During a sitting some years ago my father said, through Feda, that he had promised to convey a request from one who was a stranger to me, but whom he had met in the other world, a delightful and clever man, who was extremely anxious about his wife on earth. She had been left with their infant son and was in deep depression. He had spoken with her at a sitting and it had comforted her, but he noticed that she had recently yielded to depression and he had reason to believe that she now entertained the idea of killing both the child and herself. He was therefore most anxious that someone should intervene to prevent that calamity.

After this introduction, which I have abbreviated, my father proceeded:-

"Many people know me and my work with you here. He asked me whether you could see and talk with her without telling her that he knows she had thought of doing this. He would not wish the idea suggested to her again if it has really gone. But she has, he fears, only temporarily recovered and was in despair a little time back, and had the wild idea that both she and the child would be better off in passing to the next

life. We wish to avoid that rash act at all costs; for it would not bring her nearer her husband. Suicide is bad enough, but coupled with the destruction of another life it is very bad. Her husband thinks she can manage her affairs if she could find someone who would give her hope and befriend her a little."

[missing illustration]

This photograph-stand of coloured mosaic was in a house I had not entered, and in the possession of a lady whom I did not know. Her son-in-law anonymously shared one of my sittings with Mrs. Leonard, and on a subsequent occasion, when he was not present, it was described as follows:-

Your father says he has seen the young lady who came here last time. She told him that, quite recently, there had been a sort of medallion found; it is a little oval picture, not for a wall, but an ornament. It has a little studded frame of fine workmanship. She thinks the sitter of last time will know, because she liked it, and used to handle it much. It is quite small, but not quite flat, the surface is a little convex."

The one discrepancy relates to the words, "the surface is a little convex." I should not have described it so, although the mosaic flowers project.

The incident was pregnant with significance for both the lady and her son-in-law. The latter is shown in the photograph with his wife who, shortly after her passing, originated this message.

For the full account, see page 104.

More was said, from which I gathered that the thought of suicide had been noticed in the widow's mind only three days previously. My sister added that they were very anxious about her, and that while at first the husband had some diffidence in asking them to tell me what he had seen in his wife's mind, he felt that a minister might be trusted to act with the needed discretion. I asked Feda if she remembered whether the lady had named this terrible idea during her recent sitting. Feda said that nothing of the kind had been hinted, and that the lady had left seemingly cheered, although troubled about her future plans.

I discovered the widow's address with some difficulty and then my wife and I made her acquaintance. The special reason for the husband's anxiety was never named by us, but when we had known her for some weeks and she told us the story of her sorrow, she incidentally remarked that, at one time, she had wondered if it might not be the best thing "to turn the gas on herself and the boy." This was some years back, and she has faced life bravely ever since.

CHAPTER X

THE SPIRITUAL BODY

NO sooner had my father commenced to communicate with me than I realised from his remarks that he wished me to understand that he now lived in a body which, to him, seemed as real and as substantial as the body he had inhabited while on earth. Instead of the vapourish form which I had imagined to be the dwelling place of the departed soul, he described a replica of his former body, but one which possessed powers of movement, and an extension of the senses, far surpassing anything familiar to earth. He spoke of being suitably clad in garments, and not, as I had supposed, draped only in a cloud of light.

In these records the new body is variously termed the spiritual," the "ethereal," or the "etheric" body.

This spiritual body is described as being so sensitive to the condition of the soul within, and partaking of its nature and development so completely, that it manifests unmistakably one's true character.

My first sittings were some fourteen years after my father's passing. In one of these he remarked:-

"All bodily weakness was left behind at my passing. I am now hale and hearty, looking a young man in the prime of life. Were you to see me as I really am, it is possible that you might not recognise me. My appearance is more like the early photograph which shows me without a beard, but with rather prominent whiskers. Have you that photograph?"

I was able at once to recognise the photograph in question. It was then in my mother's house at Bournemouth. It is of cabinet size and framed. It dates from the time when I was very young and has been familiar to me all my life. The significance of the change between my father's appearance in old age and that described above is seen by comparing the photograph in question with one taken shortly before he passed.

Some months later, he remarked:-

"I look many years younger than when I passed over. When your mother joins me she, too, will gradually change to youthful perfection again. For when the ethereal body is freed from the flesh it tends to revert automatically to its prime. After our family circle is completed we shall all progress towards perfection of outward form, so that I shall become even more youthful than now.

"It is usual for friends who welcome us here to assume something of that appearance which was theirs on leaving earth. Just as members of one family

gradually advance in age without their noticing any sudden change in each other, so do they here grow steadily younger in appearance until all attain the look of youthful perfection.

"Your mother has not looked any older to me since I left; for I see her spiritual body which looks even younger than she appeared at the time I passed over. You see only the covering; but I see her as she is."

C.D.T.: If the etheric body of an aged person looks to you younger than does the physical body to us, how would the etheric body of a growing youth appear? Would it seem younger or older than his physical body?

Father: The etheric body of a growing youth would look young; it is progressing and would be seen as immature. But in a person past the prime of life the etheric body always looks younger than its physical counterpart. It cannot follow downward steps. In the case of a boy who was mentally advanced, his etheric body would be in agreement with his mental, rather than with his merely physical growth.

C.D.T.: Are you never weary?

Father: Never; force is generated in my body which quickly revitalises any part that may require it. Yet sometimes, knowing that it is good to have a change, I lie down. But this is more for meditation than for rest. It is the only kind of rest we need. On earth you require sleep, but for us a soulful meditation brings rest.

C.D.T.: I wish to ask about the body in which we live after physical death; does that body already exist here, interpenetrating the physical body?

Father: Yes, the etheric or "spiritual body" is with you now, the entire bulk of it, but it is not so alive or conscious as is your physical body. When the latter sleeps your consciousness passes automatically into the former. The etheric body is never unconscious. It has a separate consciousness when freed from the physical body, and shares the consciousness of the latter when within it. Those who can see clairvoyantly, and remember what they see, must have a partial or momentary division of consciousness; but the etheric body sees only partly and in glimpses during earth life. It is the etheric body which sees clairvoyantly. Should a person suffer harm by this clairvoyance it would be through straining and overdoing it, ejecting consciousness too often from its proper sphere. While on earth, the physical is its sphere; for men are placed on earth to concentrate upon a physical environment.

Father: When the body is discarded you have a "spiritual body," that is to say, one which is more akin to the Divine Spirit, more sensitive to His operation. But if He has not been permitted to manifest Himself through the earthly body, the etheric body will be unsuitable for His manifestation, the latter being dominated for some time after death by the habits of its physical body. That which is done in the earthly body

modifies, for better or for worse, the etheric body. The penalty of an ill life consists in certain qualities of the etheric body which limit and hinder when a man passes over.

One can speak in this way of the etheric body as something by itself. But it must be realised that one's soul and its etheric body are inseparable. Just as you manifest on earth by means of, and through, the physical body, so do you, on passing over, manifest in and through the etheric or spiritual body. The habits of the soul are perpetuated and made manifest in its essential body; that body which, during life on earth, was being modified and stamped by the actions and quality of the soul.

C.D.T.: Is the spiritual body which you see with us indicative to you of our actual character, not the mood of the moment, but the actual character which we have formed within ourselves?

Father: The spiritual body indicates character to us more than the outer body could do either to you or to us. The physical can wear a mask, the spiritual cannot do so. The outer body may show a fair face and pleasing expression, but should that person's mind and character be evil, the spiritual form would show it; the face of the latter would not be so pleasant as the face you looked upon.

Spirit itself cannot be evil or ugly; but the soul of man, which is developed by the combination of spirit and body,* reveals its true nature by the appearance of its etheric body. There can be no deception. We can always tell from our side. We may seem to make mistakes over some matters, especially when we try to see and describe earthly things, but we are never wrong in matters of character. Few people have a spiritual body which is entirely ugly. The mood of the moment has some effect on its appearance, but an evil man cannot entirely change the look of his spiritual body in a good moment. There might be some improvement, but not a complete change, and no momentary improvement could deceive us.

** For teaching given up the relation existing between soul and spirit, see Chap. xxix.*

We now proceed to my sister's remarks on this subject.

C.D.T.: When you passed over and met those whom you had formerly known, did they look much the same as when on earth?

Etta: I think I may say "Yes" to that question. Only they look younger and healthier, and also so much happier, and happiness changes people greatly, giving them more colour and expression. One notices more difference in some than in others, especially in those whose faces used to be gloomy.

At a sitting held shortly after her passing I asked:-

C.D.T.: What is your present body like?

Etta: It looks just as I did when much younger, say shortly after my marriage.* But I am always well now, and never feel tired. I even choose to dress much as I did while on earth. I shall not change very much until you and the others have come over. Then, gradually, we shall all change. Perhaps you will understand my meaning if I say that people usually make that gradual change in groups.

C.D.T.: Have our grandparents changed much?

Etta: They have changed considerably. But when meeting those who would expect to see them as they used to be they would approximate to that former appearance. Our appearance is now far more amenable to our will than it was on earth.

Etta: Recuperating forces constantly replenish our bodies, but we need neither food nor drink, although our bodies look and seem the same as yours. You take food because it is what your organism needs, ours does not depend upon such sustenance as you consume. We breathe in our nourishment.

C.D.T.: Do you not require sleep?

Etta: No, our rest is not as yours, because there is no unconsciousness. We certainly rest at times, but retain consciousness, not perhaps acutely so, but a partial or peaceful consciousness

** Etta passed over at the age of forty-six.*

C.D.T.: And you have no difficulty in recognising each other there?

Etta: I recognised father and he recognised me. You might suppose that, in the case of a mother who had lost a baby boy long years ago, she would feel disappointed at meeting a full-grown man when she arrived on our side. But, speaking generally, she does not feel so, because her soul will have kept in touch with his gradual change of form through meeting him while her body was sleeping.*

** For explanation, see Chap. XXX.*

Etta: In contrast to my weakness during the last few years on earth it is a relief to be freed from questioning whether I shall be fit for such and such a duty. To have a strong body once more is just splendid.

C.D.T.: What exactly is your body now? (The date of this sitting was five years after her passing).

Etta: It is rather difficult to say. Could you say just what your body is? I term mine an etheric body, but it is one that I can see and feel. It is composed of chemical matter

of some kind, but of a different kind from yours; for your body will dissolve and evaporate. Our bodies are lighter than yours, and so is our atmosphere. But we are visible in our atmosphere, as you are visible in your atmosphere. You do not see me because my body is suited to my atmosphere, but not to yours. I have not altered in features nor in form; my hands, for example, look the same to me as when on earth. But my body is now entirely under the control of my will. Yours is not. You could not sit down and will away your pain. When, however, you come to us, (luring the sleep of your earthly body, you come in a body which is akin to ours and which is suitable to our atmosphere. I feel sure that these meetings with us help you, although you do not remember them.

CHAPTER XI

THE EVIDENCE OF BOOK TESTS

ON returning home, go to the room where bookshelves stand opposite the window; from the top shelf on the right take the fourth book from the left. Open this at page 33 and find, rather more than half-way down, a distinct reference to something which your father ardently supported in his later years.

Such a message as the above, if received during a sitting, would be a book test. The message is presented in a form which we have to make intelligible by discovering the missing portion—namely, certain words in a book which some invisible intelligence has selected as being suitable for his purpose. Until finding these words the message remains a puzzle; for we cannot with any certainty guess which of our father's interests may be the one intended. And not only is the subject matter unknown, but we cannot recollect which book stands in the place described. Still less are we able to recall the topic dealt with on its thirty-third page.

If, on reading "rather more than half-way down" the designated page, we find a reference to some enterprise which we remember that our father ardently supported in his later years, then the experiment will have been successful. Such a success could not be attributed to leakage from one's own mind, and no fanciful stretching of "telepathy" helps towards an explanation. The selected passage has been correctly matched with a remembered fact. Who did this matching? Our communicators say that it is their doing. A careful study of hundreds of these tests has convinced me that this is the explanation.

A few highly endowed sensitives are reported to have succeeded in reading words contained in sealed envelopes, or a paragraph from a book unopened. But they require either to touch the object, or to be in close proximity with it. The wide difference between this feat and our book test experiment will be obvious. But I think that this acute sensitiveness, evidenced by a few gifted persons, affords a hint of the methods used by our invisible friends when arranging evidential tests for our instruction. I revert to this at the close of the present chapter.

My father remarked that he had been anxious about his earlier book tests, well knowing that, if they succeeded, this new evidence would remove from my mind any possible questioning as to the reality of his communications. They certainly served their purpose. The successes were sufficient, both in quality and in number, to prove his ability to scrutinise my books and to ascertain the contents of specified pages. Thought-transference from my own mind was ruled out; for he frequently selected from books which I had never read, and from pages which were uncut.

On one occasion, while Feda was transmitting a description of the book to be experimented with, I was able to recognise it as a volume given me two days before and which I had left unexamined and unopened on my study table. To return home,

therefore, and discover by verifying the several test items, that my informant knew more about this book than I did, was a clean-cut and impressive experience. It was not reasonable to suppose collusion between the medium and the friend who gave me the book; neither of them have been inside our house, and it is certain that they could not possibly have known where I had placed the book. Yet its precise whereabouts in my study was described.

These tests were often selected from rooms which I had never entered. One such was in the house of an acquaintance living at a distance. I wrote explaining matters, and gave the description of the room, the particular shelf, the position occupied by the book upon that shelf, and the number of the page. The test message stated that on this page would be found a few words aptly describing the purpose for which my father was working with me.

On receiving a reply I learnt that the page in question contained the words, To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death. Few sentences could more effectively summarise the purport of my father's remarks at this period about his object in working with me. For he often emphasised the need of evidence, sufficient in quality and quantity, to ensure that his speaking with me and his account of experiences in the life beyond, would be recognised as something more than fanciful imaginings. He believed that a conviction of the reality of such communications as his would, for many people, dissipate uncertainty about a future life; and that, for others, an acquaintance with his after-death experiences might remove, or at least greatly lessen, the fear of death.

When he deemed that I had sufficient material for a book, he supplemented his suggestion that I should publish, by weaving into his tests an occasional reference to this project. Our book was subsequently published by Messrs. Collins Sons & Co., under the title, Some New Evidence for Human Survival. It is almost entirely devoted to evidence and treats at considerable length on book tests, numerous examples of which are to be found in its pages, together with a discussion of their significance.

It will naturally be asked whether chance might not sufficiently account for the appropriateness of a passage such as the above? It might. One occasionally comes accidentally upon apposite lines which would constitute an excellent verification of some book test message previously received. The question at issue is, however, whether chance can achieve a series of good results, or only an isolated success now and again? This question has been decided by careful experiment. As explained in my former book, I explored the possibilities of alighting on appropriate passages at hazard, and it became manifest that chance coincidence, however brilliant its occasional product, could not produce anything comparable with the series of successes which my communicator regularly achieved.

But while one may thus arrive at personal conviction, it is more difficult to convey the assurance to those who have not shared in the experiment. It will therefore be appropriate to refer to an inquiry by the Society for Psychical Research into this

question of chance in book tests. The full account is contained in the S.P.R. Proceedings for March, 1923. The following is a summary:-

Sixty persons took part in a search for fictitious book tests. Each of these examined ten of his own books for three separate tests. The number of the pages to be searched were decided by those supervising the experiment; and the topics chosen by them were so devised as to bring this experiment, as far as possible, into line with the book tests obtained by a group of Mrs. Leonard's sitters. No fewer than 1800 pages were thus examined, every facility being given to ensure that chance should produce its best results. The findings were afterwards compared with 532 book tests received by the group of Leonard sitters and which had been examined by Mrs. Henry Sidgwick, whose Report thereon is embodied in a Paper (Proc. S.P.R. Vol. XXXI). It was found that the Fictitious Tests scored 4.72 per cent. successes, while the Leonard successes attained 36 per cent.

But this difference is further emphasised in favour of the Leonard tests by noticing the high degree of success achieved by the more skilful of the communicators. The following table shows the percentage of success obtained (a) in the three Fictitious Experimental Tests, (b) in the tests given by the three most successful Leonard communicators, whom we will call X, Y, and Z.

	No. of Results Examined	No. of Complete Successes	Total Successes	Partial Successes	
Experimental tests	1800	1.89	4.72	7.67	
Leonard tests.	532	17.2	36	54.1	
Communicator X	283	15.5	37.9	56.1	
Communicator Y	64	20.3	47.0	70.0	
Communicator Z	22	63.6	68.2	77.2	

The S.P.R. account concludes with the following lines:-

"The total number of results examined by Mrs. Sidgwick, 532, is not far short of the number of results examined in regard to each of the three experimental tests, 600, and the percentages given in the table above show that even if we include in our reckoning a considerable number of comparatively unsuccessful communicators, the percentage of success is much higher in the Leonard tests than in the chance experiments."

It will be seen by glancing at the above results obtained by the 34 Leonard sitters that some of their communicators were more successful than others. Now, if chance were the only factor, a change of communicator should make no difference in the result. But there were conspicuous differences. Some communicators brought off a large proportion of successes, while others failed to do so. This difference accords with the repeated assertions of my father that book tests necessitate a certain degree of clairvoyance for physical objects; and that it requires time and practice to develop such clairvoyance sufficiently to ensure the minute accuracy demanded by these tests. He tells me that some who attempted them had experienced difficulty in even perceiving the printed page, while others had acquired a facility for the task. We have seen that chance coincidence obtained only 1.89 per cent. of complete successes, while the most gifted of the communicators has 63.6 per cent to his credit. From this it may be certainly inferred that book tests are not to be explained by chance.

The following example presents special features. It relates', to a Mrs. Drummond (pseudonym), who sent an account of it to the Society for Psychical Research (See S.P.R. Jour., Nov., 1922, P. 376).

On December 9th, 1921, Feda transmitted a book test from my father which I was to verify in my study:-

"Top shelf by window, 6th book from left, and page 19."

Feda then continued:-

"Page 3 of the same book interests Ian's father; it has a link with his earth life, both general and almost in a personal sense."

Knowing that Mrs. Drummond's son Ian, and her husband Mr. Arthur (both deceased), frequently gave tests through Mrs. Leonard, I sent the above message, together with a copy of page three from the book in question, which was entitled *Via Crucis*. Mrs. Drummond replied, saying that, on finding nothing relevant in my copy of page three, she had, in her own home, asked her communicators if they could explain the error. Clairaudiently she heard the reply, "Yes, page eight." She adds, "I am afraid I doubted the answer. I therefore took my table and asked them to give me the number of the page in tilts. Eight tilts were given. But then I thought the number was in my mind and that I had unconsciously stopped the table. I asked several times afterwards, and was always told that page eight was correct."

On receipt of this letter I copied out and posted page eight; but before it arrived Mrs. Drummond left home for London, and while there had a sitting with Mrs. Leonard. During this sitting her communicators spoke as follows

Mr. Arthur: Perhaps you can remember that there was one pursuit of Ian's that I had been rather proficient at when I was young, but had dropped in later life.

Feda: He had not done it since he was very young, not done much, but known to be good. It was something Ian thought he had shone in. Mr. Arthur had done it, but was not able to go on, when he was a young man. They would like you to remember after. If Mr. Arthur had kept on--"

Ian (breaking in): Perhaps he would have been better than I was. He might have been, but he didn't keep on.

Mrs. Drummond comments thus on the above: "I was rather surprised at this mention of boxing, as they had already mentioned it at other sittings.... My husband, when he was at college, and perhaps just before he went, took up boxing and was considered very good, but had to give it up as he couldn't afford the time. Feda's remarks don't apply to shooting, fishing, golf, tennis, or anything else he did. Ian, our son, was a very fine boxer, and won the Public Schools Boxing Cup after only a few months training. When he went to New College, Oxford, he was made captain of the Boxing Club and won everything he went up for, except once, and he certainly 'shone.' That wouldn't apply to any other pursuit, though he was quite good at most games."

Now, on returning home, Mrs. Drummond found my letter awaiting her, and on reading page eight, which I had copied from *Via Crucis*, found the following lines:-

THE SPIRITUAL ATHLETE

PART 2. THE CONFLICT

Now turn we to another sport Fraught with grave truths of like import, Where the well-practised pugilist Copes with a meet antagonist, And labours with adroitest art to wound some vulnerable part.

This quotation, so entirely appropriate, was the more satisfactory since she had never seen *Via Crucis*, nor was there a copy of that book in her house.

If it be suggested that it was easy to guess that the figure eight had been mistaken for the figure three, which had proved wrong, I accept the suggestion; for Feda apparently visualises the numbers given by communicators, and sometimes confuses a three with an eight. Yet, it remains to be explained how so suitable a quotation was discovered, and how it came to be associated with an obvious reference to boxing when Mrs. Drummond desired the further clue. What is the alternative hypothesis? What power had the medium to explore my books, tilt Mrs. Drummond's table in a house fifty miles away, recall old memories of Mr. Arthur and Ian, and so intelligently act the several parts of the persons claiming to share in this experiment?

All happened as if these actual persons had selected an apposite reference to boxing from my book-shelves, and had asked my father to request me to forward it to Mrs. Drummond. That they then succeeded in using Mrs. Drummond's power of obtaining messages when alone by means of table tilting, and in this way corrected an error in the initial transmission of the page number. That they further ensured ultimate success by a distinct reference to boxing during Mrs. Drummond's next Leonard sitting.

We seem to see in this incident a co-operation between her communicators and my father; and this is in harmony with their previous assertions that they had met in the Beyond. The incident supplies a further addition to the impressive array of proof establishing the identity of our respective communicators, all three of whom invariably take their natural parts in relation to Mrs. Drummond and myself.

As to the method used for discovering these tests it seems to be that of sensing, with an occasional achievement of clairvoyance. Clairvoyant inspection of books, page by page, is said to be dependent on the presence of what my communicators term "the power," an emanation which renders physical objects easily visible to them. But this emanation is rarely present in sufficient amount for the purpose, save in the vicinity of a mediumistic person.

The method chiefly relied upon for book tests is said to be that of sensing, a species of mental perception which reveals only the ideas, and not the printed words, by which they are expressed to us.

One of my sister's book tests related to a rather trifling matter, and yet, as I pointed out at the next sitting, could easily have been linked with something much more cogent which was contained in an adjoining line. Her reply was interesting as a description of the sensing method.

Etta: What you suggest would have been better, but in obtaining these tests we have to wait for associations to strike us. It is something like waiting for a note which will harmonise with a chord in my mind. Say there are three or four notes in the chord, and I wait for some single note which will harmonise with it. Often it is not a dominant note which strikes me; although a true one, it is not what I would have chosen.

C.D.T.: You are describing how ideas come to you while selecting these tests?

Etta: Yes; supposing I were to think of a certain time in my life, say a birthday, and wished to connect it with a book test. I would recall events which happened at the time, let us suppose them to be the following: (a) You sprained your wrist. (b) Mother had a headache. (c) A fortune was left me. (d) Father lost a key about which there was some fuss. Say that these were my outstanding memories of the day in question.

To obtain tests I stand near your books, or pass along by them. For a while I feel nothing. Presently, however, I feel something which I can only term a response. Now, that response does not indicate to me anything in particular, but, as in the old game, one feels "getting warmer." It is something like beginning to recognise scenery which is leading towards a familiar path; one is not quite sure of having seen that tree or that house previously, yet a general impression of familiarity dawns, and so one follows the road till it leads to recognisable objects nearer the goal. Now, after waiting a while, I might get an idea of a key, or of locking or undoing. I should realise that this had a bearing on my quest, since father once lost a key on my birthday, and this incident would certainly be remembered by you.

I should realise that it was unfortunate that I could not find anything apposite to the fortune; because it is natural to object, "Fancy saying nothing about the fortune, yet mentioning such a trifle as the loss of a key." But since the idea of a key came first, I should proceed to ascertain which book and page contained this key reference. I would retain in mind the idea of the fortune' and, continuing the search, might possibly find a reference appropriate to that; for, somehow, the getting of one item helps in getting others.

The position is that I have to get something that harmonises with my chord; I must somehow get one idea, but cannot ensure its being the most desirable one.

It is this association of ideas which gives us a clue to much of the information which we gather when composing book tests.

Since writing this chapter I received the following while sitting with another trance sensitive. It is characteristic of my father to mention book tests when speaking with me through a new channel.

The book was indicated in the usual way by reference to room, position of shelf, and number of book in shelf. I was asked to look at page fifty-six, where would be found the name Mary, chosen because there was a Mary in spirit life related to me.

I could not remember what volume stood in the place described. It proved to be my paternal grandfather's translation of Dante's Purgatorio. My father's sister, Mary, passed long since; the name appears on page fifty-six, in the sentence, A Latin hymn to the Virgin Mary.

I spent some time scanning other pages for reference to this name, but failed to find it repeated. It was natural that my father should choose for experiment a book which had been in his library and which he greatly valued. The test was prefaced by the remark that a name inscribed at the commencement of this book was dear to me; this is, of course, the name of the translator, my grandfather, Thomas.

I was next told that on page sixty-two would be found five lines applicable to my inspirational writing.

This experimental writing had been frequently named in my Leonard sittings some years back, during the time when I practised it, my father claiming to have influenced my mind and impressed me with his thoughts. On page sixty-two there are the following five lines placed by themselves, a quotation from Milton. I italicize the specially relevant words.

". "For now
My earthly by his heavenly overpowered,
In that celestial colloquy sublime,
As with an object that excels the sense,
Dazzled and spent, sunk down, and sought repair."

The test continued:-

On that same page, the fourth line from the top will serve to denote the value of our work with you."

The line indicated reads: Two angels from above did I survey. Taking the word angel in its original meaning of messenger, this line is most appropriate to my two communicators, father and sister.

The tests now turned in another direction, thus:-

"There is something on your desk which belonged to your father."

I keep his ruler in the centre of my roll-top desk.

"There is a desk in your house which belonged to him."

In our box room is a small writing desk of my father's.

"You have a watch which belonged to him."

I always wear my father's watch. It was mentioned in his earliest messages, through Mr. Vout Peters, in 1917.

"You have a portrait of John as a young man with high open collar."

My father's name, John, is here casually introduced. This portrait had been named in the 1917 sittings, but the item "high open collar" is now given for the first time. The photograph represents my father in his early ministry, with high turned-down coat collar and white tie.

This medium has not been to our house, and the picture referred to is in a room where no visitor would see it.

CHAPTER XII

A REAL WORLD

STATEMENTS about the next world made by those who live there are refreshingly definite and clear. To them it is as solidly real as is this world to us. It varies greatly in its different regions. In this it is like our own planet. Descriptions of scenery and social life differ according to the position and opportunities for observation of those making the report. This applies equally to explorers from tropical Africa, or revenants from celestial regions. Those of the latter who most frequently speak with me say that their abode is neither the lowest nor the most exalted of the regions forming the next world. Failing exact nomenclature, they have formed the habit of terming it, "The Third Sphere." Of these spheres there are said to be several surrounding our earth at great distances and forming a series of globes. The nearest is far outside the earth, but surrounding it; the furthest surrounds all the others. All of them rotate with the earth. Each of these globes has a surface of considerable thickness, and although invisible to the human eye, each appears to those dwelling on it to be firm and substantial. Each successive globe is brighter and more beautiful than the one next below it. The outermost may be thought of as "the heaven of heavens," the abode of the most evolved and God-like who have graduated through successive stages from earth.

When we look upward and see the stars, with nothing between to obscure our vision, it may not at first be easy to think that we are gazing through world upon world of active life. All seems silence and emptiness. But so does the summer evening air as we stand upon the downs, remote from town or village, hearing nothing save, perhaps, the chirp of grasshoppers or the drone of a flying beetle

Yet we have but to erect a portable receiver and at once we can hear a voice recounting the news of politics, trade or sport, or we may listen to music played a hundred miles away. Unheard by our physical sense, all this has been passing over the silent downland, only to be detected by use of a contrivance which interprets it to the ear.

Is it so difficult to suppose that our sense of sight may be incapable of making us aware of what lies between us and the stars, even as our sense of hearing is incapable of interpreting etheric movements which the wireless receiver translates?

Our senses have been evolved amid physical surroundings, and are trained and sharpened for contact with this material world. For recognition of super-physical worlds they are inadequate. But it is of super-physical worlds we are now thinking. Had we control of our etheric body with its senses in active relation to ethereal worlds, we should perceive more activity and beauty in the sky than ever telescope revealed to the astronomer.

Such an etheric body we now indeed possess, but it sleeps within as the immature bird-body sleeps in its unbroken shell. Our friends who died broke away from their physical body, and they tell those who can hear them that they now inhabit a body which, wakening into activity when the first one died, introduced them to a world of wonder and delight. Theirs is another world, and their body is suitable thereto. That body and that world are alike invisible to mortal eyes, but to their risen eyes both the world and the body they inherit are substantial.

"Does your world appear to you to be solid and similar to this one?" I asked my sister after she had been there some few years. She replied:-

"Yes, it is a place as earth is, and looks like it. It is a place, a similar world, but with greater opportunities and affording us greater knowledge. I know how difficult some people must find it to realise this."

In our own times science has pushed discovery beyond the boundary of human eyesight. Astronomers know facts which were not revealed to them by sight alone. Working from observed effects to the unseen cause, the human mind has wrested knowledge from realms invisible. Our acquaintance with atoms, electrons, and the ultimate nature of matter, has not been won by sight alone. Science has become accustomed to dealing with the invisible. The range of human sight is but a few notes only in the midst of uncounted octaves. The everyday world of our risen friends is invisible to us, but this gives no warrant for denying its existence.

Nor should preconceived ideas fetter our thought as we listen to the experiences of those who know. Residents in the world beyond death are striving to acquaint us with that land which will be ours ere long. What they tell us does not clash with reason. On the contrary, it presents us with a vista of ascending life and evolving experience which not only harmonises with man's deepest instinct, but also explains to him the meaning and purpose of existence.

Let us hear what my father and sister say about their world.

C.D.T.: Can you give some description of your present life?

Father: Among those on earth who try to picture our life on the Third Sphere there is a tendency to think of it as something very, very different from that of earth. But Nature effects great changes mostly by gradual transitions. Life with us is similar to that of earth in this respect, that in both one can work for the good of the community. The essential difference is that I am immune from illness and that no physical condition can adversely affect me. We have more control over physical things. Do not eliminate the word "physical" from your idea of our world; it would be inaccurate to describe earth as a physical world and ours as the spiritual life. For you can have the spiritual on your earth, and we certainly have much of the physical on ours. For instance, we live in an atmosphere which is chemical and therefore physical; also, I have a body; and I wear clothing, since it is a habit of thought to think of myself with

clothes. But it is unnecessary to be measured for them. We can create them by thought alone, building up in that way whatever clothing we desire. Those who are at first unable to do this for themselves find others who will readily do it for them.

We do not eat, neither do we find it necessary to drink. I frequently take long walks; that is because I enjoy walking, not because it is necessary. I can float at will, but from habit I enjoy feeling my feet upon the ground. It will naturally be asked what it is that I walk upon; is the ground real, or do I only think it? There certainly is ground, and to me it is solid, as solid as is the earth's surface to you, and it resists the pressure of my feet. Yet, on account of the powers of my mind, I could, should I so desire penetrate and go down into this ground. If you wished to descend below the ground in your garden you could not accomplish it by your mind alone without using a spade or other implement. We possess the necessary implement, which is simply our mind and will. By making a mental effort I could descend into our ground.

C.D.T.: You have spoken of relations living near your present home, and of your walking; are there highways or roads leading from place to place?

Father: We have roads, but the surface is unlike the stoned or macadamised roads of England. I notice no variations of surface. The appearance is something like natural soil, but without mud or anything disagreeable, and it is springy and pleasant to the feet.

We have no such closely populated districts as in your large cities. Houses are not crowded together. It is quite easy to travel great distances.

So much which seems fanciful to you is fact with us. Many a time Etta has pointed to some scene and said, 'It is exactly what on earth we should have termed a picture of fairyland.'

C.D.T.: I have a question about the spheres. When father spoke about the solidity of the ground, he did not mention the view overhead. According to descriptions given of your successive spheres the floor of the next higher must be somewhere overhead when you are on your own sphere. Are you able to see it, and if not, what is seen when you gaze upward?

Etta: We see no floor above us, but only what looks like sky. Is not your sky just the atmosphere? We have an atmosphere also; so we see sky, but no clouds."

C.D.T.: Then you cannot see through the sky to the floor above?

Etta: No, we cannot, and I think this is owing, not only to the distance of the sphere next above us, but also to the different state of that sphere. There is no doubt that it is state, and not distance, which matters so much here. Suppose I were on a sphere which differed from the one above it more than it differed from the one below. Then the distance from the one below would seem less than the distance to the one

above. There are great differences between the spheres, and that between, say, the third and fourth is much less than that between the fourth and fifth. The greater the difference between any two spheres the further apart do they appear to us.

A young friend, recently killed in the war, spoke at my first sitting. A few weeks later his mother accompanied me, and among her son's observations, given through Fedá, came the following:-

"He was glad to find animals and trees there; that was better than crowns and harps. He had feared it might be weird. To his practical mind religious views had not been presented in a way to give him any clear idea of what it might be like. He received the impression that there would have to be a long interval, after which one would be ready for music, harps and so on. 'When I found it here a thousand times more beautiful than the earth, although in some ways like it, I knew I could be happy.'

Fedá added:-

"He says that he has seen Christ, but that he cannot find words which would enable him to express himself in describing that meeting."

Frequent mention is made of homes. It is implied that while these are not strictly necessary, the accustomed habits of earth incline most people to use them for a while. My father describes his present home as situated on a hillside commanding wide stretches of scenery. From its garden one walks downward past fields and trees to the bank of a river.

Even on the third sphere there are some who have outgrown the inclination to reside within walls, and who live in valleys, or amidst trees, or on the slopes of the hills. Those accustomed to open air life on earth can indulge their preference to the heart's content, and in high spheres the localised dwelling becomes increasingly rare.

When one of these resting places, or homes, is vacated it may be occupied by someone else. As to possible disputes over the possession of vacant residences, such difficulties are said to be obviated by the fact that each one feels drawn towards the particular thing which it is right and fit for him to have.

Scepticism as to the reality and desirability of houses in the next life is natural to many minds. But, considering how great a place the home and its appointments take in the mind of average mortals, it would be surprising if such ingrained habits of thought were to be suddenly cast aside at death. How gradual are most of Nature's processes. Given a real world, with surroundings which seem to its inhabitants as solidly material as do our surroundings on this planet, it is but natural that for some time after leaving earth we should retain our tastes and habits and only gradually outgrow them.

In picturing the dwellings of the life beyond, it is essential to realise its changed conditions of existence. Since neither food nor sleep are there required, we can eliminate from our mental picture most of the features which are important in our home life here. This leaves us with something in the nature of a place for retirement to which we may go when wishing to be alone, a place for receiving friends in social intercourse, and adapted for study, contemplation and repose.

In earthly life emigrants arriving in a new country usually prefer to live in a locality where some of their compatriots are already settled. In process of time the district takes on something of the social atmosphere of the land from which its residents came. There is the French section of Canada, London has its Italian and its Chinese quarters, and so on. Now, it is asserted that something similar has happened in the Beyond. The various nationalities arriving from earth choose for the more part to reside among their own people.

From the sixteenth century, when early emigrants began to leave their native lands, it has been an occasional practice to give a newly founded town some name reminiscent of the land left behind. Thus, the English settlers in America planted a Boston; those who left the Derbyshire district round the small town of Melbourne perpetuated that name in Australia. Such nomenclature is said to have been continued in the next world, for while many on arriving there have preferred to continue their accustomed semi-isolation amid rural scenery, others congregated in towns, and these towns have in some instances been named after the familiar towns on earth.

After my father had given a description, of which the above is a summary, I asked whether, on his sphere, there existed the doubles of London and Birmingham. He replied:-

"That is an interesting question. We have a London, but it is not your London. Certain aspects of it do not coincide; our cities do not correspond street for street with those on earth. There is some likeness in the parks and beautiful buildings, but with us they are all finer. Much is eliminated from our towns and cities; for instance, with us there are no congested areas, no slums, no sordid neighbourhoods, no public houses, prisons, work-houses nor asylums.

"But on the lower spheres there are more correspondences with your towns. There one finds slum areas again, and some other undesirable features of your cities. And such features will persist while their counterparts continue on earth. So long as people think and live in undesirable ways, there must inevitably remain these undesirable places to which they gravitate on coming here. When your earth has risen mentally and spiritually above such habits of life, the corresponding places on the lower spheres will disappear.

"It is a curious and noteworthy fact that the buildings and surroundings of the lower spheres are less permanent than those of the third sphere; they are more easily lost

by dissolution. On our side of death all evil conditions are more easily got rid of than on earth. Your slum buildings, even if vacated by their occupants, would remain until they were pulled down; but here such places would of themselves crumble quickly away when once they ceased to be required by their inhabitants."

It is said that the regions in which the various nationalities have settled are related to their earthly fatherlands in the sense of being situated more or less perpendicularly above them. There is, for instance, on the second sphere what we call an England; there is also another England on the third sphere. That on the third is over that on the second, and both are situated over the earthly England. At first sight it might be thought that, since the residents win remain in each for a period longer than the duration of individual life on earth, this would cause the Englands of the spheres to be more densely populated than that of earth. But it must be remembered that the second sphere, being far above earth's surface, is of a vastness proportionate to its distance from the earth. The third sphere will have a still more spacious England, while that on the fourth will be again yet larger. Thus, there is ample room for all inhabitants. Moreover, on the third sphere the proportion of land to water is stated to be much greater than on earth, and this gives an increased area for habitation. So that when we turn our thought to the seventh, or highest of these spheres surrounding earth, we are thinking of an area so immense that the mind no longer raises questions relating to possible congestion; there is room and to spare for all who shall be ascending thither during aeons of time to come.

Furthermore, the higher spheres are not of that permanent and fixed extent which we associate with thoughts of earth's surface. The nature of their substance allows of expansion and increase according to the collective will of their inhabitants. Such is the hint given by my communicators. They do not attempt to explain this in detail, and it may be doubted whether such explanation could be of service to us. It may suffice if we dimly realise that there await us all possible facilities, whether spiritual, mental or of semi-physical character, for our progress towards unthinkable perfection.

C.D.T.: I gather from your remarks that your particular locality is more or less above that part of earth occupied by the British Isles. Are you conscious of the movement of your sphere as it revolves in harmony with the revolution of our planet?

Father: I believe that some here have supposed that our spheres remain stationary. It is not so. Our spheres move round with the earth, but we are not in any sense conscious of the movement. The velocity of course increases as one moves toward our higher spheres; for the higher one goes the greater is the distance covered during one revolution. Yet so gradual is it that we feel no difference while journeying to and from your earth.

C.D.T.: Have you any idea of your distance in miles from the surface of the earth?

Father: I should not regard any calculations as reliable.

The bottom of the lowest sphere is well above the earth. Some of the spheres, especially the higher, are capable of expansion; they are not stationary in size. There is no doubt that matter, with us, is more pliable and responsive to our wills; the higher one goes the more responsive it is. I term it "matter" for lack of a better word to express it. Our "matter" is peculiar and different from yours. Solid objects with us are elastic, or can become so, and can be remodeled. Ability to do this depends upon spiritual power and will. New arrivals would no more understand how to accomplish this than a new-born babe on earth could carve wood.

C.D.T.: What is below the ground of your sphere? Here we have the antipodes below us, what have you?

Father: I can tell you that, just as the ground of your earth is limited in depth, so is ours, but so far as I can judge, ours is more shallow than that of earth, and I am sure it is chemically different.

C.D.T.: I conclude that yours is highly tenuous; when we look at the stars we must be looking through your many spheres.

Father: Yes, that is so, and yet, to us, our ground is solid and opaque. But it does not contain such metals and other materials as yours. It is lighter. It goes down, I should say, for miles on each sphere. On the lowest sphere it is thickest of all. On our third sphere it is appreciably thick. Dig deep enough and one would get through to the atmosphere of the sphere beneath. One would not dig, but that is how it stands; the ground is thick, it is also mentally penetrable. The spheres above us have ground which is thinner and still more easily penetrable by mind. For convenience in passing from one sphere to another, there are channels or clearings, call them "tunnels," which have been bored mentally, just as you have tunnels excavated physically on earth. Constant use of these tunnels keeps them clear. We simply use mental means where you would use physical means. One has to make strong mental effort in order to penetrate the matter of our spheres. I could, if I chose, pass through fresh ground each time it was necessary to travel to another sphere, but this would be a waste of force; we use the channel already prepared by other minds. If you found a hole in the hedge which was obviously there for use, you and others would naturally go through it and so it would be kept clear by constant use. We do similarly.

Below our lowest sphere is another, that of animal life.

C.D.T.: Do animals go there from earth?

Father: Yes, but not to live again individually; it is the sphere of collective automatic and physical life-force, call it etheric force, left from the physical animal lives. It is drawn back again to earth, but not individually; the whole reservoir may be thought of as dividing again into small portions. It is not individual life at all, in your sense of

the word, not life which has held any intelligent or spiritual quality. Real life, but of a nebulous kind. What sort of soul does a bullock possess? It is nebulous. Cattle soul-force again becomes cattle, and only that. It is the energy-giving power of the soul, rather than the soul of an animal which lives again on earth.

C.D.T.: Do pet animals survive?

Father: They do survive, but not for ever; possibly for as long as those who love them are in need of their companionship. I have seen no snakes or lions here, only such animals as were accustomed to human companionship. A tiger pet is possible on earth, but it is quite unnatural, and is never the tiger's own choice in any real sense. The animals who come to this sphere are such as have grown naturally attuned to man.

C.D.T.: That would include horses, dogs, cats, and perhaps elephants and monkeys?

Father: The elephant is not a natural pet; it belongs to wild life. We have horses, dogs and cats, but very few monkeys. Birds seem natural here. I have seen birds on the higher spheres which are quite unlike any seen or heard of on earth. They looked like glittering gold and silver, shot with colours more beautiful than anything pictured by man.

C.D.T.: Do you see the sun as we see it from earth?

Etta: I have not seen it as a round object, yet we seem to see its light. Not that we are at all dependent upon the sun's light. I question if we should seriously miss it. The natural luminosity of our atmosphere is sufficient. With this self-luminous atmosphere there are no shadows, nor day and night changes. On the higher spheres there is more and more of this iridescent light.

C.D.T.: Do you see the moon, planets and stars?

Etta: I have not seen their forms at all as yet, but might do so by coming to earth and getting into your conditions somewhat. To see objects which are material we should use what is akin to clairvoyance. If it were worth while I might learn how to see the moon clairvoyantly-if it were of any service. But we do not concern ourselves with things which cannot, or do not, affect our progress and our work here. To me the moon seems one of the non-essentials.

C.D.T.: Yet it is one of the wonders of God's creation, and therefore of interest in learning about Him.

Etta: There are so many more wonderful ways in which we can see His works.

C.D.T.: Many people question whether, despite these descriptions given in human language, there exists the same apparent and essential reality there.

Father: There is something in that. While speaking I felt how bald and bare was my description compared with the reality of that world. Yet, there are grass, trees and flowers, as well as other forms with which you are not familiar, things of which I cannot give you any conception. I hope that occasionally some spring may be touched during our conversations which will suggest helpful comparisons.

Remember how, sometimes unexpectedly, you are touched with sudden happiness, an extraordinary uplift, illumination and hope, and yet you are unable to tell others why. Really, you are then sensing the hidden hope in life; that world which is hidden from you is revealed to you, the eye of the soul beholds that which the physical eye cannot see. Now, as we go on and upward, we increasingly perceive the hidden beauty love, and hope in all things. It is not so hidden from us as it is from you. Etta and I are in a marvellous world.

CHAPTER XIII

EVIDENCE FROM EXPERIMENTS WITH THE DAILY PRESS

INDEPENDENCE of telepathy from the sitter's mind has been proved by Book Tests; but might they not, one will ask, be somehow due to the medium's clairvoyance at a distance? My father apparently realised that this point required guarding, for he presently devised an ingenious extension of the book test idea, one which ruled out the medium's clairvoyance as completely as book tests had ruled out telepathy. This he did by means of what are now known as Newspaper Tests.

At the hour of my sittings with Mrs. Leonard the type of the London Press for the following day is not yet set up. Clearly, the medium cannot see what is not existing.

My father's plan, as explained by himself, was to visit the office of a paper selected for the test, and there note such names or statements as might lend themselves to his purpose. By employing a faculty which seems to involve some slight degree of prevision, he then ascertained the approximate position which these items would occupy when the paper was set up and printed. This done, he was ready for my sitting, and soon after its commencement he transmitted, through Feda, the references which I was to verify the following morning by examination of the issue of some particular organ of the public Press.

The simplest form of newspaper test was the statement that such and such a name would be found in a minutely described position in the morrow's Times. The defect of this lay in the necessity of transmitting a name through Feda-usually a difficult feat. It was, therefore, more usual to indicate the name by circuitous methods, such as, "one of your mother's names," "the name of a place by the sea at which we once resided," or, "a place close to which you lived when in business."

More interesting were test messages which indicated acquaintance with recent happenings in my work or in my private life, matters entirely beyond the medium's normal knowledge; also others which referred to my father's earth life in a way which was only obscure until I discovered the key-word by looking in the morrow's paper as directed.

The general idea of these experiments is illustrated by the following examples:-

April 1st, 1921, at 2:36 p.m.

After indicating certain names which would be found near the top of column two on the first page of the morrow's Times, Feda proceeded to say:-

"Also, close by is an address suggesting being on a hill. It reminded him of a place where he had lived. He once lived on a hill; to go to his work he had to descend.

While at that place he had a rather important change connected with his work; he acquired a different official standing."

Now, on thinking of my father's various residences, I recollected three which were "on a hill"; but it was necessary to refer to records dating back thirty years before discovering that, on being appointed to Ilfracombe in 1888, he was given the position of District Secretary, an honour which he appreciated. His residence at Ilfracombe was nearly at the top of Oxford Grove, an unusually steep street, from which he had to descend in order to reach the town and his church.

The address which had suggested this reference proved to be Shooter's Hill: it appeared in the next day's Times, within five inches of the top of column two on the first page. This position was, as foretold, close to the preceding test words.

Another test from the same page referred to column three, where I was to find,-

"Not quite half-way down, a name which sounded to him like that of people with whom your mother has recently renewed friendship."

In order to ascertain the meaning of this remark it was necessary first to inquire of my mother whether she had recently met any old friend whom she and my father used to know. In her reply she wrote that Mrs. May, a former resident in Ramsgate and member of my father's church there, had recently visited the town and that they had met.

I was now prepared to scrutinise The Times again, Only one inch short of half-way down column three, on page one of the above date, was an advertisement containing the word May.

Neither of the above references had appeared in the previous day's issue of The Times.

It was my invariable custom to post a copy of these tests to the Society for Psychical Research on the evening of the day on which they were given. They are there preserved for reference, and it can thus be certified that they were received by the Honorary Secretary on the morning of the day following each sitting.

November 11th, 1921, at 3:25 p.m.

In the tests for this date there was but one inaccuracy, although seven were given. This mistake looks like a slip of memory on my father's part; for Feda said, column two, when actually the required words were found to be in column one.

"Column two, page one of The Times, a little way above half down see the name Dawson. He knew one Dawson very well; and close to that name is given a place which he connects with the Dawson whom he knew."

Just two inches above half-way down column one appears, the Rev. Canon Dawson, and on the line next above it is St. Nicholas Church. In the years 1882-5 my father resided at Ramsgate and his colleague the Rev. R. G. Dawson lived in Margate. The latter had the oversight of our church at St. Nicholas, a village some few miles distant.

It may be instructive to add a note, made during the next sitting, which touches on the method by which these names are selected. I broached the subject by inquiring, apropos of the above, if my father was aware of the Place-name which stood close to that of Dawson? Feda replied that he had only sensed it as a place which Mr. Dawson would have known and spoken about. I then said that St. Nicholas was the name found. Feda continued:-

"That does not help him to decide if you have found the one which he intended, because in this case he did not sense its letters, but merely that there was a link with Dawson. He says, 'I often know things which I cannot give here; but with these newspaper tests the difficulty frequently is that I do not actually see them as words, but only sense that there is a connection. It is the link which is perceived. These difficulties are interesting. Your plane is not our plane, and we are limited directly we try to touch and understand the merely material things of your plane.'"

These difficulties are more fully discussed in my previous book. It is sufficient to remark here that these tests were at first, like book tests, attributed to a power of sensing, but that from time to time it was possible to make use of a faculty of clairvoyant vision for material things, and that on these occasions the actual words were seen. To give the position in which the test words would be found in the next day's paper was said to be more intricate, because they were not yet in type at the hour of my sitting. In order to ascertain what would be their ultimate position in the paper it was therefore necessary to employ a clairvoyance which brought into view the page as it would presently be, and, upon the page so visualised, to notice where the selected test words appeared.

This brings us up against the difficult question of forecasting the future. My father insists that what he then sees of the visualised page is to be thought of as the shadow cast before it of the thing which is about to be.

I am very far from understanding this explanation. The fact of this foreknowledge is certain. It has been demonstrated by too many examples to admit of question. Such foreknowledge bears upon many well-attested psychic phenomena in which correct foretelling has taken place. Coming events do sometimes cast their shadow before although we are normally blind to that shadow. And even in those instances when we feel impressed that something is impending, how few are gifted with the ability to interpret accurately what that something will prove to be.

That my communicator should have insisted that the name Dawson would be found in conjunction with that of a place with which his old colleague was connected, is but one of many instances which indicate that the person devising these tests was cognisant of facts which had been familiar to my father in years long past.

The following examples reveal the close touch which my father is able to keep with my activities. They relate to incidents which were in the immediate past when the tests were given.

December 20th, 1921, at 11:54 a.m.

In The Times to-morrow, about half-way down column one, see the name of a man very recently passed over, about whom you have been talking lately."

I distinctly remember thinking about this particular test while returning to London from the sitting. It was impossible to recall any name which would meet the case. I had not, to my knowledge, been speaking of any who were recently deceased, nor could I think of any recent death which had especially attracted my notice. My mind was a blank as to the name which would appear in this exactly designated position in the morrow's Times.

That evening, while taking an appointment at the Mission, I heard of the death of a Mr. Ray whom I had visited in hospital at his special request. He was a member of the Mission, and I had from time to time discussed his chances of recovery with my colleague who was his regular visitor; these talks had taken place in our minister's room and were known only to ourselves. In view of this I concluded that the name Ray, if found in the given position next day, would be an incontrovertible proof of knowledge coming from another mind than my own.

When The Times arrived next morning it showed the name Ray in an advertisement placed less than two inches below the half-way crease in column one of the first page.

Scrutiny of the previous day's issue showed that this advertisement had not been there before; it was right for the day stated, and for no other days.

In an attempt to elaborate this test Feda had said that the name James seemed somehow connected; the further effort, which had been to find the same name in another daily paper, failed; but I discovered some days later that James was Mr. Ray's name, a fact I had not previously known.

This incident, following many of similar character, indicated that my father was able to follow, with some closeness, my work at the Mission. To many minds this might seem more easy to credit than that he should be able to investigate in The Times printing works the preparation for the morrow's edition. Yet, the latter achievement has been demonstrated by many scores of accurate newspaper tests. The fact is

beyond dispute, although a full understanding of the powers employed is probably beyond the reach of our imagination.

At my next sitting it occurred to me that it would be interesting to ascertain whether my father could transmit the name Ray through Feda; I was interested in the fact that names so frequently presented a difficulty, and this seemed an opportunity for ascertaining where the difficulty lay. So I asked:-

"About the name in The Times of one recently passed over and which I found there; can my father now recollect it?"

He can," replied Feda. I said to her:-

I do not wish to spend time about it if you cannot get it from him easily, but perhaps he can tell you how many letters are in that name."

Feda then repeated my question and appeared to be watching intently while counting thus-" One-two-three-. One- two-three-there must be more than three. Nobody has only three letters in their name. One-two-three-One-two- three-." All this was said very softly, as if not meant for me to hear. I then said, "Has he given you the number, Feda?"

She replied, "He does not get beyond three. He keeps sticking at three. One, two, three." And beyond this Feda seemed unable to ascertain the communicator's meaning.

I was left with the impression that Feda felt she had failed to give the answer required, and that she supposed my father was unable to tell her the correct number of letters in the name. Had she been reading my mind it should have been easy for her at least to realise that three was the number of which I was thinking, even if she could not read there the name Ray.

October 4th, 1922, at 2:36 p.m.

In to-morrow's Times, page one, column one, and near the top, see the name of a place which you much liked while away; you went to see it, but not to stay there, and were very interested. It is not the name of a county, but of a small locality."

My wife and I had recently returned from a motoring holiday in Cornwall. Only five days previously we had stayed for an hour at Sherbourne, where we took tea in an upper room, the window of which overlooked a street adjoining Sherbourne School. There we had watched the boys passing to and fro. Before leaving the town we inspected the school buildings from the outside, and were sufficiently interested to read, on arriving home, all we could find in my books relating to Sherbourne and its school.

Now, the test message given above is somewhat vaguely expressed, and it seemed quite possible that more than one place might have equally well corresponded with such a description. But, on looking at The Times on October 5th to discover the solution of the riddle, we were, I candidly admit it, astonished to see the words, School House, Sherbourne, placed precisely where I had been instructed to look, viz., "near the top of column one of the first page."

My father lived in the neighbouring town of Yeovil during the years 1891-4, and we had visited Sherbourne together in those days. The place, therefore, held for me associations with my father, and these had been strongly in my thought during the hour spent there.

My father has frequently remarked that links of association make these tests easier for him. If this be the case, one can realise how my vivid thought of him during the hour spent in Sherbourne, may have led him to seek for something in the contents of the paper which he could weave into evidence for my next sitting.

In this same sitting there was a further test which may be fittingly recorded here.

"Lower in this column, i.e., column one of The Times, first page, and probably half-way down, they saw the name of an old friend of Clara's, a lady to whom she was much attached, one older than Clara. And a little below it comes the name of a place in which Clara would have known this friend and with which she would associate her."

It is clear that neither my wife (Clara) nor I had sufficient clue in the above to make guessing worth while. We waited until the paper arrived next morning and then discovered the name Poole, which stood within one inch of half-way down the first column of page one. This name was peculiarly appropriate to the description. My wife had for many years been on terms of most intimate friendship with three sisters named Poole, the two elder of whom were senior to my wife and had died before this date.

The second part of the test was as quickly recognised as the first part; for we found, only four inches below the name Poole, the name of the place where my wife had first known them. This was Streatham, a place always associated in her mind with the Poole family.

It may be asked whether my father had known of our friendship with this family? I do not think he knew during his life on earth, but my sister certainly did, and she has associated herself with the devising of these tests ever since a period shortly after her passing.

One is left in doubt whether to class this knowledge of the Poole family, and their earlier residence at Streatham, with my sister's earth memories, or with information derived from us since passing. For, although my sister knew of my wife's friendship

with the Misses Poole, we have no reason for thinking that she was aware of their having lived at Streatham, a place from which they removed many years before my sister met them.

Our illustration of this class of evidence may conclude with one which alludes to the difficulty of obtaining the material for these experiments.

October 27th, 1922, at 2:39 p.m.

This sitting was prefaced by a reminder from my father that he had often remarked upon the extent to which changing conditions on earth helped him or hindered him when selecting his tests from The Times office. Certain of those remarks are recorded in chapter XX. of my former book, among them this: "I find myself helped or hindered by conditions in obtaining these tests."

Then came the following for the morrow's Times:-

"Page six; the column at the extreme right of the page, and nearly at the top, expresses sentiments which would have been very appropriate to the occasions when his tests failed."

On inspecting the right-hand top corner of page six in the next day's Times the following words were seen within two inches of the top: Begun...yesterday in adverse conditions...which handicapped...and consequently no good times were accomplished. This is curiously appropriate; "adverse conditions" had been frequently mentioned; "yesterday" would correspond to the day of the sitting, i.e., the day on which the tests had been selected at the office and transmitted to me; and even the word "times" is present, although lacking the capital. I give the upper part of this column as printed in the Times of the date mentioned.

ATHLETICS

OXFORD SENIOR SPORTS

The Oxford University Seniors' sports were begun at Oxford yesterday in adverse conditions.

A strong north wind blew up the straight, which handicapped the sprinters considerably, and consequently no good times were accomplished.

Considering the hour at which this test was given, viz., 2:39 p.m., it seems probable that the correspondent who sent his report to The Times would not have written it until after my sitting concluded. Yet, there is small doubt of his having already formed in his mind a general idea of some introductory remarks relating to adverse weather conditions. While he may not have written the above sentence so early, it may well have formed itself in his mind; for he could not but be aware that the high

wind would prevent the best results. Also, he would be thinking of this fact in connection with The Times, for which his report was destined. If then, as my communicators frequently state, thoughts are very real things and travel to the person and place towards which they are mentally directed, we may imagine this correspondent's thoughts about weather and slow running being directed subconsciously toward the office of The Times at an hour even earlier than 2:39 p.m.

We may further suppose the likelihood that workers in that office had a general idea of the kind of information which this particular column was to contain. They would know that it would not be filled with advertisements, politics, foreign news or law cases. It was reserved for a certain class of information and their subconscious minds would so picture it, probably as filled with sports news.

Add together all the above factors, the officials mentally delegating sports news to this sixth page, the Oxford correspondent moulding in thought the opening phrases of his report, my father standing invisibly in the office for the purpose of ascertaining what material he could find suitable for his purpose, and then picturing the page in which his selected material would presently appear. Then, into his picture of this page, there falls automatically the ideas which officials were mentally relegating to it. Among these is the paragraph selected for the test, a paragraph which, although not yet actually present, is being projected in thought towards the office.

The above would seem to represent the foundation upon which the achievement rose into being. The rest of the process is scarcely imaginable, but its result lies before us. That which my father saw was not materially present, but was destined to be there in a few hours' time. The coming event cast its shadow before, and what by us is accounted as a shadow was, to him, already a reality.

It is beyond my power to explain how newspaper tests are accomplished. The above is merely an attempt to indicate the direction in which my mind turns when looking for the solution. My purpose is to show that things have been accomplished which demanded powers far beyond any which we normally exercise. The facts are self-evident; their explanation eludes us. These tests have been so numerous and so minutely successful as to pass far beyond anything attributable to chance coincidence. This I have shown in Chapter XV. of my former book, and it is open to readers to prove it for themselves by repeating the experiment there described.

INCIDENTAL EVIDENCE OF IDENTITY DISCOVERED IN NEWSPAPER TESTS

Newspaper tests, like book tests, proved that thought-transference from human minds was not a factor in these communications. They show that information can be given which is not within the knowledge of either medium or sitter, or indeed of any one mind on earth. That which is stated in the test is dependent for its completion, and often for its intelligibility, upon something which is to be discovered in the public Press of the following day. The message remains incomplete until one learns the

key-word by looking in a definitely described part of the given page in the particular newspaper named.

Although these newspaper tests were not offered as proofs of identity, they have from time to time provided this class of evidence. The following are instances of the speaker's familiarity with facts which had been within my father's knowledge when on earth. In each case the information has been obtained by comparing the test message with the key-words discovered in the described part of the following day's Press. My comments are added within brackets.

1. My mother's maiden name was Dore, and she spent some years of her girlhood in Hampshire.
(The name is correct. She went to a boarding school in Southampton.)
2. My father's first church after marriage was called Victoria, and at Victoria I was born.
(This was at Taunton. The house in which I was born was in Victoria Terrace, close to the Victoria Church in Victoria Street. The name Victoria could not have been discovered from our church reference books.)
3. The name Kate was connected with that of a young boy whom I knew when they were living near us.
(Kate's little brother was my first boy friend. They lived near us and were frequently at our house when I was four years old.)
4. When my sister and I were quite young we knew a Mr. Goodwin at Leek.
(Mr. Goodwin of Leek was a personal friend of my parents' and was at that time of special interest to me because he gave exhibitions with a magic-lantern.)
5. While living at Leek my father met a minister named Perks and became friendly with him.
(This happened in 1873-I verified it from my father's diary. The Rev. G. T. Perks, M.A., being president that year, came to preach at Leek where my father was then stationed, and they spent the day together.)
6. I was occasionally taught by one who was not a schoolmaster and whose name was Joseph.
(Joseph was my schoolmaster's son; he used to help his father by teaching the juniors of whom I was one.)
7. My father's old friend, Thomas Hine, lived at Baldock, Herts.
(The above was his address during the period of our intimate friendship, 1876-9.)
8. The name Preston would be recognised by my mother as indicating one who still lived at Ramsgate and who had been known to them both.

(Mr. Preston was a member of our church at Ramsgate in my father's time, and was still residing there at the date of this message.)

9. While living in the Isle of Wight I was engaged in the same kind of business as that pursued by my Aunt Margaret's father in his earlier years.
(My father would have known the latter's business, but I was unaware of it until making inquiries in consequence of this statement.)

10. One now passed over, named George, was an old servant of the family and held in much affection; he was somewhat querulous, but very loyal to us all.
(This characterisation is entirely applicable to George Young, who, for fifty years, was porter in my maternal grandfather's business.)

11. Georgina was known to both my parents.
(She was their very intimate friend from 1870 onwards.)

12. Some twenty years ago my father was very familiar with Birkdale.
(Birkdale was the name of a house which he purchased and lived in on retiring from active work at a date nineteen years before this message was given.)

13. On my shelves are books written by my paternal grandfather, and these volumes had been much prized by my father.
(I have six books of which my father's father was the author; they came to me from my father's library and had been much valued by him.)

14. A large number of accurate references are summarised when I say that the names of my uncles, aunts and cousins, besides those of more distant relations, were correctly given. In several instances the place of residence was included. Some of these persons had died before my birth.

The above subject matter covers a range of forty years and is a collection of minutiae personally interesting to my father and to me. My mother and I are the only persons who recollect all the facts, Indeed, we were not quite able to do so unaided; it was sometimes necessary to refer to family documents, and in order to check the accuracy of No. 9 information had to be asked from an aunt.

My father had been familiar with all these facts. I therefore offer this selection as incidental evidence that the communicator claiming to be my father, and who speaks to me through Mrs. Leonard and Feda, is the person he claims to be, namely my father, John Drayton Thomas, and no other.

CHAPTER XIV

OCCUPATIONS IN THE LIFE BEYOND DEATH

Father: Many people think that we must be living in a kind of dream state, or in a world which is mental only. It is not so. Even in a world where one can create mentally there must be some material to work upon. On whatever sphere you may be living you have material on which to work. I have said that where we live this material is easily mouldable; we can mould it perfectly well by mental action.

Now, the occupations of the inhabitants are many and varied. The professions and careers which people choose to follow are somewhat similar to those of earth. But certain of your earth occupations are not needed with us. For instance, there are no occupations here which are based upon destruction.

Etta: You understand that our ground is composed of soil, but there is no wind to carry dust about and no smoke, therefore we have no need for servants. Yet we have many kinds of occupation open for people's choice.

Father: Perhaps more than for any others we have scope for builders and architects.

C.D.T.: I am rather surprised to hear that.

Father: Well, perhaps they are not more needed than teachers; I ought to have placed teachers and instructors first in the list. But builders are very important because home life is so ingrained a thought in newcomers, people would not know what to do without homes of their own. It is the first thing which settles them, for home gives them a natural, familiar feeling again. And so the home is very important on our sphere, although it ceases to be so after one rises to the spheres above us.

The first thing we do when someone comes over unexpectedly is to help him choose a home, or to find people who will prepare one for him.

The providing of homes is not my work, but I have been interested in observing the way in which it is accomplished. With us it would be quite possible to form a house in a moment, but things are not usually done in that manner. Those who understood building when on earth do it here for a time; it is the same with architects, that is, supposing architecture has been their real and natural vocation. Men are not invariably drawn to the work they did on earth; for they may have had no love for it. A lawyer, for instance, may here prefer to study music; his earth occupation would, in that case, probably not have belonged to his soul's life in any real degree.

We have artists and musicians, and in fact we have people following every art and profession which makes for beauty and happiness. But it must be constructive work. It must have in it no element of destruction.

Etta has progressed marvellously with her painting. She has not lost that gift, but enjoys it more and is more skilled in it. My work remains, in one sense, the same, for I am teaching. On earth I endeavoured to really teach, and now I am teaching in a more progressive sense. With us there are many teachers; it is a large profession.

C.D.T.: Do you refer to teachers or preachers?

Father: I do not say that I am a preacher now, for preaching is really teaching. Many here require teaching. So little of earth's teaching counts after one leaves the physical behind. We regard conventional education as nothing in itself except as a groundwork for further training of mind and character. It has its importance, but does not come under our system of training. We do not teach languages nor mathematics. A person who on earth was a great mathematician is useful to us, not on account of his mathematics, but for his trained and orderly mind, which he can here apply to other conditions. So long as a mind is trained so that it can concentrate and control the desires—that is more important than anything else. It is the training which stands one in good stead here, and everything which trains the mind is useful, although purely technical and detailed knowledge gained on earth may be lost or left behind. For it is the effect of the training and education which accompanies you here.

Etta: I wish to slightly correct something previously said, namely, that servants are unnecessary because there is nothing for them to do. Many people have servants, but they are old servants who are attached to them, and who are not spiritually and mentally ready to emancipate themselves for other work here; so they may live for years in pleasant companionship with their masters and mistresses before they evolve on definite lines of their own. I thought it worth while to say this because it elucidates the real situation when communicators tell you that they have their old servants with them.

Father remembers that he was independent and enjoyed doing things for himself, and did not wish them done for him. He still remains the same. But a person accustomed to looking after others and attached to them might wish to continue doing it here. Father would not favour it; he always preached independence.

Father: We have no mechanical methods of travelling as on earth. But I must be careful and somewhat qualify that statement. I do not travel in train or car, nor do I know anyone here who does so. Yet, when engineers come here whose minds are bent upon engineering, and who may not be ready to take up another line of study or work, they continue experimenting in a limited way, especially with electrical engineering. They are sometimes able to discover certain things which they then endeavour to impress upon the minds of suitable people on earth. But they cannot long continue studies relating merely to mechanical work on earth. We are not interested in flying or motoring, except as it might be a subject of interest to you. Such things are not necessary here, and the time will come when they will cease to be necessary on earth, because you will then employ power which is now lying in abeyance. Feda reminds me that your old friend, C. B., has a workshop on the other

side. I think he is unlikely to continue it; he is too progressive for that. He will presently wish to leave it for spiritual work and higher mental life, although it may content him for a few years while he develops work in which he was previously interested.

Gardening is a popular profession with us.

Of the arts, music and painting come first, and music takes premier place. We have sculpture and even the making of tapestries. Indeed, all earthly things which the eye of man rejoices in can be and are reproduced here. It may be asked, what becomes of the objects which are no longer wanted when their makers and owners rise higher and leave them behind? Others who come here may want just those things. But there is with us a process of transmutation or substitution, by which objects may be made finer. It is possible to change the appearance of an object by mental force, entirely altering it without taking it to pieces. This process can be affected by those who have developed on constructive lines.

Your recent communicator, Strevett, could not do this. He did not construct mentally very well while on earth; he did not use his mind forcibly enough. He had possibilities and was intelligent, but had not trained his mind strongly in any direction. Therefore, since he was not constructive himself, many things have been constructed for him. By way of contrast, take the friend who came to your last sitting. His conditions, when he passed over, were ready for him and he found exactly such a home as he would have chosen on earth. He had known of it subconsciously, though not consciously, before he passed over. He can construct very well indeed, more so than during his later years on earth, for he now has a younger and stronger brain with which to work. His life here is one of great joy, new interests and new delights are continually opening before him. But he was prepared; he had qualified himself for this.

C.D.T.: You speak of clothing; are your garments simply the etheric replicas of those you used when on earth, or do you produce them entirely new?

Etta: In one sense the answer to your question must be, "Both ways." Let me use as illustration the fact that on earth an old garment can be unpicked and remade into an apparently new one. Now, our thought with regard to an object we have appreciated is so strong that it provides the "pattern" for a duplicate here. But the actual garment is reproduced by processes unique to this sphere. Thought plays a very important part in manufacture here, but ours is not an entirely mental world. We can make things by other processes than thought, if we choose to do so, and many on coming here would not be happy in doing purely mental work. It would be no good trying to make a builder into an architect immediately he arrived here; he might be happy in building, but not in designing or making plans for others to carry out. One begins with the work for which one is fitted. Many women are happy making garments, but could not take places of responsibility. People are not on our sphere because they are more clever than those below them; for there are very clever people on lower

spheres. It is a question of goodness, of spiritual development. Some here are quite stupidly good, their every impulse is pure and good, yet they are quite incapable of organising or thinking clearly. Such people find more happiness in framing a picture or covering a chair than they could do in teaching or in caring for newcomers. The latter duties would be less tasteful to them than manual work.

On my sister remarking that she was living in her father's home, my mother put a question relating to housework. Etta explained that it must not be thought that she had to attend to the multifarious details associated with housekeeping on earth; with them the home was a place to which one invited friends, and where social meetings were arranged; home-life was still a habit, and had its uses and pleasures.

C.D.T.: I imagine that where you live all have a desire to know more and more and are ever adding to their knowledge.

Father: Some do not seem eager for great knowledge; at least, not for a long while after coming here. For a time they seem satisfied, but at length all are drawn upward. Of course, many of them have useful work to do on my sphere, work which satisfies and interests for a time. The higher knowledge is not acquired all at once, it takes time. Many here are doing good work and have no desire as yet for higher knowledge which might even distract them from their present work. But it is only a question of time; they will presently feel the appetite for the higher things. The lesser things are both useful and necessary until one develops mentally and spiritually; remember how children outgrow their toys.

We have books, and people who delight in making them very much as do authors on earth. Perhaps we do not read quite so much as you do; because we are now able to converse personally with the authors. We sometimes, listen to good authors. Hearing them speak gives an even better idea than we should gain from their books. Still, we have the books and there are libraries. In those libraries are many books which have never been published on the earth.

(Following on this were remarks to the effect that earthly authors were sometimes inspired by minds in the spheres).

My father on another occasion said that, among other things, he was studying psychic laws and principles; also teaching groups of people; that he had always been interested in collecting facts and that it had been an ambition of his on earth to express them clearly and well; he was now able to revel in that work. My mother, who was present at this sitting, inquired if he remembered anything of the table-games they used to play together. He replied

"Yes, wait until you come over here, when perhaps you will find yourself playing them yet better."

My mother expostulated at the idea of games beyond death, upon which he added:-

"I think you will find yourself playing them again."

From what has been said by different communicators it is evident that they wish it to be understood that games are by no means excluded from the activities of their new life. The younger among them allude to outdoor recreations such as they used to enjoy while here.

Etta: Ours is such a wonderful life in comparison to that lived on earth. Nothing I could say through this channel would give you any idea that was comparable to the reality. It is so much more wonderful, bright and enjoyable than we can express.

Etta tells of helping in what on earth would be termed a mission; an organised system for dealing with people who have no near friends to welcome them; also with those who, having disbelieved in any future life, for some time after their arrival deem themselves to be dreaming.

At the close of a particularly long and interesting sitting, during which my father had controlled for seventy-eight minutes, he remarked:-

"I often enjoy other occasions when you are at home and unaware that I am with you."

Two years later he made some illuminating remarks about his ability to share my thoughts. He draw a distinction between the occasions when he actually came to me, and the times when he was en rapport with me without coming to earth. He explained that, in the latter case, he would more easily get my subconscious thoughts, whereas, if present with me, my conscious thoughts would be more easily received by him. He further added that this difference depended upon the condition he assumed; that whereas in his own sphere he was in "the subconscious or all-conscious plane of thought," on coming to earth he changed for the time being into "a conscious plane of thought." The difference, he added, was not easy for me to grasp, but it was very real. By practice he had become able to interpret my thought from a distance, and considered that, nine times out of ten, he would get my thoughts as correctly as if he were in the room with me.

If this be so, then it is clear that in so far as our friends acquire this faculty, one of the interests of their life will be to observe the growth in character, and ability for service, of those on earth for whose coming they wait with anticipation.

CHAPTER XV

THE INTERPRETER OR CONTROL

THIS chapter is followed at intervals by others with aspects of the process involved in communication through Mrs. Leonard. It is probable that the underlying principles apply more or less to trance mediums generally. The subject is obscure and awaits further study.

The chapters referred to are the following:-

- XVII. *The Modus Operandi of Trance Communication.*
- XIX. *Informing the Control.*
- XXI. *Voicing the Message.*
- XXIII. *Direct Control.*
- XXV. *The Difficulty of transmitting Names in Psychic Messages.*
- XXVII. *The Influence of the Sitter.*

Any contribution towards elucidation of trance methods should be of interest, not only to those who share my certainty that we are dealing with the mental activities of the discarnate, but also to those who favour alternative views. For, whatever may be the origin of the messages, it may be confidently assumed that they are produced in accordance with law, which is observable in their characteristic imperfections, and frequent failure to make plain what is obscurely hinted, as well as in their correct statements about matters unknown to medium or sitter.

The following attempt to make the process intelligible is supported by copious quotations. In these we have the explanation of their origin given by the messages themselves.

Where the communicators refer to "the subconscious mind," and to "the etheric brain," I think they are attempting to explain what they experience in themselves and observe in others. Like ourselves, they labour under the disadvantage of having no uniformly accepted terms in which to clothe their ideas about the subtle distinctions that exist in mental states. Some readers may perhaps think that the fairly obvious shades of meaning might have been expressed in words more psychologically precise. If so, I trust they may find it possible to paraphrase to themselves the sense of the quotations in language less open to criticism.

Those who have read Lady Grey of Fallodon's book, *The Earthen Vessel* (John Lane, Publisher), will be already familiar with the name of Feda. As the name constantly appears in these chapters it may be well to speak of her more fully at this point.

While studying the literature of psychical research, during the period before my personal investigations commenced, I was inclined to think that mediumistic controls

were dream aspects of a medium's own mind, or even instances of secondary personality. Experience showed me that these hypotheses fail to meet the facts. The controls studied by me not only claimed to be distinct individuals, but were proved to be so by every test I could apply; never did slip or slightest indication warrant the supposition that they were other than the intelligent and self-possessed individuals they claimed to be.

I have had the advantage of studying two controls, namely, my father and sister-from the day when they first became such by dispensing with Feda's help and speaking to me directly through NM. Leonard's lips. I have observed their early efforts at using the medium's organism develop into free and intimate conversation. From them I have learnt the difficulties which a control must surmount before acquiring ease and certainty in this task.

The hypothesis that "Feda," "my father" and "my sister," are but forms of Mrs. Leonard's personality fails to find, in my experience, any support; and I may add that this conclusion is in agreement with that of other sitters whose communicators have similarly learnt to play the part of temporary controls.

My father, my sister and Feda habitually refer to each other in a conversational way, just as anyone might speak of friends and fellow-workers. They allude to each other's characteristics, to their skill or limitation in communicating, and speak of knowing each other intimately in their life away from earth.

One can hardly convey the impression received by these multiplied touches of reality; nor is it easy to explain one's reason for counting Feda among one's friends. But to many of us, Feda is indeed a familiar friend; and among the interests to which we look forward in the next life is the pleasure of meeting her, and seeing her as she really is.

I know that direct evidence of Feda's individuality as something separate from Mrs. Leonard must, in the nature of the case, be difficult to obtain. But the following incidents should be placed on record. They supplement the evidence which some of Mrs. Leonard's sitters are said to have obtained when Feda has spoken to them through other mediums, giving information which was known to no one else in the circle, and which related to incidents in their private sittings with Mrs. Leonard.

On March 18th, 1921, Feda told me, at the commencement of the sitting, that she had been to my home and had visited the study. While there she felt that someone who had been using it recently had left a totally different impression in the room from anything which she could assign to me, to my wife or to the maids. She said that she had felt as if entering a fog and that, as she had been to the room previously, she recognised it as something unusual. This was interesting, because a visitor had just left after a fortnight's stay with us and he had spent much of his time in the study. It was a friend who had come to England, suffering from severe nervous break-down. Wishing to lead Feda further in her description I put the following questions:-

C.D.T.: Was that feeling such as might have been caused by someone who was ill?

Feda: Yes, it made a weak, curious condition, a heavy feeling. What was the "M" condition in that room? Feda kept getting an impression of "M."

C.D.T.: Did you get nothing more than one letter?

Feda: It was a name, but I only caught the "M" commencement of it. Do you know a "D" also connected with it? This was not so clear.

C.D.T.: That letter would be the initial of my name Drayton.

Feda: Not at all; for I should have felt that more clearly.

C.D.T.: Well, I'll ask when I get the opportunity.

Feda: I think you'll have an opportunity. It felt funny to get other conditions in your room, foggy instead of bright. He did not hear Feda knock there, did he? He would not have understood it if he had, but would have thought it was a mouse or something of that kind.

The last sentence may fairly be taken as indicating that Feda realised that our visitor had been a man, that he was unacquainted with psychical literature, and that I should be seeing him again, all of which was correct. My friend shortly returned for a further visit, and I then elicited from him the following fact which had been entirely unknown to me. During his first visit he was worrying about his work and wishing that he might be reinstated on the staff of his old paper, the Manitoba Free Press. He had finally decided, while with us, that he would write about this to his old chief, Mr. Defoe, and he had actually written the letter after leaving our house. Feda's impression of names commencing with "M" and "D," accord with this.

When the above sitting ended Mrs. Leonard described her recent experience at a sitting for the direct voice where Feda had spoken to her, and asked her to let me know that she had been to my study and had sensed difficult conditions there. The message for me had ended with the sentence, "Tell Mr. Drayton 'D' and 'M'."

Thus Feda, when speaking at a direct voice sitting, sent me the message "D and M," which she expanded at my next sitting. This is proof to me that it was the same person, i.e., Feda, who spoke at both places.

My second story involves three people, a lady (previously mentioned chapter XI.), who writes in the Journal of the Society for Psychical Research under the pseudonym of Mrs. Drummond, a clergyman and myself. Mrs. Drummond, while

sitting with Mrs. Leonard on April 11th, 1922 was told by Feda that a stray cat or kitten had been found and needed a home. At my sitting, seventeen days later, Feda spoke to me about this animal and I offered to find someone who might be willing to take it. At about this date, the clergyman was attending a voice sitting elsewhere at which Feda spoke. He tells me that, having sat with Mrs. Leonard several times, he was familiar with Feda's manner and diction, and that he had no doubt that it was really Feda who then, in direct voice, talked of cats and her wish that people would be kinder to them.

A month later, I was again at Mrs. Leonard's and reported to Feda that, having failed to find any other home for the animal I would take it myself. Two days after this, Mrs. Drummond was in Hampshire receiving table messages from her son, who frequently speaks to her through Feda and Mrs. Leonard. Among his other messages he gave the information, "Feda's kitten has found a home."

At this date I was unacquainted with the clergyman and it was two months later when we first met. In recounting his psychic experiences he touched on Feda's mannerisms, and happened to mention her coming to the above voice sitting. Some time later, while I was telling Mrs. Drummond of this, she recollected her son's remark, "Feda's kitten has found a home," and promised to look up its exact date. I was thus able to establish the above sequence which culminates in the interesting fact that Feda and her concern for kittens was vouched for by Mrs. Drummond's communicator, not through Mrs. Leonard, but when Mrs. Drummond was alone in her own home.

Feda's mannerisms, when speaking for herself, clearly distinguish her from the communicators. In quotations throughout this book I have not retained her peculiarities of grammar, except on the rare occasions when these may serve a purpose. And it is most noticeable how her eccentric English disappears when she purports to repeat the speaker's actual phrases. One often finds her, then, using words and speaking correctly about subjects which are, to all appearance, beyond her understanding, although perfectly natural as coming from the person for whom they are said to be transmitted.

For these and other reasons I accept Feda as being an individual quite distinct from the medium through whom she speaks.

CHAPTER XVI

"ORDER IS HEAVEN'S FIRST LAW"

C.D.T.: Can you tell me anything about the government of your sphere?

Etta: There is a government, but not one which limits and restricts; it is more in the nature of an inquiry bureau to which one can apply for advice and guidance when needing it.

There will be an area which corresponds in general to a county. In this is one of these bureaux. It is managed by a band of experienced people who have been here for some considerable time, and who do not belong wholly to our sphere, but return periodically for work. They know exactly where the newly arrived are most likely to make mistakes. As you know, on our sphere a mental call is easily heard. Let us suppose that someone has been here only a short time, say one of your weeks, and desires to visit some acquaintance who is in another condition of life. Well, he would not know how to set about it. He would probably discuss the matter with his friends and these might be uncertain whether or not it was advisable for him to go. In that case they would most probably ask at the bureau. The result might be that two guides, selected by these higher spirits, would take the applicant to the place he wished to visit, safeguarding him so that he neither came to harm nor did harm. I can give a concrete instance; there was a man who ardently wished to return to earth and make himself visible to his wife who was somewhat psychically endowed; he wished to show her that he was really alive and that he had a body. But one of his relations here felt strongly that it would be an unwise proceeding. So they went to the bureau and discussed it there. Two experienced guides were sent with them to the place on earth where the widow lived. They at once realised that the shock of grief had reduced her to so nervous a condition that her mind might be upset by an apparition. And so the man was advised to refrain from taking advantage of his wife's mediumistic powers to show himself, and rather to endeavour to impress her to overcome the grief, and to dwell on thoughts of his undying love. This he did. Had there been no guidance given him, he might have done otherwise and thereby made her condition worse.

Helpers from the bureau are ready to advise as to the first steps in this new life, suggesting suitable forms of activity to those who are at a loss to know what they can do. Also, they introduce to friends those who arrive here having none of their own-as is sometimes the case with young people.

I would not call this a government, however; it is not quite that.

C.D.T.: Do you think that your bureau is under guidance from a still higher one?

Etta: Yes, and that higher one is under guidance from one still higher, and so upward. As the teaching comes down it grows more individual. The nearer its source, the more impersonal is its form.

C.D.T.: Would you say that the higher bureaux deal with general principles, while those nearer earth apply these principles in detail?

Etta: Just so. Suppose that from a higher sphere the thought is sent out that the poor in a certain place, London, for instance, should be almost immediately assisted in some special way. This goes forth in the form of an impersonal message urging charity and help to those needing it. As this message comes downward through the spheres it gains in individuality, until, upon my sphere, it would be caught by those who, while on earth, had been in touch with London and its conditions, possibly by some who still have friends living there in poverty. The next step will be that promptings to help the poor are given strongly to your earth, probably to social workers and charitable persons who then become impressed with the idea that something should be done. No name was given in the message, as it originated on the higher sphere, but when someone on earth eagerly responds with heart and soul to the impression, we pass word upward telling what is being done and who is doing it. And so, as it goes upward the impersonal has become personal. Then a thought-current is sent downward again to the person, or persons, who are working out the mission on earth. One cannot do good without its being known in the higher spheres, particularly when one is carrying out an inspiration towards practical service.

C.D.T.: I suppose government takes a different form on lower planes?

Etta: Yes, there it is really government. When one is fitted only for a low plane, no amount of desire to be on a higher or more beautiful one would suffice to take one there. The habit of life on earth decides, and not any chance desire. If a man has qualified for a lower sphere, he will find himself there, and he cannot get away from it. That is just and right, and it saves a vast amount of supervision. According as the soul moulds itself while in the body, so it decides the place to which it must go on leaving the body. Those who simply live in the physical senses find themselves exceedingly limited on leaving earth. We wish such people understood the facts, so that they might realise how fatally unwise and short-sighted is their manner of life.

On a later occasion I questioned my father:-

C.D.T.: Can you tell me something more about the organisation or governing of your world?

Father: On the higher spheres there is the perfect operation of Divine law or principle. The people do not need keeping in order. They are nearer to the actual governing court, or seat of activity, and therefore can see the perfect workings of law. As one descends to lower spheres the law seems to work less perfectly, until, on earth, man's action thwarts it, resists it, and seems to evade it for a time. Hence,

you cannot on earth see so much of the spiritual organisation, or working of the law, as is seen on the higher spheres. The system is wonderful.

Suppose that on a high sphere it was deemed desirable to have a gathering to discuss and determine instructions for a lower sphere about some important movement, instructions intended for handing down even so far as earth. The time arrives when certain souls should gather together. Who is to call them? No one. The law brings them together, call it law of love, of service, it brings them together automatically; for people there respond to these principles which are God's Will and therefore the law. Do not take this simply in the religious sense, I am speaking of it as a fact; for God's Will is a law as immovable, as real, or even more so, than gravity or any other law you might name. This Will is for the good of the whole universe, and upon the highest sphere of each planet it is felt and interpreted.

So, it is not a government by a body of people on the highest sphere; it is government direct from God. On the highest sphere the highest is Our Lord. The Spirit and Will of God manifest through Him. He is the living symbol of the Will of God for our planet.

Now, all those who are on that sphere are attuned to the Will of God, or they would not be there. They interpret that Will. On such an occasion as I am describing, when a meeting is to be called, no messages are sent out. The very fact that it is necessary for certain people to draw together for consultation seems to collect them. You see them coming from different directions to the one place. They are obeying the call. It is not more wonderful to them to obey voiceless messages than for you to answer a telephone call, which to our ancestors would have seemed an outstanding miracle.

I was once conducting a band of young men who were to see Our Lord. We were met on the seventh sphere by advanced spirits who had left earth ages ago. I remember, on arriving there, being amazed to see these others coming from different directions and meeting us at the same place and moment. All were exact to time. They told me that they had known of our coming, that they had felt the time had arrived, although they had received no message about it.

Now, I think that they can there see the whole of things, the complete plan; while only small portions of it are handed out to you and to me. If the whole plan were given you at once, you would probably be dazzled, confused, weighed down by it. On those high spheres it is difficult for them to explain to me how they know things, because they can comprehend the whole, and although they are no longer in close touch with detail, yet detail is attended to by them for they do perfectly what they undertake.

Etta: I should like to attempt an illustration of that. You know that anyone who learns to play some instrument does it with difficulty at first and slowly. He knows how he moves his fingers because he moves them so slowly. But an expert pianist plays

most intricate things without being consciously aware which notes particular fingers are touching each moment. He sees the music more as a whole, he does not need to plod through each detail, he is interpreting. He might not be able to answer your question if you inquired whether his thumb was upon C, and his third finger on F; he does not think about his fingers and their position, because he is interpreting the whole. Thus, he might be less able than some beginners to tell you those details. What father means is that on the higher spheres they K-N-O-W. It is not reasoning, but something higher.

Father: Etta is right; there is a higher sense-Intuition. Some call it Conscience, others Instinct-the sense of knowing without having to trouble to find out how one knows. That is the form of government on higher spheres. It is a system of knowing. People do not leap into that sphere from a much lower one; they develop to it by gradual stages. Therefore, on reaching it, you are fitted and ready to know, to govern and to be governed by knowing. You can help govern those below you because you know the law and can submit to be governed by the law yourself.

On our third sphere we have a system more akin to that of your world, though I would scarcely term it compulsory government. But people are encouraged to do certain things which are best for them and dissuaded, or even forbidden, to do others. For, you see, among those who come to our sphere many have but little knowledge, although they have all done their best according to their lights. Such require some degree of governing, or they might try to do various things which were bad for them, even if from good motives. So we have Advisory Courts or Bureaux. Someone may wish to help a friend on earth in an undesirable course; another may want to engage in a kind of work which will teach him nothing. Such cases are brought before an Advisory Court. As a rule these courts deal with those who have been here but a short time. There is no forcing, no compulsion; for that is not necessary here as it is in your world. But after advice has been given, should a person insist on doing the contrary thing, guides would be sent to see that the person did as little harm as possible, and that not for long.

CHAPTER XVII

THE MODUS OPERANDI OF TRANCE COMMUNICATION

DURING my private sittings with Mrs. Osborne Leonard, only the medium is visible and the words spoken come from her lips. But everything points to the presence of two unseen persons who co-operate with the medium.

One of these inferred presences is a practised transmitter of messages. This is Feda, the control; the other presence originates them, and is termed the communicator. Chief among the communicators who thus come to speak to me are my father and sister, and as they have endeavoured to explain the process of communication I shall quote freely from their words.

They say that their messages pass to Feda in the form of thought and that Feda then transmits them by means of the medium's lips.

Very illuminating are their allusions to these processes. Should Feda and my father meet in their own realms of life they exchange thought with ease, either by words or by the more speedy method of mental intercourse. But immediately they come into the conditions strictly essential for trance communication, intercourse between them becomes difficult.

Reception of thought is complicated for Feda, because she merges her personality with that of the medium. Only by this temporary merging is Feda able to speak through the medium's lips, yet it is precisely this blend which causes her difficulty in catching my father's thoughts. When away from the medium, Feda can receive unerringly, but cannot transmit; when merged with the medium Feda can transmit, but finds it hard to receive. Her position is then somewhat similar to that of a medium who, without going into trance, tries to receive by clairaudience the messages of an unseen speaker. These mediums, who remain normal can, of course, easily speak that which they "hear," but Feda's only means of producing speech is by utilising a brain and vocal organs belonging to another person.

Feda's work therefore is twofold; first, to understand the messages which are transmitted to her telepathically, and, secondly, to effect their accurate expression in words.

My father also, like Feda, has difficulties to overcome. For, on entering the conditions of a sitting, his memory divides into its former earthly condition of conscious and subconscious. Much which he had intended to say may remain in the subconscious portion of his mind, where it is not available for use. This division of mind and memory constitutes one of the greatest obstacles which beset communicators. They are frequently checked for want of a word or fact which they know that they possess, but which at the moment is not available. Further, this split in memory may deprive them of access to those very facts which their friends on

earth have difficulty in believing could, under any circumstances, be forgotten. The inexperienced investigator is naturally puzzled when his friend purports to be speaking, and yet seems to have forgotten either his name or his place of birth, or some familiar incident.

Communicators are able to give many evidential details in the course of an ordinary sitting, but it is often perturbing to discover how very much they would seem to have forgotten. When the schoolmaster cannot spell, and the purist stumbles in grammar, their friends naturally are chilled by doubt.

As we shall presently see from their own words, communicators are often embarrassed by a temporary forgetfulness arising from divided consciousness. Some of them make a practice of preparing their messages beforehand so as to lessen the likelihood of forgetting. Yet, obviously, this precaution cannot help them in replying to questions. The information demanded may, or may not, be in their recollection at the moment; and even when present, and successfully transmitted to Feda, it may yet fail to be spoken accurately by the medium.

There is a further prolific source of trouble. This is the continual variation of the psychic emanation surrounding the medium. Its fluctuations are comparable to that of the wind, so that what is possible at one moment becomes impossible at another. This calls for skill and discernment in its use, such as only long practice can ensure.

When Feda has latitude in the selection of words, her task is lightened; for if some words will not pass, she can employ others which the medium's brain will accept. But there is no such alternative where proper names are involved. It must then be the right name or nothing. Not infrequently an important sentence turns upon a specific word, and that one word may be as great an obstacle as a name. Sometimes it gets through at the first attempt. But if not, Feda may vainly try to achieve its correct expression. Her very anxiety defeats her chance of success.

In golf the bunkers on the links are stationary and visible to the players; in trance communication the bunkers are not only unseen, but in perpetual movement. Hence the many checks encountered as a sitting progresses. The communicator and Feda are playing their ball amidst obstacles, while the sitter being unaware of these, wonders at the pauses, circumlocutions and failures.

The force in use being that of thought, it is easy to understand that a strong cross-current from the sitter may block or side-track communicator or control. It may neutralise the efforts of the former, or cause the latter to mistake the sitter's thought for that of the communicator. In the latter case, Feda combines the two streams of thought into a welter of incoherent ideas.

Some communicators have learnt to dispense with Feda's services and to impress their thoughts directly upon the brain of the medium. But a communicator, while in this direct personal control, is still limited by his divided memory. Besides which, he

is, to some extent, preoccupied by the care required in operating the medium's brain. Practice is essential. The progress shown by my father and sister is evidence of this. They both attribute their increased facility to a careful study of the various difficulties, as well as to their frequent opportunities for practice in speaking with me. As one of them said:-

"We learn by these experiences, and are beginning to see why and where we fail."

CHAPTER XVIII

ENHANCED POWERS AND HAPPINESS

Father: We do not need holidays. Our life is a feast of work; not a labour, but a feast, more enjoyable than any holiday.

The following extracts refer to Etta at periods ranging from six months to six years after passing:-

Six months after:-

Etta: It seems incredible to me that I can have been away from earth so long. With us time flies so fast that months seem short as days. I am no longer surprised that people around me find it easy to await the coming of their friends.

Father: It is delightful having Etta here. She finds this life even more interesting than she had anticipated, and she is very happy.

Two years after:-

Father: I wish it were possible for you to see Etta now, not merely to console yourself, but to see how extraordinarily and keenly happy she is.

Three years after:-

Etta: My life with father is so interesting and wonderful. It seems curious now to look back on the comparatively narrow life that engrossed me while on earth. I should not care to return now, even were that possible; I should not welcome it for myself, though I should be glad if you and the others could see me. This is such an interesting life; and I think the fact that I studied psychic matters and learnt something about this life while on earth makes it even more interesting to me now.

Four years after: -

C.D.T.: Do you find life broadening out for you as time goes on?

Etta: Yes, the four years since I passed over have gone very quickly and very happily. I grow more conscious of the wonderful things around me, things of which I was not wholly conscious at first. For instance, my range of sight and of bearing, as well as my understanding, is constantly increasing. All is there from the first, but one has to grow in ability to understand. A little child has around him all the things which are around you, but his power of appreciation has to be developed.

Six years after: -

Etta: We lead such a wonderful life compared with that on earth. Nothing I could say through this channel would give you any adequate idea of its reality. It is so much more wonderful, bright and enjoyable than we can express.

It is often asked how those above can be happy if they are aware of the tribulations through which their friends on earth are passing. Here is Etta's explanation:-

"When we speak of being worried or unhappy about things on earth you must not suppose that we ourselves are made unhappy. Certainly we are sorry, but nothing happening on earth can make us unhappy in the life yonder. We sympathise, but we also see the aim and the end. On earth people struggle on, and the end seems far away and even uncertain; but we have attained it.

After an interval of two years Etta again referred to this. She said. "I am not worried about anything, but am happy in my own life. Although aware that all sorts of worries come to friends on earth, yet I am so sure of the ultimate good of it all, that I can be happy while awaiting future reunion with them.

C.D.T.: Can you explain to me how you recall your memories?

Father: On our own sphere we do not recall memory because it is present. All is upon the one page. Past is present in that sense with us. It is impossible to forget anything; not that we are always looking at the past, but it is there for us to read in our memory. It is there without any striving for it.

C.D.T.: You would not experience that memory as vividly as when the event had just happened?

Father: I could do so if I wished, by an act of will.

C.D.T.: Then one might almost live over again the happiest scenes of earth life?

Father: Yes, we can and do. It is especially wonderful and beautiful when two recall such things together. On earth you may meet an old friend and expect pleasure in talking over old times with him, but find that it is less pleasurable than you had anticipated; his mind does not always recall the things which most interested you, while he has considered as being important certain matters which did not interest you at all. But here we remember the whole completely, and this makes a tremendous difference.

Father: I am convinced (for I have never heard anything to the contrary) that as we progress we retain our individuality. We do not lose self, we only perfect it. We perfect it to so high a degree that it is a blessing to be oneself. While we grow more and more selfless, we lose nothing of our self that is good. This does not imply that all will attain to one uniform type; they will retain each their own peculiarities, so far as these are not harmful. For example, it is right for Etta to be impulsive, quicker and

more excitable than most; she will keep that characteristic, but will always use it wisely, rightly and perfectly. But on earth there is an idea held by some that we shall eventually be submerged in some ocean of spirit. No, no. We can become allied with the source of power and wisdom, but never submerged. "In His own image He made man," and in His own image He keeps man.

Alluding to a friend and the possibility of bringing her to communicate with me, they said:-

"We will send out a mental invitation. It is quite easy to do. The person receiving it can accept or refuse at pleasure."

C.D.T.: Does such invitation always reach the one for whom it is meant

"Nearly always; that is, if it is right that it should reach them. You see, there is a law which acts automatically; should a thing not be right for us, it could not happen on our sphere, even though we tried by thought to bring it about. So that, if it does not come to pass, we are not disappointed, knowing that its happening would interfere with higher and more important plans. We are unable to create conditions on our sphere which are not the best for us. So that if it is right for your friend to come here she will receive my mental invitation."

Note.-At a subsequent sitting I had a long conversation with the lady in question.

I asked my father and Etta to give some description of the greater powers of body and mind which they now experience.

Father: It is important to make known the added powers of average people like ourselves; it will make for a better understanding and appreciation of the after life. Many on earth fear that on leaving their body they will be less complete than at present; their physical body seems so essential that the idea of being detached from it suggests a sense of loss, of being less well off than before. But such an idea is entirely wrong. The unseen body has a real existence all the time you are in the physical body, and it has much greater power when freed therefrom. While in the physical body its power is small, because your personality functions in the physical body. But you live in your spiritual body during sleep, and in moments of inspiration, or prayer.

When your soul is freed from its earthly body it finds itself living in one that is similar, but which has indeed added powers of feeling and of movement. I wish to emphasise that not only am I surrounded by greater beauty and happiness, but that my powers of appreciation are greatly expanded. You know how one used to walk past beautiful flowers, and grand sights, without seeing all that was in them; we are able to see the complete beauty. In short, our powers are a thousand times greater than yours.

C.D.T.: Do you really mean a thousand times?

Father: Yes, incalculably more; one cannot exactly say how many times greater. Etta will be very glad to give you her views. She is enthusiastic, just as she was when on earth.

Etta: You ask me to tell you something about our powers here. For one thing, we have complete control over both mind and body, a complete control. It is astonishing how little control we really had when on earth. The contrast impresses me immensely on coming here. On earth the mind has some degree of control over body and health; a bending of the mind to one's task, and a determined cheerfulness under difficulties, can accomplish a good deal. But here our body is perfect, perhaps on account of the mind's perfect control over it.

Our emotions also are under the control of mind. Suppose I see something which makes me indignant. I feel the indignation, but should not lose my temper or neglect anything I happened to have in hand. I should register the emotion, but should not dwell upon it. And so likewise with sorrow, I may feel sorrow, but it does not hurt me. I have no sorrow for myself, but I do feel for others. When I realised that I had come here I felt sorrow for you all who were mourning my loss; but that sorrow did not hurt me, because I did not dwell upon it in the sense of putting other things aside for it. I knew that I felt sorrow, I registered the fact, but it makes all the difference when the mind has complete control.

Another of our powers is that of realising the great happiness of love for our friends on earth without the old craving for their immediate companionship. I have not that craving, but always the consciousness that one would not be away from them were it not right. I think it is the complete consciousness of being in one's right place which overcomes all such personal desires and griefs.

On earth, even in sorrow, there comes the moment of enlightenment in which you know that all is right; for the moment you feel it, although you revert to the old sadness afterwards. Contact with the ordinary conditions of life brings back the former sadness. Yet, in that momentary flash, you experience the kind of consciousness which is always ours here. It would be incorrect to say that I long and crave to have contact with earth. Rather say that when I have this opportunity of talking with you it brings me an added happiness. We think more and more of our friends as we progress in our upward life. The only occasion when we should not be permitted to engross our thought with friends on earth would be when any of them selfishly attempted to compel us to do so. Not many would do that. It is a thing to avoid, and may as well be stated by way of warning. Opportunities should be given us, but it is useless to try and compel C.D.T.: Am I right in saying that no one could possibly compel you to come to them?

Etta: Compulsion is quite impossible. Yet, you will easily understand that the very knowledge that someone was there on earth, longing and appealing, would not add

to our happiness here. But so far as friends refrain from that attempt to compel us, we are able to help them more and more; for we can get closer and closer to them.

Yet another of our powers is that of realising the rightness of everything. On earth one so frequently resented and lamented the wrong seen all around; whereas, if we but tried to improve and set right, so far as we could influence matters, it would be the better course. Here we are always building up and never dwell upon regrets. I am, of course, speaking of our own sphere. On lower spheres there is regret; it is the penalty. Just as my added powers of mind enable me to realise that it is waste of time to idly regret the past, so do the dwellers on lower spheres come to realise that it is right and useful to regret, because only by consciousness of what was wrong in their lives can they rise to what is better.

Our happiness here is extraordinary; it is beyond any description that I could give you.

C.D.T.: And are you aware of events happening at a distance from you?

Etta: There is what father terms "telescopic vision." We are not always seeing what happens at a distance. My range of vision is little more than it was on earth, though the clearer atmosphere makes it easier to see. For events taking place two hundred miles away we can employ a special vision not in constant use. We can use it whenever we choose, but it is no more necessary to employ these special powers of vision, than it is for you to concentrate minutely upon trifles. There are times for the lighter touch, and times for the deeper attention.

C.D.T.: It seems to suggest clairvoyance.

Etta: It is clairvoyance, and we have clairaudience upon similar lines. At first I was unable to employ it, but I can now hear what you say while quite far off. Father informs me that I get the sense only, yet it seems to me exactly as though I hear it, even to the actual tone of your voice.

Note.-The remainder of this conversation dealt with Etta's description of the varying degrees in which she could see me, and the objects around me, as I worked in my study. I gathered that, in her opinion, the object most easily seen was the etheric or psychic body and that from this there emanated an ethereal light which, to her vision, served to illuminate surrounding objects; but that, as a rule, inanimate objects were less easily seen than were people.

C.D.T.: When you are away from here and in the spirit world as usual, do you speak with others by thoughts or by words?

Father: Either way; by words if we wish, or by projecting our thoughts. But there is more privacy, because the thoughts are only projected at will. It is as when two walk together in the country and both may be admiring the scenery silently till one says,

"Look at that," and designedly attracts the attention of the other to some object. Then they see it as you see it. This is easier than doing it by words.

C.D.T.: How do those talk with each other who on earth used different languages?

Father: Each speaks to others in the language that was his own, but the thoughts reach the mind of the recipient in the form familiar to him, and not as foreign words.

Six years later my sister made a similar statement, viz.:-

"On our own sphere we could understand anything "ken by the Chinese, and the Chinese would understand us also; this is due to a sort of automatic interpretation of the mind."

C.D.T.: I gather, from what you have told me, that it will be possible some day to re-enact all the brightest and best scenes of one's earthly life.

Father: Yes, and also those which one has missed on earth; all that which once was possible, but which did not come to fruition. When you come here you will find that which is difficult for me to express. You will realise the good of what you have done, and the happiness which you had, and beyond that, also, the happiness which you might have had, and which, just because you might have had it, is still yours. This will include the things which were apparently taken from you, but which you let go willingly and not grudgingly; for those things you have made doubly, nay trebly, your own.

C.D.T.: That sounds very beautiful.

Father: On coming here you will find it is a fact. That which is given up willingly, or which you see taken from you, yet you do not waste time in repining over, you have made yours. Whereas, things which men pursue, seize on by force, are the things they lose.

Etta once remarked:-

"On earth one interprets blindly the meaning of the Higher Will, and follows it as best one can; but we here can feel where one will have to follow next when the time ripens.

My mother, while with me at a sitting, remarked that she thought at her age there could not be many more years left for her.

Etta: I do not think there will be, mother; but it is wonderful to think that we can never really be separated.'

After naming several relations who had passed over, she added:-

"They will all be there. It is quite true, mother, about 'the many mansions.'"

My mother quoted:-

"The thought of such amazing bliss should constant joys create."

Etta: It is amazing bliss! The knowledge of it should be spread; for it is needed.

C.D.T.: Do you not sometimes feel awed and almost terrified to think that you have now no boundary to your mental horizon? On earth we limit our views by our years, and death is the boundary. You have none.

Father: It is all so satisfying that one would be terrified to think it could come to an end. There are new possibilities and developments which one is always anxious to experience, and we know there is still more beyond. And always the happiness and peace which you cannot understand while on earth, because you cannot retain it, even if you feel it for a moment.

CHAPTER XIX

INFORMING THE CONTROL

IT IS of interest to hear what the communicators themselves say of the way in which their thoughts are given to Fedra, and how she, in turn, expresses them in speech.

Father controlling.

"When I come here to speak, Fedra is frequently puzzled as to my meaning and fails to catch it either quickly or accurately. That is when I am unable to make my meaning reach her in the form of words. If I then project a thought of some concrete object, Fedra may remark, 'I see so-and-so,' but though she may seem to be seeing the object, it is really my thought of it which has reached her.

Etta controlling.

C.D.T.: How do you give your messages to Fedra?

Etta: As a rule, when I give a message it goes by thought in blocks. Say that I wish to give, "I have been in a garden at home, lately." I should not give it in bits, but in a complete thought first of all. Suppose she then asks me to give it again; the first attempt is already imprinted on her mind, but not necessarily penetrating through to that part which is working upon the medium's brain. It is not lost, but she may take time in getting the thought through; so I help by splitting up the sentence thus: "I have been in a garden...at home...lately." This permits her to get clearly any part which she had missed. Fedra's mind usually follows what I give, and while getting the first and second parts of a thought she would be mentally asking, "When? Long ago? Lately? And that prepares the way for me to give the other portion of it.

In the following remarks Fedra describes the process from her point of view:-

Fedra.

"They try any way-feeling, seeing or hearing; but Fedra finds feeling the easiest. They can suggest hot or cold, if the object they think of is metal. Much is done by suggestion. They can make Fedra feel a thing is cold or hot, exactly as if she felt it with her fingers. You know how hypnotised people can be made to feel like that."

Fedra.

"Fedra used to make bad mistakes when they showed symbols, because she did not understand them. Suppose they showed her a cross, she would know now that they meant trouble. Until they explained what their symbols meant Fedra used to get wrong over them. It is still difficult when new spirits show them, but experienced spirits often come with them to help and show what symbols to use. They use them

when it is too much trouble to explain their meaning in words; for there are times when Feda can see better than she can hear them."

Feda.

"-What?... Wait.... Cannot hear you.... It is a nuisance. I was hearing him very well just then, but there is a vibration of voices coming now which mixes it all up. Can you shut the window?"

This break came in the midst of an interesting passage which flowed with ease and accuracy. I then noticed, for the first time, a sound of voices in conversation outside the room where we were sitting. Two persons were talking on the lawn outside. I asked them to speak more softly, and closing the window, returned to my place. Feda then said:-

"It does not matter while your father talks mentally, but when he speaks in voice it does matter. Although you cannot hear his voice, it sounds like a real voice to Feda while in the medium, and it is more like your voice, because Feda listens to both of them from inside the medium. When controlling, Feda hears both the sitter's and the communicator's voices; not always equally well, but sometimes so.

"Your father says that this is because Feda has a double set of instruments to work with-her own and the medium's. He thinks these machines are occasionally interchangeable. He asks: 'Is it the medium's etheric brain or Feda's brain which is used?' Either can be used, and the same process does not hold good, even throughout one sitting."

During the early part of a sitting Feda had failed in giving the family name of my father's old colleague, Benjamin Browne, although I had clearly recognised by the description, and the name Benjamin, that he was the person alluded to.

We spent some time over it, and I went so far as to ask Feda whether the name wanted was not that of a colour; but Feda was unable to put it through. Later, when my father was controlling, he said:-

"You must wonder what is doing when you ask for a simple name like Browne and I cannot give it."

C.D.T.: Was Browne the name you wanted Feda to say earlier in the sitting?

Father: Yes, and so I got it in here. I dropped the attempt till I could introduce it myself.

Father controlling.

"I am not always aware what Fedá says when in control. I am mentally following up what I am giving and so am not always noticing what she says. Thus, I am not dear as to whether she had given my thoughts rightly or wrongly. As when telephoning, if a slip is made you may not realise how it has been understood at the other end, and, not knowing that an error has occurred, you cannot rectify it."

Father.

"There is difficulty in introducing an entirely new topic, introducing it to the medium's brain and to Fedá. I frequently prepare the ground by using words which lead up to my subject. Association of ideas is all-important. However, I am frequently able to broach an entirely new subject, and probably I find fewer difficulties than do most communicators."

Fedá's part is beset with pitfalls which she does not always see. For example, she may not notice that the communicator has begun a new topic and she may then attach the second message to the tail of its predecessor. Sometimes neither communicator nor sítter notices that disconnected themes are being combined.

Then sometimes Fedá cannot grasp the idea which is being conveyed to her. Even when the conditions are so good that she seems to herself to hear the message in spoken words, some important part of a sentence may be missed, and the resulting impression which she transmits is inaccurate. More difficult still is it when Fedá cannot receive the thought in the form of words, but catches only its general import. Omissions easily reduce a communication to chaos. Fedá is perfectly aware of all this and has discussed her difficulties with me.

There have been times when a fragmentary message has contained definite evidence that my father was aware of certain facts which he failed to convey to Fedá in consecutive and accurate form. In some instances I could see what it was he wished to tell me; it was clear that he knew more than he could make Fedá understand. When he persisted in trying to explain, Fedá made a long circumlocution; and if, for sake of experiment, I put leading questions, they only brought further proof that Fedá could not understand something which was clear to my father and to me.

Fedá (addressing the communicator): I cannot get that...try again...(turning to me), Do you know, there are times when I hear him, really hear him and yet get only muddled sounds, not properly formed sounds? He says it again, and if it does not get clearer he has to show it, or get it through in some other way. He does not always know when he has failed to make Fedá hear, and goes on with it. Then, if asked to repeat, he may not know what part Fedá has not heard, and then there is a muddle of mistakes.

"Feda cannot hear all he says all the time. Isn't it a nuisance? Have to catch parts, like when many things are thrown at you and you catch what you can. Feda rarely hears all that is said."

"I think he wants Feda to understand something which he knows, but cannot quite get through to Feda."

C.D.T.: Can he not tell you plainly in words?

Feda: He could tell Feda, but Feda cannot hear.

C.D.T.: How is that?

Feda: Feda can hear part, and part not; is able to hear some of it to-day, but not all of it. People often wonder why there seem to be extraordinary gaps in a sitting, not natural sequences. A communicator has to break off and leave out something which he knows it would be hopeless or risky to try to get through. So that often a sitting seems disjointed, fragmentary.

Feda: Your father says that he may not be able to continue the present topic next time.

C.D.T.: But cannot he plainly tell you it is coming?

Feda: He might plainly tell me, but I might not catch it. At nearly every sitting there is something which Feda knows she has not caught. It is like losing something and not being able to pick it up again. Communicators seem unable to, repeat, or else it is that Feda can't catch the repetition.

She tells me that, sometimes, a would-be communicator who though present at the sitting, has failed to attract her attention, will to some degree mingle his thoughts with the messages she is transmitting for someone else. In her opinion it is more likely to happen with communicators who are new to her, especially when there are several of them present; because, in these circumstances, it is difficult to know from whom the ideas come.

It may be asked why my father does not give his messages to Feda before she enters into control. He tells me that he has tried this, but that the division of memory affects Feda quite as much as it affects himself. I have occasionally heard Feda in conversation with him during the short period of whispering which precedes her opening remarks. In these whispers I have caught references to topics which were presently introduced in the sitting. Feda tells me that this preparation helps her slightly by making it easier for her to catch the ideas again when they are projected to her later.

CHAPTER XX

MISCONCEPTIONS RECTIFIED AFTER DEATH

C.D.T.: Many people of average good character seem to take no interest in Jesus Christ; do they quickly learn to do so on passing over?

Father: Their mind soon begins to open to thoughts of Him when once they know from experience that life continues after death. This opens up, in many instances, a whole line of ideas, and the next step is towards God. The very fact of their experiencing the reality of an after life brings to most people a certainty respecting God also. Question an atheist and he will probably say that he does not believe either in God or in a future life. All who become aware that they are actually in the life beyond death do open their mind to the possibility of God. It is not everyone who immediately accepts Jesus Christ, but they accept the fact of God.

There are many good Buddhists, Mohammedans and others who, at first, are satisfied with their own conception of the Highest, whether as Buddha, Mohammed, or other, as the case may be. The idea of Jesus Christ does not at first appeal to them, but later it does. Naturally, people may say that I, being a Christian minister, am prejudiced. But on consideration of other religions it will be seen that their followers are unlikely to qualify for such high place as those who sincerely follow Christ; because their lives are generally influenced by practices which are neither good nor moral.

C.D.T.: Then, whatever our creed, things which conduce to wrong conduct will have to be recognised as hindrances to our progress.

Father: Undoubtedly. People do not see the importance of their shortcomings as we see them.

C.D.T.: Do you still hold the doctrine of eternal punishment as it was understood and taught in your day?

Father: It was an error. All will have opportunity, and in time all will progress.

C.D.T.: Is there a personal devil, as you used to teach?

Father: No, there is no organiser of evil, no individual spirit directing evil, no malignant force of personal evil. There are multitudes who pass over from earth in a sadly undeveloped condition, but the undeveloped soul of a person who lived a bad

life on earth is a very different individuality from the traditional devil of popular imagination. You probably realise that many, whom you would term "evil men," become what they are through ignorance; neither mind nor character are developed. Of such it may be said, as Christ said of his murderers, "They know not what they do." Theirs is not so much a calculated, determined, chosen attitude of opposition, as a state of blindness to the reality of God and goodness, a blindness which may indeed be culpable, but which is not a settled opposition to good. Such undeveloped souls are not devils in any other sense than a bad man on earth may be termed "a devil." No such unprogressed person has power over us or over you. Evil thoughts and habits might invite such a one but, even so, he cannot control you further than you may choose to act in accordance with his suggestions.

While I admit that these unprogressed ones might suggest evil to men's minds, I say they have no power to force men in any way. I entirely disbelieve that any such forcing ever takes place. You may hear someone say, "I was compelled by some outside influence which was too strong for me." But that is untrue. The man may have reacted to an evil suggestion, but it was not forced on him. People around can easily bring to bear on him much stronger suggestion than can any unprogressed spirits. Unwholesome companions are more to be feared than any and rebuilding. On coming here one discovers that it is Principle that matters, and not motive.

There is much confusion between principle and motive. But principle is the foundation of truth in conduct, and leads to sound knowledge about motives. Before we allow ourselves to respond to motives we need to be sure of our principles. Many a man comes here and finds that he has to account for something which he did when on earth, and rather prided himself on doing. He finds that it was not a good thing to have done, because it was not founded on right principles. What is "Doing evil that good may come"? It is acting with a good motive upon a bad principle. There is more misconception, perhaps, on that point than about anything else, save religion. It invades religion. Take the case of a savage who offers human sacrifices in the name of his god. He does it from a motive, a good motive. But that action in the name of his god is based upon a wrong principle. His ideas about his gods are wrong, although his motives are good.

This is one of the reasons for missions to the heathen. I used to hear it said in some quarters that they ought not to be interfered with, that their own religion might be the best one for them. But we must enlighten them when we see that their actions are founded on wrong principles. The Christian religion is above all others, for it is founded on right principles. Consider only a few of its most prominent, love and justice, and I would like to add also knowledge, because Christianity gives and expands spiritual knowledge more than any other religion. So I say that our Christian religion is The One Religion, because it is founded on the strongest and best principles in the universe. Is there not, in nearly all other religions, something which we deplore, something which our sense of justice tells us is wrong? But nothing in Christ's way of living can be called wrong, even by those who do not follow it.

I speak of Christianity as you and I understand it, who have left their earthly body; the latter can only use mental influence, while those on earth may employ for their ends not influence alone, but also money and alluring surroundings. Tempters in the body are ten times more dangerous than invisible tempters.

Father: When I was on earth I do not think I thought consciously of communion with any other individual in the spirit world, but only of Our Lord. I feel now that it is a help when you have others who stand prominently in your mind; the link may be small, but it is important. I think that Etta and I, and perhaps some others also, act to you as waymarks. You know where you are with us. And so the road to Our Lord is made plainer. He would have us serve thus as landmarks on the upward way. Some people may think of their friends here as a goal, as if communication with them were an end in itself. I am inclined to think that communication may be a rather bad thing for those who use such a possibility of spiritual communication and yet make nothing spiritual of it.

Some have talked about "holding us back it is not possible for you to hold us back; but we may be saddened and disappointed, which would, to some small degree, lessen our happiness. This might result from people regarding communication with us as an end in itself, rather than seeing in it a means of attaining something higher.

C.D.T.: Can you mention other misconceptions which are corrected on passing over?

Father: I should like to name especially the confusion of thought about acting from principle and acting from motive. Many, while on earth, were inclined to think that their conduct was right if only the motive was good, no matter what the result happened to be. But motives are not everything, they are like the walls of a house without foundations; for in a life regulated only by a system of motives, one is always falling down and not of its perversions. I must add that the Mother of Jesus certainly holds a very high position on our side, and quite rightly too. On this point I understand more than I did when on earth. I fear we have taken very little notice of her in the past, probably because of certain practices in relation to her veneration which I feel are wrong.

C.D.T.: What of those whose religion was a perversion of Christianity. Are they at a disadvantage on coming over?

Father: Not all, but many are, those for whom their Church was a limitation restricting their spiritual sense. Most certainly these are at a disadvantage; for their sense of personal responsibility, of thinking for themselves, had been taken from them. Yet, I admit that many come here whose temperament has apparently been suited to such a Church. Many have belonged to Churches which did not suit their temperament and so have been limited thereby. I think this applies to almost every

Church and religion. But I find that, after a time, we all begin to follow the same great path leading to God through Christ.

CHAPTER XXI

VOICING THE MESSAGE

ON becoming aware of the thought to be transmitted, Feda operates upon the medium's brain. One says "brain," but I think there is some portion of the medium's mind alert within it. It is with this mind and brain that Feda works to get the message spoken aloud. She tells me that this is not always easy. It is essential to ensure that the message is "taken," otherwise it may, to use her own phrase, "drop out of the brain" instead of being spoken. Let her describe this in her own way:-

"Feda pictures something and wills it and that sets the medium's mind going. Suppose I wished to give the picture of an apple; it would be necessary to think strongly of an apple, make a picture of it and put it on her mind. Feda tries to jump on the right part of the medium's brain, but often fumbles; it is like touching the wrong string."

Here I asked Feda how she found the right spot on the brain. She replied:-

"When Feda has got a picture of the apple it feels like holding it up above the medium's brain. Feda feels it as if it were being drawn to a right place, attracted to a right part; but it has to be held till it is attracted there. Feda wriggles it about until she feels that it connects, that it is taken up; but all this is done with the mind, not with hands. Feda thinks of the brain as something alive with sense in it. It is a little like a game in the dark when someone has to catch what you are holding. Feda pushes it towards one part, then towards another part, until it is taken."

My sister at this point explained that the shifting process did not necessarily mean movement from place to place, but a changing of the idea of the apple. Feda then continued:-

"At last it feels like something sucking it in, like taking in a breath. All that does not take as long as it sounds in describing. Whole sentences can be done quickly sometimes. The best flow of words is when long ideas are being worked out; that kind of talk is much easier than giving some specific thing like apple or orange. It would be more difficult to say 'An apple on your plate this morning,' than to give a long philosophical disquisition, or analysis of character."

Feda finds that the medium's receptivity is continually varying, and this necessitates careful management.

While transmitting for my father, she remarked:-

"A picture of your mother suddenly jumped into this. I did not wait to ask your father what he meant by it, lest what I wished to say should drop out of the medium. Things

sort of spill over if I do not keep them fixed on her brain. If I wait to ask anything, then what I am holding there may run out."

Feda: Your father says that he refrains from saying many things which he wishes to give, lest they should come through in a distorted form. Feda feels that also; for she does not always make the medium's voice speak as intended. Feda touches something which wakes the medium's mind and then it goes off on its own account.

C.D.T.: Feda, can you hear the words spoken by the medium?

Feda: Yes, but cannot stop her speaking if what she says is wrong. Often Feda cannot get the power to check the words.

She continued: -

Your father says that overpressure taps the subconscious mind of the medium and then something escapes before Feda can stop it. Even after bearing those escapes and inaccuracies, Feda cannot always so control the medium's mind as to put things right. As each thought is given it is fixed on the co-operative mind which is created partly by the medium and partly by Feda. Once it is registered there a counter suggestion is not easily put through. Your father says that Feda thinks she works directly upon the medium's brain, but he does not consider that this is entirely accurate. He says that Feda really works upon the medium's mind-essence which, in its turn, works the brain. This mind-essence belongs to the medium's organism. To take a simile: Feda puts a match to the gas, this gas is not Feda's, but its light might be termed hers, and she can regulate it. Feda has produced a quite wonderful manifestation which draws its supply from the medium. That may explain why Feda is occasionally less brilliant than at other times; if it were Feda's own gas it would always be equal, but, being the medium's, it varies.

Yes, your father is sure that Feda is wrong in thinking that she works the medium's brain. It is the mind in the brain which Feda works. Feda gives to the medium's mind and that mind then works the brain. Feda telepaths on to the medium's mind, much as the communicators telepath to Feda, but the operation is so instantaneous that Feda can scarcely realise in detail what is happening.

C.D.T.: Feda, did you find the medium's brain respond to your efforts as easily, when you first learnt to control, as it does now?

Feda: No, it was dreadfully difficult then.

Your father says, That bears out my assertion. For Feda was then working upon the medium's mind, and found it difficult work owing to lack of practice and experience. But had Feda been working direct upon the brain, the trouble caused by the confused mental conditions of an undeveloped medium would not have arisen.

On one occasion, when my father was speaking through Fedá, I asked:-

"Does Fedá ever find that your thought has reached the medium's mind direct? Or must it always go to Fedá first?"

Father: Fedá might find a thought in the medium's brain and understand that I have thrown it there; she would then cause it to be spoken. But Fedá usually knows what I send to her own mind, and she then impresses it on the medium's brain. I think Fedá succeeds in doing it either way.

C.D.T.: But would not the medium's brain automatically cause the thought to be spoken if catching it before it reached Fedá?

Father: No; consider how, during sleep, your mind holds pictures, images, thoughts. Does your tongue therefore speak them? Certainly not, although the images may be as vivid as a waking experience. Fedá can manage it either way. She often catches what I say before she puts it through; but the whole operation is either instantaneous, or nearly so. She would scarcely be able to say which came first.

Fedá here added, that, while controlling, she does not actually know whether she gets the thoughts from the communicator, or from the medium's brain. But what she does know most certainly is that she often fails to get something which she ought to get.

CHAPTER XXII

INTERCOURSE WITH EARLIER GENERATIONS

Father: We often speak of the greatness of our advantages here as compared with life on earth. There is, for instance, the mingling of different ages. It is astonishing how far back one can go. I have even seen people who lived long before the Christian era, and have talked with many who lived centuries before me.

I should explain that if it is someone on a higher sphere whom I wish to see, that person must share my wish or nothing will come of it. On the other hand, when I wish to see one who is living on a sphere lower than my own, the desire need not be mutual. We help many who are unaware of our interest in them; some of these are on earth and perhaps give no thought to us. But it is different when we are seeking aid or information from those above us. Had I real need of advice from one on the sixth sphere, he would receive the S.O.S. sent by my mind and would probably respond to my invitation. Let us suppose, however, that he was just then so occupied that he could neither come to me nor let me interview him; his thought would be so powerful that he could send me a mental message, asking, me to wait awhile. I should receive that idea; it would affect me in a manner that resulted in my feeling: "No, I must wait, it will happen in good time." I should feel philosophic about the delay. I consider that true philosophy is the interpreting of divine will correctly. One does not become apathetic, phlegmatic or careless, but I know that when I feel myself inclined to philosophise about my wishes it is an indication that I am to wait for their fulfilment.

I have told you previously that we are able to shut off our thought at will. This gives us privacy of thought when we deem it desirable.

C.D.T.: How frequently do you meet with those who lived long ages ago?

Father: I cannot lay down any rule. Some do it much more than do others. It is not everyone who shares my interest in the remote past. Etta has spoken with some who have been long resident here, yet have never spoken with anyone of long ago, their interests being on other lines.

C.D.T.: Then the older generations are not intermingling freely with you all the time?

Etta: No, it is more usual for us to visit them than for them to come to us. Few of them reside on our sphere, although it is possible for anyone on a higher sphere to have a temporary place on ours in which they can dwell when their work brings them into our conditions, or even into yours. You see, these people of long ago, the progressed, can travel back to lower spheres, but in doing this a bodily as well as a mental change takes place which requires adjustment of an intricate and rather difficult kind. And so, in the event of important matters on earth requiring the supervision of these advanced souls, they make a temporary home on our sphere

and acclimatise themselves again to earth for possibly weeks or months of your time. At different periods of the world's history our sphere has been much occupied by them; during such a period as that of Christ's life on earth there would be many of them.

C.D.T.: How many generations back do the people around you date?

Etta: It is rather elastic. The majority of them came, say, twenty to thirty years ago, but many have been here a century. If they remain much longer than that I should suspect they have some work or mission in connection with earth, as is the case with Feda.

Feda: Feda has been here more than a hundred years and expects to go on with this work for some time longer.

Etta: You will ask whether, when those from higher spheres come to dwell with us, everyone here wishes to see them? No, many are not interested. You might liken it to London when a prominent pianist arrives; some will wish to hear him, many do not, the majority may not even be aware of the visitor's presence in the city.

Father is interested in those who have been prominent in history, especially the great teachers and leaders in different religious movements of the past. His to-morrow is always going to be more interesting than to-day, and his to-day more so than yesterday.

Father: Our life is ten times more replete with interest than that of earth and no time is wasted in sleep, eating, or the preparation of food. Consider our facilities for meeting interesting people; one thinks, "I wish I could get into touch with so-and-so," and then finds himself helped into touch with that person. The limitations of earth, such as distance and difficulties of travel, no longer present any hindrance.

I have had the pleasure of speaking to the pioneers of various sects and forms of church life. It is wonder fully interesting to get the sum total of their various experiences, and to find how they now agree that there were many paths to the one goal. There are as many paths as there are branches on a tree, where each branch leads to the same trunk, from the pliable and brittle twig to the solid trunk-the trunk in this metaphor representing God. But, although on earth there are the many branches, it is not so in our higher world; with us it is as one great open road to God.

These men, who would once have argued and fought about their various creeds and sects, have now recognised that, even if their methods were mistaken, they had to pursue them along a certain road; for they could not have travelled the other men's road, or, if they had done so, they would have learnt little and found it unprofitable.

I certainly never thought of meeting Cardinals and Luther and Wesley and having a heart-to-heart talk with them.

C.D.T.: Is there any limit to the historical distance of those you can meet?

Father: If it were any benefit and I truly desired it, it would be quite possible to meet Julius Caesar although he has risen to the sixth sphere. I could see him within five minutes after the ending of this sitting if there were good reasons for it. The whole atmosphere seems full of magnetic rays which bring certain people into line. One person on the sixth sphere may be the guide to a hundred on the third sphere, and at any time a ray from the higher person can be thrown out to one on the lower who needs him. It may, in a way, be likened to rays from the sun. All works naturally; if a thing is right you will have it; if not, you will not wish for it.

I find this life a perpetual feast of mind.

Etta states that one great interest has been her meeting with some of the old ancestors of our family. These struck her as showing marked family likeness to some of her own day. Even before they had introduced themselves there was a something which enabled her to understand that there was family relationship. Some of these ancestors she named, but lack of family records makes verification impossible. One remark of hers I have been able to verify by an inspection of family paintings representing some of my paternal grandfather's brothers and sisters.

She said, "One side of father's family were very dark, with dark eyes and black hair." I had not noted this fact until subsequently looking at the old paintings to see if this were so.

On one occasion, when my sister had been speaking about ancient Egypt and its art, she said:-

"I am sure the old Egyptians did not posture in that extremely stiff and angular fashion in which they are portrayed by the artists of that time. But their artists had not the art by which they could convey a natural movement or posing. I have seen some very early Egyptians, very early indeed, and I asked them whether they stood naturally in those peculiar positions. They told me, No, and that they moved as freely and as easily as we, and in very much the same way."

My informants say that not only are the people of other days approachable, but, under certain circumstances, the cities in which they lived are reproduced. In some instances these have permanent place in the spheres, while others of them, existing only in the minds of their former inhabitants, can be materialised and given a temporary objective form. Then the ancient city stands revealed, with those who occupied it at some given date moving about in the manner of long ago. This reproduction is for purposes of study and education. Thus, the different periods of ancient Egypt, Greece and other lands, now being studied by archaeologists on earth, are made available to students in spirit life. Speaking of this, my sister added:-

"I wish it could be realised that there will be this opportunity for visiting and studying. It is far superior to the hurried and often wearying sight-seeing of earth. Those who wish to travel, but are bound by duty to their homes, will be able, on arrival here, to visit all variety of interesting places and to enjoy them fully. The inability to travel, which so many on earth lament, would take a brighter aspect if it were understood that the opportunity does not end with bodily death, and that the pleasure is merely postponed."

On re-reading this remark, after an interval of months, I am reminded of my father's attitude to foreign travel. He had never been further than the Channel Islands, although sensible to the delights of fine scenery and interested in accounts of life in other lands. When I once spoke to him of a holiday in Switzerland he alluded to the duties detaining him at home, adding, "I shall not see Switzerland while in this life, but when an angel it will be my pleasure to visit such places at leisure and enjoy them fully." Such were his thoughts. At the time I was not impressed; the earthly pleasures were so near, the future possibilities so hazy and remote. But now I understand the deep wisdom of his outlook, and know that, in ways difficult for my imagination to grasp, he has attained his hope and more-far more than he then deemed possible.

When one considers the vastness and variety of this planet-the storied beauty of southern seas, the mighty pageants of great mountain ranges, the teeming life of the tropics with their gaiety of bird and plant life, the majesty of volcanoes and the arctic auroras, the brilliancy of night in Egypt, the colours of sunset on the Alps-one realises how small a glimpse of Nature one has seen. Most of us live and die almost strangers to our globe, having remained within one small range of its myriad paths.

Books of travel show how relatively little we have observed of humanity in its divergency of habit, colour and custom. Nor can the traveller take into consciousness all that meets his eye. Receptivity is limited and the best does not lie exposed to a casual glance; both sympathy and knowledge are required, and we need bring with us much, or we shall perceive but little. One can visit a foreign city and yet realise almost nothing of its inner life. The most favoured visitor can only begin to know and see.

Life is short, while Nature's panorama is endless. And so we pass from this world of immense interest, having barely commenced to recognise how entrancing are its scenes, how marvellously diverse its forms of life. The infinitely great beckons us overhead, the infinitely small displays its wonder wherever we direct the microscope. We catch, at best, but a glimpse of that which is "boundless inward in the atom, boundless outward in the whole."

The surpassing wealth of physical creation suggests the infinitude of interest awaiting the receptive soul in its progress through super-mundane spheres.

CHAPTER XXIII

DIRECT CONTROL

IN preceding chapters we have examined the phenomenon of Feda's control. Let us now see what happens when my father or my sister, taking Feda's place, transmit their thought direct to the medium.

Forgetfulness is still a limitation. Much knowledge which they are aware of possessing is no longer within reach. They say, "One of our greatest difficulties when controlling is our divided memory." Their condition would seem to correspond with that, so familiar to ourselves, when we fail to recall a name. We are aware that we know it, and that we would recognise it if we heard it spoken. We may even succeed in recalling it by some link of association, but all direct efforts are futile.

Feda: Your father says he knows the intricacies of controlling, not only by observing Feda, but through doing it himself. He is sure that he works only a small part of his mind within the medium's mind. The part left outside the medium's mind forms, for the moment, his subconscious mind, but he is still in touch with it, just as you are in touch with your subconscious mind.

C.D.T.: Is subconscious knowledge available while in control?

Feda: No; when you wish to recall what your conscious mind has lost you try to obtain it from the subconscious. Very often he tries to do this while controlling, but it is more difficult for him than for you, because a smaller proportion of his mind is operating in the medium. In her brain there is some of her own mind, and also some of his; while in your brain there is only your own mind. In controlling, it is what may be termed a co-operative mind. You see, therefore, why he cannot, while controlling, think so clearly or remember so much as you can.

My sister remarks in this connection:-

"We bring in as much of our mind as we can, but the situation for us is something like having to turn from a full compass piano to perform for a time upon one having but a single octave of notes."

During my sister's fifth time of controlling she succeeded in describing a young officer who had recently died, and she transmitted several messages which he had given her for his father. (These messages proved to be rich in evidential points, and the father was convinced of his son's identity). The young officer was said not to be present at the sitting and my sister added finally:-

"The extraordinary thing about it is that, although he told me so much, I am now unable to recall it all. Yet later, when away from here, I shall remember everything."

During personal control several matters demand simultaneous attention; there is the care of the medium's organism, and the necessity of observing what will "take" and what fails to take. The controller must also endeavour to mark what is actually spoken, and to avoid starting a flow of words which would misrepresent his meaning. When such a flow is once started it may be difficult to check, and practically impossible to follow it up with a contradiction or explanation.

My sister says that she does not know the exact moment at which she gains effective control of the medium's mechanism. This probably explains why one hears Feda whispering in apparent conversation with the communicators before the sitting opens.

During his controlling my father once suddenly remarked:-

Something makes me want to cough." (The medium then coughed and cleared her throat.) "When I think suddenly it gives the organism a jerk and I cannot control the breath properly until I cough."

Later, he was checked in his attempt to explain something further, and proceeded:-

"I cannot make her say it although I know quite well what it is I wish to tell you."

On the occasion of my sister's first control I had no warning that she was about to make the attempt. But I noticed that the change of control was taking a much longer time than usual, and when the voice commenced it was slow and faint.

"I am trying...not father. I shall do it. I want to. Can you bear better now?... I shall speak more distinctly soon. S-S-S-S (the sibilants were clear and prolonged). I cannot manage her breath. I shall soon do it. Yes, now I think it is better...when I speak like that. I do not make the whistling sound. I wish to speak clearly, distinctly and well. I am so glad to be able to speak. I shall do it in time."

Etta continued in control for twenty-nine minutes, and towards the end of that time was speaking more easily. She succeeded in pronouncing several relevant names, although failing to give others for which she was evidently trying.

A few weeks later Etta controlled for the second time. Among other things, she said:-

"I want to practise names of people...I want to remember the sound of words while controlling and to make the lips sound, to give her brain the names and make her lips say them. But it is difficult to think; I fail to connect up my ideas. Even now I have a strong consciousness of having been often with you, but I find no detailed recollection of the things we have done. Do not tell me anything; I wish to practise remembering."

One may enjoy the perfect reception of a wireless apparatus without in the least knowing how it works; but if it begins to fail and disappoint us, we become curious to know what is amiss. With complicated instruments trouble frequently arises, necessitating some delicate adjustment. An understanding of the mechanism enables one to do justice to the instrument, and to obtain its best results.

In trance mediumship we are dealing with living instruments-viz., the communicator, the control and the medium, each of whom should be working in adjustment with the others. The communicator has come prepared to speak and needs to convey his message to the control. The control has a double part to play; first, to ascertain what the communicator wishes to say, and then to ensure that the message shall be spoken by the medium. Only in so far as these processes are accurately carried through, will the sitter receive the messages in satisfactory form.

I do not think these explanations cover all possible phenomena of trance communication. But they form, at least, an attempt to obtain a working hypothesis of the phenomena usually obtained with Mrs. Leonard.

CHAPTER XXIV

CONTACT WITH HIGHER REALMS

Father: When, after my request, a response comes to me from higher planes of being, it may take the form of a symbol. I am able to interpret the symbol, and should be aware if I had interpreted it rightly or not.

C.D.T.: Do those symbols take form outwardly?

Father: They seem objective to me, yet others who were with me might not see them; so they are evidently subjective.

C.D.T.: Then it is much as when we on earth pray for guidance and receive it inwardly?

Father: Yes, for people on earth can be strongly aware of the guidance so given, seeing or feeling it with inward clearness.

C.D.T.: When you speak to an assembly there do you prepare an outline, or write in full as when you used to make sermons on earth?

Father: There is no preparation of the matter of discourse. I rely wholly upon inspiration; for there is nothing between us and the source of inspiration. When speaking publicly on earth there is much between, and something may happen which cuts you off from it. But with us there is nothing which could do so. If someone makes a stir in your congregation you might lose your thread of discourse, owing to your conscious mind being affected by the disturbance to such a degree that it became unable to switch back again to the channel from which you had been receiving inspiration.

C.D.T.: You once spoke of "listening to the voice of law" on your sphere. How do you become aware of that voice?

Father: It is the inner voice, but much more definite than the voice of conscience on earth. I think it is because I live so much more completely in the subliminal mind that I hear this higher voice so easily.

C.D.T.: Does the voice convey guidance from superior spheres?

Father: Yes, from those nearer to the Source of wisdom.

C.D.T.: Working under Our Lord's guidance?

Father: That is just what it amounts to. Those nearest to Him understand and interpret His wishes perfectly.

C.D.T.: We commonly speak as if Christ were the only one who worked for earth there. Is that an accurate way of representing the facts?

Father: No; multitudes in our sphere are working to help man, all of them doing His wishes, but doing what we once thought He, and only He, was doing, or could do. It is a system of universal brotherhood and service.

C.D.T.: It must be good for those who thus serve.

Father: It is the only way. One cannot progress except by service. Who served so much and so completely as did Our Lord?

C.D.T.: Can you tell me anything about the powers of those on the higher spheres?

Father: I will try. They certainly have greater mental power, and it is more operative, more creative than is ours, just as ours is more creative than yours. Even on earth those who are mentally developed can accomplish more than others, despite the material surroundings. But on sphere three, which is ours, we are not so rigidly limited by "matter" as you are; and yet we are more limited by it than are those on the seventh or sixth. On the highest sphere they have the power of constructing mentally anything in the past, present, or even in what you would term the future. All that which has been active in the material sense, in any way or at any time, is there under the dominion of mind. In that realm, thought is really free and is combined with executive power.

When it is necessary to show to someone here the effects resulting from some good or bad deed, he is taken for the purpose to the sixth or seventh sphere. There, certain of the higher guides will reconstruct the whole scene for him. It is difficult to explain. I will state it as simply as possible. The persons selected to re-enact that scene are, as a rule, the same who originally took part in it, no matter how long ago it may have been. You recollect the line, "The evil that men do lives after them"; it does, even with us, the evil and also the good. To re-enact the evil of long ago is sometimes a punishment meted out to those who caused the evil. But to those dwelling on the seventh sphere it is no longer punishment, but rather a sacrifice, a voluntary sacrifice, offered in the process of neutralising, or shall I say, of wiping it out. This is not a regular occurrence, but may be arranged to teach someone who is about to visit earth for a purpose. Guides are often taught in this way; the lesson is impressed upon them. You may take it that the greater powers on the higher spheres are due to mental and spiritual development. We develop slowly upward to that state.

C.D.T.: Would it be possible to give me some idea of what you have learnt when visiting the fifth sphere?

Father: It is doubtful. I greatly wish I could find words to convey it. I was shown the working of the law of cause and effect. Also, I have seen pictures of the earliest development of the planet, and the early forms of life upon it. You may ask how it is possible to have obtained pictures of earth as it was before man arrived. They originate in the great mind of God, of which our subliminal minds are a small particle—shall I say, a single cell. The earliest men saw earth as it was then; since that time they have developed to states of consciousness in which they can bring back memories of the Divine Mind which watched over earth before man was.

C.D.T.: Are those men now the highest in the ranks of spirit workers?

Father: Among the highest. They help to build the mental pictures, cinematograph-like, upon the ether, forming images or representations of things that have been. We see that mental picture as if it were actually happening. Possibly it may act as when a hypnotised person thinks of a rose when commanded to do so, and experiences the reactions of smell, sight and touch just as if a rose were actually present to his senses. Such a power as that we certainly possess, only it is a thousand times stronger.

C.D.T.: Does the Heavenly World—you will recollect what we on earth signify by that phrase—seem nearer to you now than when on earth?

Father: I have access to it now. My sphere is the fringe of the Heavenly World. I think of the very high spheres only as the Heavenly World; and yet the one wherein I dwell is truly a very heavenly place. Properly speaking, the fifth, sixth and seventh are the Heavenly Spheres.

C.D.T.: Could you explain in what way the seventh differs from yours? (The following reply was given slowly, and very carefully, a few words at a time.)

Father: I have been to the seventh. It is not that personality is diminished, but yet, without losing that which we strove so hard to perfect, we become there more impersonal, more desireless. We become so sure of the Divine Wisdom that we no longer desire any individual thing, whether for self, those here with us, or for our loved ones on earth. We thus become less personal in outlook. I have not attained to that as yet; for when I see something coming which I think good for you, I wish it, and pray that you may have it; I feel enthusiastic about one thing, and not about another. But on those higher spheres the feeling for others is more universal; it is not that love for wife and child is less, but that love for all others is more. I think this is the greatest difference.

Were I now dwelling in the fifth sphere instead of the third, I should not be sufficiently in touch with earthly conditions to help you, but I should be helping those on the third sphere. Dwellers in the fifth, sixth and seventh do not hold much personal contact with earth, but are the agents, where agency, in the sense of guiding a nation, or even an individual, is needed. It is right for me to work on the third sphere, because

there are so few there who have such an opportunity for helping on earth. You have made the opportunity for me, but how small a percentage make any opening for us.

C.D.T.: I notice that you have replied to my question in terms of the inner life, whereas I was really wondering what the external difference might be.

Father: Curiously, it is just that internal difference that strikes me most there. I rather lose sense of the external in that atmosphere, lose susceptibility to it, and am not moved by the externals. Yet, I have been there sufficiently often to notice that there is a great difference in outward things also. The higher the sphere the less the number of buildings of a conventional kind. There are fewer houses; indeed, no residences such as we have on the third. People live more in the open, and sleep—no, I should not have said sleep, but take rest in the open. Buildings are there, but these have been erected for some particular purpose, in which colour and shape are used in some instructive sense, sometimes symbolically.

The clothing worn there is of lighter texture than on the third, and presents a greater similarity of appearance, with less expression of individual taste; to those people it is clothing merely. Then the atmosphere is lighter, and I am sure that the inhabitants are fairer on those higher spheres. Some consciousness of the effect of that brighter atmosphere may have given the great artists their idea that angels are fair.

C.D.T.: Can you tell me of the Apostles?

Father: They are with Jesus. He teaches them and they teach others, who in their turn pass it down to others, and so downwards until it comes to those who try to inspire the teachers on earth. Thus, the teaching passes through many intermediaries who present it in terms best suited to the understanding of those whom they teach.

Jesus is the channel, the mouthpiece of God. He is God embodied in a personality. He is the highest point of perfection, so far as personality is concerned, and that toward which we are all tending, or should tend.

C.D.T.: Does the seventh sphere look a solid world, as earth does to us?

Father: That which is there looks as solid as does the room in which you are sitting at this moment. The beauties of nature are reproduced there, but with more colours than you on earth have ever seen. The wonders of the seventh sphere cannot be told; we can only state that even a brief visit there makes us gloriously happy.

C.D.T.: Is there yet more beyond the seventh sphere?

Father: Much more. But that is the highest stage of existence which I have touched. I suppose that millions of years may elapse before we touch any outer spheres of life beyond it.

Father: Looking very far ahead indeed, I know there is a great destiny which awaits us some day, somewhere, somehow. We shall continue to be ourselves, but in a state higher than anything realised upon these spheres. I know that there is a world above and beyond our present one, but I do not seek to know too much until it is given me. When it is necessary for me to know any fresh facts, beyond what is common knowledge here, I am summoned to the highest of our spheres. Just as men can receive inspiration from us, and so obtain light upon matters of which they have no normal experience, so we can go to the fifth or the sixth sphere to share the inspiration which is there received from the seventh. But upon the seventh it is possible to receive inspiration from that higher world which lies beyond and outside these spheres of ours. I am learning many new things now, information which did not come to me during my earlier years here.

(The date of the last paragraph was twenty-two years after my father's passing.)

CHAPTER XXV

ON THE DIFFICULTY OF TRANSMITTING NAMES IN PSYCHIC MESSAGES

FROM my earliest sittings with Mrs. Leonard it became evident that the messages presented marked peculiarity in the matter of proper names. When Fedra first alluded to my father she said, "There is an elderly man with a beard"; then followed an accurate description. Later, in the same sitting, it was remarked, "The initial J comes with him." I naturally asked myself why Fedra had not abbreviated this by stating simply that John D. Thomas was present and wished to speak to me.

During the second sitting my father's study was described and one item was given thus:-

"Near the bureau, but above it, and easily seen when sitting at it, is the picture of a man, elderly, with fine face, a splendid character."

It would have been more simple to say, "A picture of Wesley is above the door." Why this roundabout description? Why this avoidance of names, or the substitution of an initial letter in place of a name? The question became more interesting when I later discovered that names were sometimes given without any apparent difficulty, and that at other times Fedra could write a name in the air, using the medium's finger to trace the letters. Sometimes, after ineffectual efforts to pronounce a name, the first syllable would be given; Fedra would then complain that she could not see the remaining letters, but that they appeared to be, say, six in number.

It became evident that the giving of a name involved the overcoming of some obstacle, and that usually the difficulty, whatever it might be, was too serious to permit of success. This is the experience also of other investigators. There is unquestionably a difficulty in transmitting names through trance mediums, though some give them more successfully than do others.

Readers who have followed my attempt to analyse the methods of trance communication will remember the limitations to free expression. These also affect the transmission of names and so I will touch on them briefly in that connection.

1. The communicator has frequent difficulty in recollecting.

It is the more easy for us to realise this difficulty with memory, because we ourselves are occasionally in a similar situation. We forget a name which we know we ought to be able to recall. We have not forgotten anything else, for our mind pictures the person whose name is eluding us, and we can remember many facts relating to him. We know his profession, his place of residence, and could describe events in which he played a part. Nevertheless, we cannot name him.

I recently found myself unable to recall the name Treadgold. Mental effort failed to bring it into recollection. Presently, it occurred to me that the word silver would in some way serve as an aid. For some moments I tried to follow this clue, but failed to recover the name. Then I turned my thoughts in other directions and shortly after the name Treadgold came into my mind.

Such lapses of memory are common, and when we are inconvenienced by inability to speak the required name, we may have recourse to description in order to convey the identity of the person in question. This is exactly what we find happening so often in trance messages; someone is described and his identity further indicated by various remarks until the sitter realises who is intended. The communicator, like ourselves, finds that personal names are less easily recalled than are scenes and incidents. One such remarked to me, "Yes, I remember it, but not here and now."

2. The communicator cannot always make the control understand his meaning, and is unable to convey the sound of a name.

I use the word sound advisedly; for Fedra is able on occasion to receive the communicator's thought in a way which produces to her the effect of sound. At such times she appears to speak messages verbatim, as if repeating what is dictated to her. This dictation method always reaches a high degree of accuracy, and I realise that I am receiving, not merely the communicator's thoughts, but his diction. When, however, Fedra receives only the general import of a message and transmits it in her own words the level of accuracy is much lower.

But even during the dictation method there is frequent difficulty with names and other words which receive no assistance from the context. As Etta once remarked, "sending words to Fedra is more difficult than sending ideas." Hypnotic experiment illustrates this point. M. Emil Boirac tells us that while he was experimenting with a hypnotised subject a doctor entered the room. Boirac then took the patient's hand and asked him to say the doctor's name, thinking of it himself meanwhile. Soon the patient remarked, "I cannot distinguish it very well, it seems to me that I hear Ort, Ort, Ort." As this was correct for the final syllable Boirac said, "Listen attentively. I will think one after another the two syllables of his name. Here is the first.... Here is the second.... Now? The man replied, "I am not sure if I heard correctly. It seemed to me the first syllable was Du-, and the second -sort." The doctor's name was Dussort. (Psychic Science, Boirac, p. 291.)

I think it must be in just such a way that Fedra hears the communicator while he concentrates upon a name. That it should be difficult to hear correctly is not surprising; with the telephone we often have similar trouble.

Picture a communicator wishing to convey a name to Fedra, and finding that his telepathy, or perhaps her receptivity, is at fault. What is he to do? Insistent effort on his part does not help matters; he must either renounce the attempt, or fall back upon an indirect way of conveying his meaning.

One cannot sometimes get the names right. If I wish to speak about a man named Meadow, I may try that name and find that Meadow is not spoken rightly by Feda. So I then wait and try to insert the idea of a green field, connecting with it the idea of the man described. We always try for a definite thing which will tell you exactly what we mean; but, if unable to do that, we have to get as near to it as we can. Sometimes we have to depend upon slender links in giving you the clue."

So said my father while explaining his method of transmission, and on looking through notes of earlier sittings, I discovered many instances of these more or less slender links. Here is one:-

"The word Zion occurs much near page 122."

This was part of a book test, and I discovered that although there was no mention of Zion, the name Jerusalem appeared many times on the pages indicated. When I pointed out this discrepancy later, my father replied, "Zion was the approximate word."

3. The control is sometimes unable to make the medium speak the required words.

Here are quotations which illustrate this: the first is a remark made by my sister while in direct control.

"Is it not strange that I cannot say my husband's name? I can feel it, but cannot say it; that is, I cannot get it spoken. I get it on the surface, so to speak, but cannot get it into the medium's mind."

My mother then asked her if she meant Whit, which was my sister's customary abbreviation for her husband's name Whitfield. She replied:-

"Oh, you should not have told me that. I have been trying to say it and should have succeeded in time."

Her expostulation at having the name given away, just when she had hoped to succeed in getting it spoken, was most striking. Some four months later, Etta had occasion to use this name, but only succeeded in making the medium say, Wh-, Whi-, Wht-.

My father once said, while controlling:-

"Do you remember Bertha? She wished to be remembered to-"

As he paused without giving any name, I asked if the message was for me. He replied:-

"Only to someone whom you know. I can remember the name, but cannot say it. It is a most peculiar situation. I got out the name Bertha suddenly, or could not have done it."

On another occasion Etta, failing to pronounce a name, remarked:-

"The more I try to think it on, the less can I get it on. I am expressing myself in a peculiar way, and it is the medium's power of expression which I cannot control. One may get a word into her mind and yet be unable to make her express it. Because it is in the mind it does not follow that her brain will take it. Unless the ideas in the mind are tapped on to the actual brain one cannot express them; like a typewriter when you think words, but unless you tap the right keys you will not get the letters. You can place your finger on the right key, but unless you tap it there is no expression. The brain takes or does not take from the mind.

"Her brain is like a key-board, automatically responsive to us, but often in a wrong way; we wish to press the keys, to put expression through, but if we try too much for a certain word the keys become stiff with-say apprehension. If in painting one stiffens the muscles when not wishing to do so, then anxiety makes it worse; just so with words. When I cannot get them I pretend to forget and thus relieve the tension, and the 'key' then relapses into its ordinary condition. Then sometimes, a little later, that required word will come. On occasions I might be unable to say my name here. Strange, but it is the human instrument which makes it so difficult. If only a mechanical one could be made! But mind is the bridge between the two worlds."

My father once commenced his controlling by an unsuccessful attempt to speak a name. He said:-

"SerIn-Ser-Cur. No, I have not given it correctly, yet. Sarah; it is not Sarah, but the first part is pronounced similarly to the start of Sarah although not spelled so. Cer-"

At this point he realised it was useless to continue the effort, and proceeded to speak of other things.

Despite the difficulties, my father and sister achieve a fair degree of success with names.

My father once made a successful attempt to write while in control. He asked for my writing pad and pencil and these were placed in the medium's hand. During a few minutes' silence the hand wrote slowly and with apparent difficulty, then the pad was handed back to me. I found that the writing was in three different styles, none of which bore any resemblance to my father's; nor was there any recognisable similarity with Mrs. Leonard's handwriting. The pad now bore nine names and one initial. My father remarked that he had previously informed Etta of his intention to try this experiment and she had expressed the opinion that he would forget the names

before he could get them written. He then made appropriate remarks about several of the names, indicating knowledge of their inter-relation. We found that he had coupled together Mary and P, also Tom and Lizzie; these represented married couples in whom both he and we had been particularly interested. Three other names were those of our relations. Another was quite appropriate, although we were uncertain to whom it was intended to refer. Only two were illegible. The chief interest of this experiment lay in the fact that the names were written in less time than they could have been transmitted verbally, either through Feda or during personal control.

I notice that Feda can more easily catch a first syllable than the whole name. Sometimes she seems to see the initial letter, which is said to be pictured for her by the communicator. Again, she will say that such-and-such a letter "comes up" with the person whose name she has not yet caught. Her explanation is that, while this is often due to a definite attempt to give the letter by itself, at other times she only catches the first letter, although the complete name is being attempted. Feda will sometimes give correctly the first and the last letters of a name. At other times she can tell correctly the number of syllables in a long name, as well as its initial letter, and yet fail to ascertain the name itself.

An examination of failures is sometimes instructive. Here are instances where Feda failed to transmit the name, and yet in each case the attempt, context, or subsequent description made it evident.

One who had been a schoolmaster at Kenley, and whose favourite study had been Greek, was trying to introduce those two words. Feda said:-

"G-, Gre-. He says it is something you can maneuver. Grek, Greg, Greeg. It is something not always easily managed, not easy to do. Not everybody would like it, it is a matter of taste. Some want to get out of doing it, to escape from it. Ke-, Ken-, Ker-, Ken-. Now he returns to that word again; he is anxious to give it, Greg, Grek, and Kende. Feda cannot get it right. The two words are connected."

I was once accompanied by a lady whose son had died in the midst of a brilliant political career. He spoke about his family, and made special allusion to one whom his mother easily recognised as her son's widow. Veiling this recognition, she inquired:-

"What relation is this lady to him?"

Feda then answered:-

"'Not a sister,' he says when Feda asks him, and not his mother, nor an aunt, nor a cousin; it is someone close, very closely to do with him and his children. So Feda guesses he means his wife."

It was somewhat puzzling for the mother to receive so indirect a reply to her simple question, but I think it was precisely the direct question which made the one word impossible. The ingenious elimination of other near relationships provided an answer, although not in the form anticipated.

Just as one man hears better than another, so do some controls catch the meaning of a communicator with more ease and accuracy than do others. We are dealing, not with machines, but with individuals, and they are not all capable of the same efficiency.

There are some methods of psychic communication which favour accuracy in obtaining names. One of these is the spelling of words by tilts of a table, or some similar contrivance. Here the communicator dispenses with the control and (if there be sufficient psychic force available) directs the tilting himself. Supposing he can tilt the table freely while we call over the alphabet, then, if he remembers the name required, he will spell it. This method is slow and cumbrous, but it can be very effective. Names which could not be put through during trance sittings, will often be given in this way. The communicator may not always succeed, even when in full control of the table's movements, because his recollection may fail him. In that case we cannot assist him. But if he becomes confused during the spelling, we can suggest that he recommence the word, and with patience it will be completed.

Two facts, familiar to experienced investigators, are instructive:-

Names which fail to be given by one method can be accurately given through another.

Names which could not be given through one medium will be given through another.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE PLACE AND CONDITION OF THE UNPROGRESSED

PERSONAL character stands supreme among the factors which, here on earth, influence success or failure, happiness or misery. The deepest intuitions of mankind intimate that character and its results persist beyond death.

But what form does retribution take in the hereafter?

Terrible pictures have been drawn of the fate awaiting the impenitent. These forecasts have always been influenced by the customary punishments in vogue at the period of their inception. The more ancient were sketched in fiercely lurid colours; the more modern tend to soften those crude conceptions of vindictiveness and cruelty, and to suggest mental substitutes for bodily torture. There is, however, no general agreement upon the nature of future punishment. Heated controversy continues as to whether it is remedial or vindictive, temporary or of perpetual duration.

It is therefore with peculiar interest that we listen to those who, by observation or by experience, are able to tell us what happens in the hereafter to those who misuse the opportunities of earth.

C.D.T.: When a person of evil character passes over, has he around him the same things which surround you?

Etta: No; all is different for him because he is in a totally different place. There are two places, or spheres, below ours. The definitely evil go to the lower of them. To the other go the weak and selfish who have done harm to others through lack of effort to do right, rather than of set purpose to do evil.

C.D.T.: Have those two places higher and lower stages or degrees?

Etta: Yes; I should think there must be several, because there are so many degrees of wickedness. There is a difference between a habit, and an impulse or occasional wickedness. The people most punished by earthly laws are those who indulge in occasional wickedness; for the people who are wicked all the time are, as a rule, able to protect themselves. But when they come here they take their true places. Among our activities there is one special work in which experienced people engage; they visit the lowest spheres, seeking to make the residents realise that there is a sphere above their own. Just as it is difficult to make some on earth understand that there is a world beyond, so is it with those in the lower realms who do not credit the existence of anything higher. But all will come upward at length. I have never heard of any being annihilated. There is hope for every one. The very worst of criminals can rise. When first reaching the other side they think that theirs is the only place. They cannot even see us when we visit them. I am aware that there is an essential

difference between my body and that of a person on the lower sphere. My body is so etherialised that it is almost as invisible to those people as it is to you, and the mental barriers set up by those unhappy souls preclude them at first from even sensing my presence.

C.D.T.: What do you find corresponding to our ideas of "The judgment to Come?"

Etta: "The judgment to Come" consists in being able to see ourselves as we are, and by no stretch of imagination being able to avoid seeing it. It is a judgment of God on us through our higher selves.

On earth even the best are subconsciously avoiding things, or trying to think things are slightly other than they really are. But when one comes here, one enters into the judgment directly one becomes conscious; and no other person could be so severe or just a judge of us as we ourselves can be when facing the truth. For many it is a terrible hour.

I am glad that you say "Judgment" rather than "Punishment" or "Reckoning"; for "Judgment" is the right word. Directly one has realised how, where, and why one was wrong, there is an instinctive feeling that one must work it out.

It is sometimes very appalling, this time of realisation; especially when a soul has been pampered or flattered by loving but mistaken friends into thinking himself right when he is wrong. It is an awakening indeed; judgment and awakening are synonymous here. One then sees and knows, and cannot avoid knowing.

Although this is, to many, a terrible experience, yet running through it is a vein of hope, a feeling of certainty that one will be able to overcome and work it all out. That gives courage. Were this not so, one might be overwhelmed when realising the truth. But there is always hope, the opportunity for recovering lost ground. And this way of recovery is in helping others who have exactly similar limitations, difficulties, or vices.

C.D.T.: Here I inquire if this help is given to those still on earth?

Etta: Yes, and also to those on the lower spheres and less developed planes of consciousness here.

We greatly wish it were understood on earth that nothing in the way of punishment is forced upon one here.

C.D.T.: But what happens to bring it to the notice of an evil-doer?

Ella: Take an extreme case, one upon the lowest sphere to which human life can go, say a man who has been very cruel, thoughtless and selfish-and selfishness is seen in its true light here-say a wealthy man who, by his vices, brought suffering and even

sin into the lives of others. While he was on earth he was treated with some toleration on account of his riches, or his position, or his abilities. Sometimes wealth and position cover a multitude of sins. But on coming here he passes to that plane and place to which he belongs because of what he really is, without any reference to what he appeared to be, or desired to be thought. Now, that means that he will find himself surrounded entirely by those who have the same sins, vices, and limitations as himself; there will be a collective condition resulting. This is very different from his environment on earth, where his evils were to some extent in isolation, because he was surrounded by a family of fairly good people; their presence lightened the mental atmosphere and mitigated the condition around the one evil life. How often such a one is tolerated for the sake of the family, and his sins more or less ignored. But here it is like to like; therefore, he finds himself with no other friends, and no one else near him, save those who are exactly like himself. The whole atmosphere and the very scenery of the place is tinted with the hopeless drabs and grays of their mental and spiritual outlook. How truly poets and the great writers have symbolised the darkness of evil, the grayness of misery. I have visited it and I have seen the grayness, I have seen the darkness. It surpasses that known on earth.

The wakening comes slowly, very slowly to such people; and, therefore, that which I shall term judgment comes slowly. At first there is felt a resentment at being in such a condition; this is followed by bitter disappointment at being unable to buy, or to enforce, better conditions. Then, when they realise that they cannot command different surroundings, they begin to wonder why.

You can understand how each of these people becomes an object-lesson to the others, since each one is a reflection of the others.

When they begin to realise that there is something wrong, visitors come to them from the higher spheres to point out to them that there are higher and happier spheres to which they can go when they have risen above their lower selves. This is exactly like sending missions to the heathen. As you know, the heathen do not immediately, nor always, believe what the missionaries say. And our visitors are not believed at once; we may go there many times before making any impression on them.

But eventually the sense of contrast begins to act, and into the mind of one of them will come the question, "Why is it that this man or woman is so different from us? Why are they able to go away from this miserable place and then return when they choose? How is it that they speak to us with love, sympathy and hope, when all others here are thinking only of themselves?" When that seed commences to germinate it brings the realisation, "I am with these miserable people because I am of them, in fact, because I am like them." When that happens, there comes the desire to be different. Then follows the awakening of which I have spoken. It brings that bitterness and remorse which is the greatest and most terrible punishment man

can have. No torture which another can inflict is so terrible as the remorse which one's own best self inflicts when enlightenment comes.

That process of awakening may have taken a long time. But there are others, fairly good people, who have faults, and who have made mistakes; with these the wakening and "judgment" comes very quickly.

In the early years of my ministry I was acquainted with a man of dominating personality who had exerted considerable influence in his time. He was a remarkably successful political speaker and uniformly expressed himself with vigour and lucidity. Some years after his death he made himself known to me in the course of my usual sittings. His messages were clear-cut and came through with an ease rarely achieved by those whose powers of expression are meagre.

After giving an ingenious and conclusive proof of his identity, he proceeded to describe those traits in his former character which he had since found reason to regret. He said:-

"I used to have great differences of opinion with people; some of my opinions were right and some were wrong. Many of my ideas, although I could not get them worked out, were on sound foundations. But I ought to have taken a longer vision. I was hemmed in by conditions which were not helpful. I do not excuse myself; but with a crowd of unhelpful surroundings hemming one in it is difficult to steer one's way out, especially when they are further complicated by financial considerations. It is most interesting to speak with you through this channel; for, had I known of this subject while on earth, I should have been a different man. Even the coarsest form of Spiritualism would have helped me where the higher presentations of spirituality left me cold. My disposition would have been more attuned to it.

"When on earth I used to push my way among people; I could push everything in front of me. I got the most out of people and gave the least possible in return. I used to grind them.

"Here I have tried to work that out, and have only just reached the third sphere by much effort. On coming into this life my place was a low one, because my spirituality, so long dormant, was not attuned to anything higher. My first surroundings may be likened to some of the dull, uninteresting towns in the midland or north of England with their stretches of barren fields around and small rows of jerry-built houses. My companions were uninteresting and unintelligent people. Many of these had been wealthy when on earth, but it is not that which counts on coming over here. When the soul has been starved of all spiritual food one has to begin very low down. Indeed, there is little wish for anything higher; it is only when the soul becomes dissatisfied with the almost mundane things of those lower spheres that it, almost automatically, raises itself to higher places. The very act of aspiration, of wishing something better for the soul's sake alone, causes one to rise.

"On reaching the next sphere my surroundings were a degree better, for there were opportunities for more intellectual and spiritual development. There I found halls and schools where study was encouraged, and helpers came who did not coerce, but who told us of the more beautiful regions above. Yet, although they can tell of those realms, and can arouse the wish to reach them, one has to work out the stupidities and follies and the errors of evil done, whether consciously or unconsciously, during life on earth. And this is accomplished by hard work for others, while forgetting self entirely; building houses and making the less beautiful objects required there, aiding those newly arrived, and, generally, in effacing self while recollecting one's truest needs. In thus living more fully for others one moves upward and at length attains the third sphere where none but the enlightened are found.

"On this third sphere are those who on earth lived exemplary lives, and also those who, on lower planes, have awakened to the realisation of higher things than those connected with self and ambition. Some who axe here with me passed quickly to this elevation, while I had to work through the lower regions and have only lately reached it. For I was almost an unborn soul when I left earth, and so had to begin upon the lowest rungs of the ladder."

In harmony with the foregoing are my father's explanations. A selection from these completes this chapter.

C.D.T.: Do relations meet quickly on arrival there?

Father: Close friends meet quickly, if upon the same sphere. But if one is on a lower sphere, his friends may not know of his arrival there. Then, again, some are better left alone for a while. I knew of an instance where a man's friends did not know of his having passed over until the widow asked about him. Even then they could not approach him; he was far down in the regions of the second sphere. I have been engaged in helping those in the lower regions, and I notice that they work things out for themselves very slowly; but the lessons of experience are effective.

My father remarks that there is a very literal sense in which one may "lay up treasure in heaven"; that beautiful objects, created on earth and expressing the soul of their author, have an imperishable counterpart which finds a place on the third sphere. But that nothing ugly or vile finds place there; such things gravitate to the spheres below.

"Whatever one does or thinks is reproduced in some form. That which the hand does, the soul had a share in, and therefore there exists an etheric counterpart."

Continuing this subject in its bearing upon life in the underworld, my father said:-

"There is an interesting aspect of this, but one difficult to explain. Such objects are not all in existence at the same time, not in complete existence-I cannot find the word I need-let us suppose that a man painted an evil picture twenty years ago; its

etheric duplicate would not have been in actual existence all that time. Yet, when he passed over, he would automatically recreate that picture, it would be in harmony with the conditions in which he then found himself. How shall I describe its existence in the meantime? To simplify the explanation we will say that it existed in his thought.

"But during the interval between creating that picture and his passing, the artist might become a changed man and incapable of producing such a picture. In that case he would not go to the sphere Where such objects could be recreated. The penitent and changed man could not go to the low sphere; but if one qualifies for the low sphere he will find his works there and will live with them again.

"I do not say that he will there be tempted by his former sin, but that he will be surrounded by evidences, reminders of it, until he wearies at the sight. On earth the sin is gilded, but there it is seen ugly, naked and unattractive.

"There is more to add. The man we have described, by way of illustration, might decide to destroy his objectionable picture from motives of policy or fear. But if it should be destroyed for such reasons merely, it is not really destroyed at all; it still exists in all its details, and he will find it after his passing over. But should he feel remorse for having created such a work, he is destroying it with his soul. Soul force was used in creating his picture and nothing but his soul force can permanently destroy it. He cannot effectually destroy his picture for any mere earthly reason, such as public opinion; its destruction is only achieved by an honest loathing of his soul for that which is wrong.

Here I remarked that, if this were so, it were well that the fact should be made widely known.

Father: We are endeavouring to let it be known. The first step is to make clear that there is another world. Many a man does not know that he has a soul. He knows his body and brain, he does not quite know what his mind may be, and his soul he does not know at all. But were he once made certain that he lives on after physical death he would know his soul's reality. Once assured of that, he would learn many things of vital value to him.

Shortly after this conversation I sought to elicit further reference to the result after death of ill deeds committed here. My question was phrased thus:-

"What recompense does the bully meet with; one who loved to exert physical violence on others? Will he be surrounded by those who find pleasure in treating him in a similar way?"

It may be of interest to record that I expected an answer in the affirmative, and was quite unprepared for the reply given.

Father: He will meet with no physical violence, but with a corresponding extreme of mental violence. On those low planes one would feel the current of such thoughts as if receiving an actual blow on earth.

C.D.T.: Does that type of man retain his wish for evil, or, at least, the habit of thought which led to evil here?

Father: A man's will is not so prominent on the lower spheres as it was when he lived on earth. God gave man freewill in the physical body, but there is less volition in wrong-doers on the other side. There, the human will is more under the divine influence and there is less temptation to evil. Those on the lower spheres have less freedom of will than we have on the higher spheres. By using the will amiss while on earth its power has been limited; there is less freedom in using it until progress has been made.

A man may continue for a long time in the same frame of mind as when he left earth. He does not become worse, however. He sees his sins reflected in others.

C.D.T.: Do you consider that there is any likelihood of a man continuing to resist the divine will interminably?

Father: I do not think so.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE INFLUENCE OF THE SITTER

THE sitter is an important factor in psychic communication; his physical condition and his mental attitude react upon the medium and control. Should he be ill or weary there is small likelihood of a good sitting. Anyone who is overwhelmed by grief makes communication difficult, though emotion which is under control may assist.

I am not aware that a sceptical attitude of mind makes any appreciable difference, so long as the manner is civil, kindly and tactful, and the sitter is careful to speak as he would if conversing with visible communicators. Anyone who imagines that the control may be a "secondary personality" of the medium, and the communicators merely dramatisations of the mind, would be well advised to take the speakers at their own valuation; at least, so long as the sitting lasts. By so doing he gives them opportunity to prove their identity. During the sitting it is essential to remain receptive; indeed, if justice is to be done to the occasion, careful notes should be made of all that is said. Some of the best evidence is often discovered when examining such records afterwards.

Tension of interest causes no obstruction while one remains passive. But to ply the communicator with a series of questions, or to be ardently expecting or wishing for some particular name or subject, makes, as we have seen, a confusion of the mental atmosphere which may baffle the speaker and obstruct the passage of his thought to the control.

Should the sitting drag, one can sometimes impart fresh vivacity by introducing a new topic, either by question or by an expression of interest or curiosity.

My father said on one occasion: -

We never know when coming here that our prepared material will be available. Some of the best we have given had not been prepared. Conversation with us may fit in and give ground upon which we can base what we have to give. Those whom Feda terms 'deaf and dumb sitters' are unlikely to provide good groundwork. Sitters should talk with us in an ordinary manner, without giving away information. Such talk helps us. When first I came here I used to give plentiful evidence of identity; you did not give things away, but you used to talk of the pleasure it gave you."

Sudden questions may be difficult to meet under ordinary conditions of life, and they often create confusion at a sitting.

My father has said

"The things we give voluntarily are usually the best. We know what we can give; but when asked to supplement it, in response to questions, we have to conform to your

conditions. It is like having to pour our thoughts into moulds which you prepare and which are not our moulds. It is difficult to explain; but, as a rule, it is best that you should take what we can give. Questions are difficult in a peculiar way. As you are aware, we can often tell you things far more difficult than those for which you ask. In using the term 'moulds' I mean a form of words and selection of thoughts."

And my sister said once:-

It is difficult to explain, but the expectation by you of some particular thing seems to impinge on some very delicate thought-fabric which we are weaving, and spoils it, so that we cannot gather together its threads in order. They become knotted up. So the advice is, keep passive, and do not think of any particular person or thing; that will prevent your thought impinging on ours. Everything to do with our thought is much more delicate and subtle than yours; therefore, our thought should impinge on yours and not vice versa. Father says that it would not be wise to rub canvas upon the paints; it has to be done the other way round. The book and newspaper tests were comparatively easy to give, because you could not mentally influence what we were transmitting."

Some friends of mine had occasionally taken their daughter Joyce to share their sittings with Mrs. Leonard. My sister Etta was interested in Joyce's approaching marriage and had referred to her in a recent sitting. One day, while on my way to Mrs. Leonard's house in Hertfordshire, I saw Joyce in the train and travelled with her. The incident then passed out of my thought until Etta, during Feda's control made a very definite statement that I had just seen someone in whom both she and I were interested. She proceeded to elaborate until there needed only the addition of the name Joyce to complete the evidence of her knowledge of our meeting that morning. I therefore pressed for the name, and when Etta said that this was beyond her power, I inquired where the difficulty lay. "Partly in you and partly in Feda," she answered. "Then, if I thought of something else, say the moon," I asked, "would it make a better chance of your giving the name?" Etta said, "Do so, and I'll try later on to give it." So I put it from my mind, and waited to write notes of whatever might come next; and these words were then slowly spoken: "I hope it will help Joyce."

My readers will have gathered that there is a purpose underlying the characteristic interruptions and little remarks which Feda makes. They are calculated to break the tense concentration of the sitter's mind. Something similar is found in group sittings where singing or light conversation is asked for; those who complain that this causes waste of time, or that it is in bad taste, are unaware that they are being helped to hold the easy mental attitude without which the whole purpose of the sitting may be defeated.

Again, it is useless to sit with a closed mind, watching for nothing but a confirmation of prejudice. This attitude, especially with people of forceful and positive mentality, destroys the delicate thought-fabric essential to communication.

I quote from my records the following fragment of conversation:-

C.D.T.: Can you tell me, Fedra, how you distinguish between thoughts coming from the communicator, and those in the sitter's mind?

Fedra: It is a different feeling altogether, very different. Have trained myself to lean towards the communicator and to shut off the sitter. Fedra does not like sitters to be in front of the medium, but likes to have the communicator in front. I concentrate on just that place and so shut off other places. Your father says, "Even that would not prevent Fedra getting a thought and not knowing it was from the sitter, if the latter happened to be willing something very strongly. A sitter might will his thought fifty times and miss, but Fedra might accidentally take it the fifty-first time."

C.D.T.: And would not Fedra realise from whom it came?

Fedra: He says, not unless she were very careful and on the watch for interference.

Fedra then confided to me an experience which related to a strong-minded lady who held certain ideas so firmly as to make it impossible for her husband, who was communicating, to state the contrary. He ceased communicating to save unavoidably misleading her. In this incident of the positively-minded lady we see how easily strong prepossessions can warp the truth.

Fedra: Your father says, "It seems to me that only a certain portion of the sensitised region here at a sitting can be used and filled at once. If you fill and use it, then we cannot. It is as if we had canvas and paint, but you seized them and started to paint something you wished pictured. Then, we are foiled. We should have to scrape off or paint over what you had put there. I have come to realise that only lately." (Note.-This was in our eleventh year of sitting.)

He says it is like double exposure; it does not help when two impressions are on the same plate. There is confusion. It does not do for you, as a sitter, to fill the sensitised area with the impressions of what you wish.

I say nothing of those who designedly make false statements to the control except that they may find reason to recall the proverb: A fool is answered according to his folly."

Let me, in concluding this chapter, give a quotation which embodies much which a sitter needs to know:-

"It is easier for us to read your mind when away from here than it would be during a sitting. It is supposed by some that a medium reads the mind of the sitter; but one has only to experiment to discover how difficult it is for us to answer questions. We can sail along, giving details quite unknown to you; but if you suddenly ask a simple

question which comes into your mind, it presents a difficulty to us. Now, if we were reading your mind there would not be that difficulty.

"During a sitting we are bent on keeping intact the link between ourselves and the control; for if we lost it through giving too much attention to you, it would be difficult to regain. It is as a thread which will stretch a little, but if taken round you as well as the medium, it would break. A question often breaks the thread of our thought and we have to drop the topic. We can often create another and substitute it for the other quite quickly. We do not mind your asking questions, because we know that, if we do not take them up, you will understand that there was a reason. But some sitters would feel distressed and disappointed, which makes it hard for their communicator. Our feeling of absolute ease with you makes it possible for us to do our best. We know you will not be distressed if we cannot do what you ask at some particular moment."

Toward the close of my tenth year of investigation I remarked to my father while he was controlling:-

"I have been studying afresh the difficulties of communication, all I have noticed here, and all that you have told me of the processes involved in giving your messages. How different is the reality from my first ideas of it; for then I pictured you coming as a shining presence and talking with perfect freedom to Feda."

He replied:-

"I think it will be a long while before communication becomes as easy as you pictured it. But it should grow much easier when we have a more perfect type of medium and of sitter; people who can attune their mind to the requisite degree."

CHAPTER XXVIII

"WHERE I AM THERE SHALL ALSO MY SERVANT BE."

Words of Jesus recorded in John xii. 26.

Father: On passing from earth I realised my expectation of feeling a consciousness of God. One's God-consciousness is increased; it is clearer and He seems nearer, as I had anticipated—a part of Him, a small part.

C.D.T.: Did you see Our Lord as soon and as easily as you had expected?

Father: Not as soon, nor as easily, but yet as I had expected to see Him. One had to prepare; it is always so. We are, however, more conscious of Him at all times than when on earth. Those visits to the seventh sphere are most wonderful; more so than the physical brain could imagine. Yet, although so wonderful, it does not surprise; for one feels as if having been waiting for it all one's life, as if it were the natural consummation of all one's aspirations and endeavours, both while on earth and there.

When mentioning that my father and sister converse with me from the other side of death, I am sometimes asked whether they say that they have seen Jesus Christ. The following is an answer to that question. Although my notes are not absolutely verbatim, they embody many of the actual phrases used, and reproduce in correct outline the gist of the narration.

But what cannot be reproduced is the intensity and thrill with which my father and sister told their experience. It was surcharged with deep emotion. The sentences recording their actual sight of Our Lord were given very slowly, a pause between each word, and with utmost reverence and impressiveness. I do not recall having heard anything which touched so high a level of intensity and spiritual joy. It was inimitable; only a faint echo of its reality can be conveyed by the printed page.

Father: Etta and I have been to the seventh sphere. I do not like the word "sphere" and should prefer to say "condition," but suppose we must call it "sphere" in the absence of any term which would be better understood. Can I explain to you that this seventh is the outermost sphere, or condition, of what we call our world? Life there is realised more impersonally; I mean that one's whole work and activity on that sphere would be solely for the good of others. There would be no personal bias there; selfish aims or ambitions would be impossible.

It is there that Our Lord is present in a personal or individual sense, manifesting in a form that responds to one's finite ideas of Him, a form that one can see and touch.

I think I have previously explained that on my own sphere I can be conscious of Him in a way that is much surer and closer than yours. May I illustrate the difference by

saying that you can observe a fire and know that it is a fire, although you are far away from it. Whereas we, being much nearer, are able to feel its warmth, in addition to seeing its glow. Men on earth do not, save in rare exceptions, see Him with the eye, or hear Him with the ear; you are dependent for your consciousness of Him upon the higher perceptive powers, which you are not at all times able to use. But we, on the other hand, can realise Him at any time by hearing or by visualisation. We enjoy greater powers of perception.

C.D.T.: Do you mean that you can picture Jesus to yourself? Or is it that you actually obtain a clairvoyant glimpse of Him and observe what He may be doing at the moment?

Father: "Clairvoyant vision" would correctly describe it. I am able to see what He is doing at the moment. Many persons on earth have the ability to obtain occasional glimpses of us. But we have the advantage of seeing those above us whenever we so desire. Were about to engage in difficult work, say a mission of help to those on a lower sphere, I should first visualise Our Lord, and draw to myself actual power through consciousness of Him. As you draw strength in prayer, so do we continually draw much greater strength from our realisation of Him. Etta wishes to add something to that.

Etta: Our surroundings aid us in this easier realisation of Our Lord. On earth, one was hampered by distractions and anxieties, not always selfish ones, but thoughts and difficulties about others, as well as personal perplexities. But here, where we now are, we can see our way so much more easily and clearly. When I visualise Our Lord there seems to come an actual light, like a search-light or something of that kind, and this shines into my mind, illuminating anything that might have perplexed or seemed difficult to me. And that which I have alluded to as a light comes to me whenever I visualise Our Lord's face, or call to mind his voice or touch. Whenever we do this we seem to attract the light which illuminates every difficulty and everything we have to do.

C.D.T.: Are you able to describe what you saw when on the seventh sphere?

Father: After arriving there we found ourselves moving with a multitude which converged from all directions towards one point. Neither Etta nor I knew why we set our faces in that direction, we simply felt impelled. Presently we noticed that one and another stopped; we learnt later that they had been able to feel, see, and hear Our Lord without moving nearer; for realisation no longer depended on, what you would understand by, measurements of distance.

And then, we saw Him too. When saying, "I saw Him" I am speaking in the same sense as that in which you would use the words if telling me that you had seen some friend in your house. I saw his face, his hair, his form. Pictures on earth have not described Him very accurately. Or perhaps it is that his spiritual body so far surpasses anything that was possible to his more limited body on earth. It is

indescribable; for it contains and reflects the power, and the beauty, and the love of Our Heavenly Father. Words convey but little to you when I say that his features are beautiful. A great majesty, together with great sweetness and humility, radiate from Him, as a light shining through a globe.*

Etta: You might have expected that we should bow, or fall upon our knees. But I did not want to do that, I wanted to look up; the feeling was to lift myself to Him. To kneel, to bow the head, is fitting while on earth. But we felt as the flowers may feel which turn towards the sun, instinctively upward to the sun.

He spoke.... That which He said I am unable to repeat here. I can only tell you that what He said would help me, that its recollection would remain within me for all eternity, even if I never saw or heard Him in that way again. Try to recall those brief flashes, coming at rare intervals on earth, of complete consciousness of good, of everything being just as it should be. Well, I now had that complete realisation of a goodness, therefore of God, in everything. This experience came to me through Him, through that spiritual body of Our Lord which I was seeing and hearing with my actual senses, in the same way that I see father. I then felt that I was able to symbolise or interpret God in everything around me, and not only there, but even in the things of earth. I felt during those moments as if I understood everything; as if a spirit of life, flowing through Jesus to me, explained even ugliness and sin, as well as beauty and goodness. I felt only hope and ultimate good for everything.... Even now, under these very different conditions, I can feel the glow of that wonderful presence, that revelation. It was, indeed, a complete realisation. The trouble on earth is just the lack of this, the absence of a complete realisation of God under any and every circumstance. Here we feel that at all times; but on this occasion we realised it in a different way, in a more personal sense.

** In the above description Feda seemed to experience considerable difficulty and made frequent pauses. The words used to assert the personal sight of Our Lord were given one by one, very slowly, and with great reverence and impressiveness.*

Among those present were many of the great and outstanding who passed through their earth experience long ago...the Apostles and Mary...those of whom we had read and thought. You would think it so wonderful to actually see them that you might scarcely know where you were. Well, it is, and yet it is not. Although so wonderful it did not seem at all strange to me; for, as you well know, these great spirits had been living realities to me for years before I left earth. I had thought of them, and had wondered about them. Hence, I had come to know them subconsciously. When people whom you have never seen on earth live in your imagination, you become subconsciously prepared for meeting them in reality. And that is why on each occasion when I have seen Our Lord, even including the first time, and when I saw the Apostles, and Mary, I felt to be meeting in a new way those whom, in another way, I had often met before.

When you think of me, and when you remember what I thought of things-and you knew partly, more than the others did-you can imagine what this experience means to me, and may even understand why it has not seemed strange.

When we returned to our own sphere it did not seem a going back, but a going forward. Even our home looked different to us, the very atmosphere seemed to have grown brighter, and our movements lighter. Everything seemed to have taken on an additional power and joy from our wonderful experience.

Then we came straight to you. While on my own sphere I had thought that you might catch the radiance from us when we came near you. But on coming I found it was not so. The conditions of earth life make it difficult for you to catch my joy, and it is impossible for me to convey to you any clear impression of it, seeing that I have to limit myself to words alone.

CHAPTER XXIX

SOUL AND SPIRIT

WHEN we had reached the stage of easy conversation in these trance sittings, and had dealt exhaustively with the evidential side of the communications, I took opportunity to ask my father and sister if they now knew more about man's nature than was common knowledge on earth. Their talks upon soul and spirit were resumed from time to time. I have selected typical extracts which outline the substance of the teaching given.

It was necessary at the outset to agree upon the meaning of the terms used. We decided to call the highest within man, "spirit," and to use the word "soul" for the ego, or self. By the "etheric body" is meant that vehicle of the soul which interpenetrates the mortal body and survives death. (In Theosophical literature this term is used in a somewhat different sense). The words "subliminal" and "subconscious" refer to unconscious mental activity.

Let us first see what was said of the soul and its invisible body. Here are some quotations from my father:-

"The soul is the child of spirit and body.... For the purpose of creating individual man, a part of God, Spirit, is divorced from God and allies itself with a physical body-"

"Personality is a child of the spirit and the body, born by Spirit coming into contact with a physical body. Universal Spirit is of course impersonal, or non-personal might be the better word. A detached part of this Universal Spirit, attaching itself to a new physical organism, gradually becomes personal through contact with conditions which you term 'Life.' Some develop personality more quickly than do others. Backward children are the less developed personalities."

"Some people fear that they will be less complete when out of the body than they now are while within it. The physical body seems so essential; the idea of being detached from it gives them the feeling of loss, or being less well off than before. This is quite a wrong idea. The unseen body, which exists all the time you are in the physical body, has much greater power when set free. It has not much power while within the physical body, because personality then functions in the physical, and not in the invisible one, save in sleep. During moments of inspiration or prayer one functions for a moment consciously in the spiritual body. During more than 11 3/4 out of 12 waking hours one is in the physical condition. When personality and soul are freed from the physical, one is immediately in a similar body, but one which has indeed added powers of feeling, of appreciation, and even of movement."

"All your mind is not in, or acting upon, your brain at once. You have your conscious and subconscious mind; that which is outside and registers memory is the subconscious. By 'outside' I mean something not operating in the brain at the

moment. Conscious mind is that which operates in the brain at the moment. Directly it has finished, it naturally passes back into the subconscious. The subconscious is memory's storehouse. I think that a better term for subconscious would be superconscious; for sub suggests that which is under, a subservient mind, which it is not. It is the more powerful of the two. I would rather speak of it as the over mind, and not the under mind."

Sometimes I asked questions, and these were always readily answered, as in the following conversation:-

C.D.T.: You once said that at death the memories of physical body and psychic body are withdrawn into the soul. Have you now normally the soul's memory and also a psychic body memory?

Father: No; one cannot express it in that way. I seem to have but one memory. I have the ordinary memory of physical things that I had on earth, and this is merged into the subliminal memory which operates consciously here. When one passes over, one's subliminal memory operates consciously. Your conscious mind is really soul, a part of the subliminal, but a part projected on to the brain. The brain would not hold all the memory, all the subliminal, but only a limited part of it.

C.D.T.: How is the subliminal mind related to the soul?

Father: I think it is an expression of it, as ripples are a part of the water. One cannot separate them.

C.D.T.: That seems to explain your having but one memory now and not two.

Father: Consider the prodigies who do certain things marvellously, say mathematics or music. They have consciously developed touch with their subliminal, but only along one line; they are not versatile. One child will do figures without trouble which others can only do in a long time upon paper. That special power comes through being able to touch the subliminal mind just along one line.

C.D.T.: They somehow get at it along that one line.

Father: Without knowing how; like a child who learns by experience that a certain string pulled will give out a certain sound; he knows how to produce the effect, but does not know why the result comes. Ardent students do it upon their particular line; they master it, and their subconscious self is in touch with vibrations of the universal inspiration and creative power. You can portray in all art and science if only you can touch the requisite key-note of your subliminal mind. Some without learning how, do things which others cannot accomplish even with toil. They touch their subconscious self; "It just came to me," says the artist.

Etta: The people who have great difficulties who are not happy in themselves, erratic people, are those whose conscious and subconscious selves are out of touch, out of harmony. The less these two are in touch, the more out of harmony feels the life. When in easy touch with the subconscious it is a wonderful thing; for a man's soul remembers a large range of facts and experiences which he can draw upon at any moment.

Father: We sometimes know things now which our subconscious mind may have known on earth, but which our conscious mind did not. For example: say that someone has robbed me and that I was unaware of it and thought the money had been lost in the ordinary course of business. On passing over I should realise that I had been robbed, and should know the whole truth about it. People can diagnose the disease of which they died. Say they died under an operation and did not know the cause of the disease; on arrival here they could become aware of it. Your mind can get knowledge from the subconscious sometimes, but in our sphere we can always do so.

The following extracts treat of the spirit in man.

Etta said:-

"The spirit, like yeast in bread, is always energising to uplift, to make perfect and to work through."

C.D.T.: Is my consciousness of the soul?

Father: Yes.

C.D.T.: Has my spirit a self consciousness?

Father: I would not say so; its consciousness is God's and it works through you into consciousness. It is not a consciousness in itself, nor in you, but is God's. God is conscious in you, by means of the spirit which is part of his consciousness dwelling within you and animating you. People wonder if it is possible that God sees them do this or that little act of good or bad. "How can he keep His mind's eye on me, how can it matter to Him?" It is because of a part of His consciousness which is in you, and which came from Him.

C.D.T.: And which is permanently in touch with Him?

Father: Yes.

C.D.T.: Is it the action of the spirit on our soul which certain texts allude to; as, for example: The spirit of God beareth witness with our spirit?

Father: Perfectly right. Many puzzles in Scripture are made easier of understanding by these studies. The Holy Spirit works in us the whole time, and is part of, is an expression of, God. If I could say it is "soul-power" of God-comparing ourselves with Him-I would say so; because the Holy Spirit is a part of Himself, an expression of His personality, it is of Himself.

Father: Spirit has one great memory, the memory of God.

C.D.T.: Do you mean that it remembers that it is from God?

Father: Yes, it remembers that it knows what God is, in a way that neither soul nor body can know. Spirit is of God. The spirit must have a consciousness of God, more than any other part of man; because it is of God, purely, entirely and solely of God.

C.D.T.: When after your passing you found yourself in closer touch with the spirit within, what difference did you notice?

Father: It made me more acutely conscious of God and of a spiritual universe. On earth I was conscious that there was God, but I was less acutely conscious of Him. It is easier for the soul after death to link up entirely with the spirit. It is more conscious of the spirit then, and shares more of the spirit's consciousness.

While the soul is within the earthly body it must be, say fifty per cent. natural and fifty per cent. spiritual-put it that way. Soul must have a strong bias towards the material, must operate through it, must be conscious of and be influenced by it. Otherwise you get dreamers, idlers, idealists who spend time and strength in theorizing and not practising. You must have the balance. And yet, having the balance is a drawback to the soul in one sense, because it undoubtedly prevents one from being in that complete union with the spirit which it attains when freed from physical flesh.

Father: The spirit cannot be evil or ugly.

C.D.T.: Do you mean that spirit is always good?

Father: Spirit is the one part which belongs entirely to God.

C.D.T.: But it sins with the soul and with the physical body.

Father: No, no. Spirit cannot do evil, but can be prevented from doing good. It is the free will of man which accomplishes the evil.

C.D.T.: But by "Will" do we not mean the spirit giving orders?

Father: Will is not the spirit, but can become the right hand of the spirit if used habitually for good. Spirit is pure and comes to the physical body at birth. There are

many offsprings, as Choice, Will, Growth, Personality. If Will were spirit, a baby could will things, because it has its spirit just as much as grown people; but it has to develop Will through growth in the physical body. It is not spirit which grows in itself, but all which goes to make up the spiritual body and the personality. Will-to-do-good can be developed; and that brings it more into co-operation with the spirit. But a will-to-do-evil can be developed; that alienates the will from the spirit and subjects it to the lower physical. The spirit is never dominated by evil, never; the will may be, it is not forced to be, yet can be, but the spirit never is.

C.D.T.: I want to base a question on your recent remark that spirit cannot do evil. What, then, is the spirit's condition when a person of evil life passes to the realms of discipline and gloom? Is spirit there a higher personality which suffers with its more material partner, the spiritual body and soul? If so, is there a dual consciousness there?

Father: Spirit may suffer through wrong done by the spiritual body. It is not any worse for a spirit there than when attached to that body on earth. But it is a great thing, I strongly feel, for the spirit when the soul has worked out its salvation through the physical body, for it takes longer to do it on our side; men are sent on earth to develop the soul through contact with physical conditions.

C.D.T.: Would an evil man there be in closer touch with his spirit?

Father: Yes, when he realises where he is; many do not, especially those who have not trained themselves to think while on earth. It is important to get right habits of thought; for these determine state and condition there. Not the impulse for good, but the habit of good, is the thing which tells. Spirit is pure. It is of God, and knows the source from whence it came, and to which it will unquestionably work back again, and so it is, in a way of its own, happy.

C.D.T.: Would a sinner be conscious of that happiness?

Father: No, save momentary gleams such as men have on earth. I am sometimes sent to help on lower spheres; at first they seemed very low. The people could not see us, and yet to some extent they felt us; it was a feeling of being in touch subconsciously, intuitively, with a higher soul, and it put them in touch with their own higher self, that is to say, with their spirit. In that condition they would have gleams of momentary desire to rise to some place or state to which their spirit belongs.

C.D.T.: What part does our spirit play in our progress?

Does it, rather than the mind, catch the higher inspirations and transmit them to our consciousness?

Etta: Spirit is so much a part of God it never loses its connection with God. Divine life is flowing all the time and replenishing the spirit. Your spirit lights up your body as

long as it is within, as long as you have bodily life. Spirit does not speak with your mouth or look with your eyes, but helps, controls, gives life to the soul and personality which is what speaks and acts through you.

C.D.T.: The spirit then is less personal?

Etta: Less? It is never really personal. It is incorrect to say "I recognise that spirit as my father." It is the spirit body which is recognised. You cannot recognise any one by their spirit. Spirit does not change, but develops clothing; Like an artist's canvas which gets a picture on it. When completed, can you say which is picture and which is canvas? Both are united, it is a combination. Spirit is the foundation, the impersonal foundation. Yet, when painted on, it is difficult to say "the canvas is quite separate," and the soul is like a picture painted on the spirit canvas; but soul does the painting, grows itself. Soul can learn to like evil, which spirit cannot do.

C.D.T.: Have you learnt this from others or realised it?

Etta: Both. But being taught brings about a realisation here as it often did not on earth. Spirit is from God; and the rest is grown, i.e., Soul, Mind, Will, through combination of spirit with matter. Activities of the soul are Will, Emotions, Mind, Intellect. The Will is like the head, and Emotions like limbs of the soul.

I must tell you about the reaction of spirit, the only adverse way in which spirit can be affected. If mind is always being appealed to in a wrong way through the senses, it makes very bad and impossible conditions for the spirit. We look on it as a shrinkage, as if you picture the gas turned down so that the light shines less. The condition is bad. But father says, a better simile would be that of a fog and a clear atmosphere; evil to the spirit is like a fog to the light. It cannot kill spirit but limits it, till there comes a time when spirit is so limited in force that it takes time to get through to the body when it gets a chance. Drink, for example; if a man would pull up early, spirit could manifest strongly. Afterwards, the spirit could not do so much in a week of abstinence as in a very brief time previously. It is habitual evil which is so bad, because it makes the body so bad an instrument for spirit to manifest in, like a rusty machine.

Shortly after the above conversation I resumed the subject by saying to my father:-

"I was much interested in talking with Etta last time and should like to go over the same ground with you. What part does our spirit play in our progress? Does it, rather than our mind, catch the higher inspirations and transmit them to our consciousness?"

Father: Yes.

C.D.T.: Does it try "to get through" its wishes and wisdom to our conscious mind?

Father: Yes, but not personally. Eliminate the idea of effort and personal endeavour.

C.D.T.: Is our spirit like a sort of "control," always trying to control, but much thwarted in its effort to bring through into our actions that which it desires?

Father: I will take the last question first. Not what it desires, but what it is and that which it is part of. The spirit works all the time to bring about a manifestation of the divine life of which it is a part. The spirit has no personal wish or desire, but tends to manifest God in us all the time. My spirit is not changeable; only the material in which it works, i.e., soul, is changeable.

C.D.T.: Is the same spark of God in me now which I have had all the time?

Father: Yes, and so there is ever the opportunity to become spiritual; it is never withdrawn or differing in kind or degree.

C.D.T.: You may remember it used to be preached that a man could lose the spirit?

Father: Yes, one may make it so difficult for spirit to show itself. When body and soul so live that spirit is out of hearing, because they are out of God's ways, then very little of spirit can manifest through them. One could say then, that "the spirit is withdrawn," but, literally, it is only that we have ejected and rejected it. There is an important thing to explain here; spirit itself is not changeable, as I said before, but can transmit many wonderful powers and qualities from God to you, such as love, sympathy, pity. Understand, that it is a channel for these gifts. One who lives such a life that his body, mind and soul are in harmony with the spirit which exists in him, can receive anything; the more he fits himself to receive, the more he will receive. It is one interpretation of, "Unto him that hath shall be given." The more you desire to receive, the more you can receive. There is no limit to the receiving you may have, and it is perfectly true that "from him that hath not shall be taken away"; which amount to this-if one keeps completely out of harmony with the spirit which is in him, then not only can he not receive more, but he will lose,-not his spirit, but the faculty of attracting spiritual things to his mind and soul, through the spirit.

C.D.T.: What is the relation of the Holy Spirit to this?

Father: True, again. It is as closely affecting us as does sap the outer branches of a tree. You see, it is through the spirit in us that we keep our connection with God, remain linked with God.

C.D.T.: He keeps Himself in touch with my spirit; but what is meant by "touch"?

Father: God is conscious of all which He animates. You do not think in your finger, it is an extremity, but you are conscious of what happens in it. Your centre of being is not in finger or toe, but in your head, that is your centre of consciousness for what happens to the toe. Yet, it seems so far from the seat of consciousness.

You are as an extremity of God's, as, say, a finger. The seat of his consciousness is not in you, but it is aware of what happens in His extremities. God knows everything, even the least little thing you do or think, and knows it through the mediumship of His consciousness in you, i.e., His spirit in you, which is "your spirit" so called. Really "my spirit" means the Divine Spirit in me; but a part which has been semi-isolated in me, yet never disconnected from its source any more than is a branch from its tree. When the body is discarded you have a spiritual body, that is to say, one which is more akin to the Divine Spirit, more sensitive to His operation. But if He has not been permitted to manifest Himself through the earthly body, the etheric body will be unsuitable for His manifestation, the latter being dominated for some time after death by the habits of its physical body. That which is done in the earthly body modifies, for better or for worse, the etheric body. The penalty of an ill life consists in certain qualities of the etheric body which limit and hinder when a man passes over.

One can speak in this way of the etheric body as something by itself. But it must be realised that one's soul and its etheric body are inseparable. Just as you manifest on earth by means of, and through, the physical body, so do you on passing over, manifest in and through the etheric or spiritual body. The habits of the soul are perpetuated and made manifest in its essential body; that body which, during life on earth, was being modified and stamped by the actions and quality of the soul.

C.D.T.: Does the spirit try to "get through" its wishes and wisdom to our conscious mind?

Father: Not its wishes, that would be a wrong term; because it is impersonal, and there cannot be desires in an impersonal condition. Neither say "try"; for IT IS, that is all one can say of the spirit. It is somewhat misleading to call it your spirit; say your mind, body, soul, but not your spirit; for really it is

God's spirit in you, permanently in you. We do not say "the body or the arm which belongs to the fingers," but "fingers which belong to the body"; it is not the tree which belongs to the leaves, but the leaves belong to the tree. Spirit is the expression of God in you, therefore now yours in a personal sense, yet you need not think of it quite in the possessive sense. The text, "the spirit of God beareth witness with our spirit," really means information coming from God, via the spirit to one's soul. Popularly, "spirit" is used for "soul," whereas it is actually the life of the soul, the animating principle.

Man could lose his soul, for it is his own to lose but not so the spirit within him. Yet, the word "lose" is misleading in that connection. One cannot permanently lose it; so the reality would be better expressed by "injure" or "suffer loss." We must remind people that physical life is a very short period compared with eternity, the life of soul and spirit.

C.D.T.: Is the spirit always trying to control, but much thwarted in its efforts to bring through into our actions that which it desired?

Father: Eliminate the idea of personal effort. GOD is and can be anything He chooses to be. His effort is synonymous with spiritual gravitation towards good. His love is not in our spirit itself, but is transmitted through that spirit which is an expression of His personality, not of ours. His love and desire for our happiness run through the channel of our spirit all the time. All the time he draws us toward Himself through the mediumship of the spirit within us.

I am told by some to whom I have submitted this chapter that it is, in substance, the view put forward in the past by this and by that philosopher. They may be right in saying this. It would be strange indeed if, during the centuries behind us, none of the thinkers who have wrestled with the problem should have glimpsed this particular view. To me it appears of little importance whether the explanations here offered are new or old; and I do not assert that they are correct, or the last word upon the mystery of man's triune nature. But I have not before met with explanations which gave me so logical and satisfactory an account of that which I dimly perceive within myself.

While on earth, neither my father nor my sister were deeply versed in philosophy or psychology, although my father was an accurate observer and one of the most conscientiously painstaking men I have known. What they here tell me is not perhaps expressed in irreproachable language; I question whether the medium's mind would furnish suitable words and phrases for achieving this. Yet, it seems to me that they have succeeded in expressing with clarity the results of personal observation and experience.

CHAPTER XXX

CAN THE SOUL LEAVE THE BODY DURING SLEEP?

IT was one of the surprises of my earlier séance talks to be told by friends who had died that I often left the body during sleep and went away with them. It did not seem credible. If it really happened, why did not memory of such excursions remain? I had lived for fifty years without suspecting it. If these excursions had been taking place would one have remained in total ignorance of the fact?

I do not accept statements as true merely because they come to me through psychic channels. They may have been blurred during transmission, or mingled with fancies in the medium's mind. When satisfied that they represent what the communicator wishes to say, one should further consider whether it is an opinion that is being expressed, or a personal experience.

For a long time I kept an open mind upon this question of sleep travel. The considerations which eventually led me to regard it as most probably true include the following:-

1. Experiences of leaving the body, making a short journey and returning, are recorded by credible witnesses.
2. Certain hypnotic experiments tend to support this claim.
3. There are instances on record where the sleeper has been seen at places distant from his physical body.
4. MY communicators, whose identity is established, consistently assert that the soul can do more than this; that it sometimes visits higher realms during bodily sleep. They give reasoned explanations in reply to my questions and objections.
5. The reality of such excursions is not disproved by absence of recollection when the sleeper wakes.
6. Partial recollection is asserted by some; while with others it appears to emerge in their dreams.

Let us take these headings one by one.

1. Experiences of leaving the body, making a short journey and returning, are recorded by credible witnesses.

These experiences, as recounted by persons of my acquaintance, fall into two classes. In the first are vivid dreams of getting free from the body and floating away over trees and country. The dreamer is able to make minute observations.

Sometimes the return journey is equally vivid. These excursions seem confined to earth; it is the familiar type of country and town which the dreamer sees. I say "dreamer," but my friends aver that these experiences are quite unlike ordinary dreams and leave a unique impression after waking.

In the second class all idea of dream is disclaimed. The percipient is apparently awake when suddenly he finds himself looking down upon his body. By an act of will he moves into the street and observes the pawing traffic. When repetition has familiarised him with the experience, and lessened his earlier timidity, he has been able to travel greater distances. His movements, after first issuing from the body, seem more or less under control of will.

Such narratives are chiefly interesting as being supported by instances, to be mentioned later, where the narrator's impression of visiting a given place is confirmed by the observation of those who saw him there.

2. Hypnotic experiment tends to support this claim of actual travelling from the bay.

There have been carefully observed experiments where the hypnotised person has been told to go to such and such a place and observe what is happening. On comparing his report with the result of subsequent inquiries, it has been found that the description tallied exactly. There was no room for doubt. It was evident that the hypnotised person had accurately described what was happening at the moment in a distant place.

A friend tells me that, on one occasion during the war, she was present at a séance where the medium's husband asked them to suggest the place his wife should visit while in the hypnotic sleep. My friend's son being then in the navy, "somewhere on the North Sea," she asked that the medium should be told to observe what our ships were doing. The suggestion was accepted. The medium presently began to describe a Zeppelin floating on the water, and boats putting off from our ships to rescue its crew. Next day it was learnt that a Zeppelin had been brought down at the mouth of the Thames and its crew rescued in the manner described; the time at which this happened synchronised with that during which the séance was in progress.

While such instances are impressive, it does not necessarily follow that the information was obtained by the soul's excursion. The same result might perhaps be achieved by some form of television. We are not confined to one alternative. It may even be suggested that a spirit communicator, who was aware of the distant happening, availed himself of the opportunity to impress upon the medium's mind a picture of the event. Moreover, it is stated that if a susceptible person be hypnotised and then told that he is standing by the sea, he will immediately act as if actually there and will proceed to give a lifelike description of sea-shore sights. We therefore require more decisive evidence that the sleeper has actually travelled.

3. Instances where the sleeper has been seen at a distance from his body.

This class of evidence exists and is highly important to our inquiry. It establishes the fact of actual travel to distant places and gives added significance to the foregoing instances of asserted travel during hypnotism, or during sleep.

My friend, Mr. W. Appleyard, an ex-Lord Mayor of Sheffield, personally told me of the following incident, which I now extract from page sixty-four of his book, *Au Revoir, not Good-bye*, published by Hutchinson & Co.

Speaking of his wife, he writes:-

"During her illness I had a most extraordinary experience. An American medium came to carry out a long-standing engagement, but my wife, not being in a condition to entertain her, she went to a member of the family about one hundred yards away, where one evening we held a séance. My wife was much disappointed at not being able to attend, and was in bed.

"During the sitting a brother of hers on the other side came, and we asked him what he thought of his sister. He replied that he was going across to have a look at her. In a little while we were startled by a voice we all recognised, calling out, 'Walter, Walter' (my name), and the laugh we knew so well. We were at once filled with apprehension.

"'Who are you?' I asked, just to assure myself that I was not mistaken. 'I am Isie' (my wife's name), she called out.... The meeting broke up in confusion, all of us thinking that my wife had passed away. I immediately phoned home and was told that she was asleep.

"In order to obtain an explanation of the incident, we held a séance the following evening, when the guide of the medium informed us as follows: 'Your wife's brother came, and, as promised, went to see his sister, and, finding her asleep and the power very strong, he brought her across to the meeting when she spoke to you.'

"After she awoke she made no sign as to her knowledge of the experience, nor did I mention the matter, fearing to excite her.

"This is clear evidence of the possibility of the spirit, while in the flesh, being able to travel and communicate. It is the only case of the kind I have witnessed."

The following incident was written out at my request by the percipient, a lady bachelor of science and lecturer on biology. She is a personal friend whom I consider to be a keen observer and highly intelligent. The brother, on whom the incident hinges, had been master in a school, and subsequently became a Doctor of Medicine.

"My brother Cardew, who had been an invalid for many years, was ordered by a specialist to go for a year's voyage. This was planned out to include three months in Australia. It was a great trial to us all, as he is the only brother living. However, it was arranged that he should go, and that he would be away, at the very least, eighteen months.

"Before he left me he promised me that if he were ever in trouble, or if he were dying, he would appear to me personally if it was anyhow possible to do so, as he and I were always special friends. He sailed on Christmas Eve.

"After various letters from him, we received one in June telling us that he seemed much better, and that he had decided to stay for six months, at the least, in Australia before continuing his voyage round the world. He had arranged his movements exactly, and had gone, much to our surprise, to work on a fruit farm at the advice of an Australian doctor who had examined his throat and lungs.

"The very next night after receiving this letter, I was lying awake as usual (I always he awake for an hour before I can sleep) and was not even thinking of Cardew, when suddenly, although it was dark, I saw him distinctly, standing at the foot of the bed, in a gray tennis flannel suit which I had never seen. He smiled, and said in a very cheerful voice, 'Don't be frightened, I am all right, but I am coming back; there is trouble at home.' Then he smiled, said no more, and quite disappeared.

"I felt very uncanny, so at once woke my sister who was sleeping in the same room, and told her of Cardew's appearance. We agreed not to mention the incident to mother or to father, as it might frighten them. And we put down the date of Cardew's coming in a diary for future reference. We felt rather frightened about the matter.

"A few days afterwards we decided that mother should go to North Cornwall with my sister for a holiday, as she seemed to feel my brother's absence so keenly. When they had been at Boscastle for over a month, a letter came from Cardew telling us that he had suddenly altered all his plans, and was coming back, and was then on the way home. Two or three days afterwards a telegram arrived saying he had landed at Liverpool, and the next day he was here again. We wired for mother and she came home at once.

"We wondered what had altered his plans so suddenly, but he did not tell us for several days, and then he told us that one day, when he was feeling very well and strong, and thinking how much he liked being in Australia, he suddenly felt he must go to the docks for a walk. When he got there he felt again that he must inquire about the ships that were returning. The 'must' was so strong that although he knew it was positively settled that he should stay in Australia, yet he was compelled to go and inquire. Yet he was not homesick, and had no desire to come home just then. On making inquiries he found that a boat was leaving the next day for England, and some very powerful force made him book his passage on the spot, contrary to his

wishes, reasons, and common sense. A voice seemed, to say 'You must return at once. Book your passage at once.' It was so strong that he had to obey it, although he hated doing so. And so he returned.

"When he told me this, I asked him about the time and date of this feeling and decision, and found that they coincided exactly with the date in my diary. Then I told him about his coming to see me that not, and showed him the entry in MY diary. As there was, however, then no sign of the 'trouble at home,' we both felt there was nothing in it-but not for long.

"A few days afterwards my father was in very great trouble about some business matters. Through a quite unnecessary act of kindness he had become responsible for somebody else. He was in great trouble about it, and became very ill in the worry of it all. At last he told Cardew what it was, and the latter by his foresight and alertness was able to see exactly what to do, and consulted lawyers, etc. Finally, he settled up everything satisfactorily to both parties. If he had not been at home we should have been involved in a long lawsuit, and lost most of our money. I need not explain the circumstances further, but we shall always be most thankful that Cardew was at home to advise father about the matter. It took weeks to settle things, but Cardew was very glad he was at home to arrange matters with the lawyers.

"He did not wear the gray suit for some weeks, then one morning he appeared in it, and I told him it was the one. He said that I was right, and that it was the one he was wearing when suddenly he booked his berth home."

This apparition in England of a man then in Australia indicates two points bearing on our inquiry. (a) That distance does not hinder, and (b) That the traveller may retain no recollection of his journey.

I add a further instance of sleep travel. My informant is a clergyman who learned of the locality where, at the same time, he was observed by two persons.

While snatching an hour's sleep during the late afternoon of a hot and busy Sunday, he had a vivid dream of being in his former parish, a place some score of miles distant. That same afternoon, a farmer and his wife, living in the latter place and who knew my friend well, were out walking, when they both saw him in an adjoining field. It looked as though, they must meet after passing the stile in front, and as they climbed over it they looked around expecting to see him. Their astonishment was great at not finding him. They failed to understand how he could have left the field so quickly, and wrote that evening, gently upbraiding him for visiting their neighbourhood without calling on them.

The numerous psychic incidents occurring spontaneously to this friend prove him to be mediumistic. He records the experiences with care, but has not sought to develop his gift.

The incidents I have related are examples of what is common knowledge to those versed in psychical research. A large collection of cases, similar in character, can be found in the literature of the subject, which is available at the headquarters of the S.P.R., 31 Tavistock Square, London, W.C.1, and at other psychic libraries.

4. My communicators, whose identity is established, consistently assert that the soul can sometimes visit higher realms during bodily sleep. They give reasoned explanations in reply to my questions and objections.

I have touched upon considerations which, to my own mind, open the way for a belief that the soul has power to leave the sleeping body.

We are now to consider the question of the soul's more extended flights. If it can make excursion to distant places on earth, can it go yet further and enter realms beyond earth?

There is a remarkable consensus of testimony on this point, psychical communications in general asserting these extra-terrene excursions. Personally, I am much impressed by what is told me by my own communicators. In previous chapters I have stated some of my reasons for certainty about their identity. Knowing them as I did while they were on earth, I am confident that they would not intentionally mislead me. Their remarks on this subject are the outcome of observation and experience.

They say that they have seen my soul issuing forth and have accompanied the traveller, leading him to their own sphere, and there conversing with him. Other of their friends travel in like manner. On arriving, we are somewhat slow in awakening to a realisation of our surroundings, and tend to grow dull and heavy as the time for return approaches. Meanwhile, we are each connected with our sleeping body by a cord of etheric matter drawn from the soul's etherial form.

They point out that this etherial body of the soul is necessarily less complete during the temporary loss of etheric matter forming the connecting cord. Hence, it is not so adequate a vehicle for the soul's manifestation, and not so alert as it will be when finally separated from the physical body at death. This etheric cord is essential to physical life; there can be no complete separation of soul from body until death. But this cord, or ray, of etheric matter is indefinitely elastic and does not impede the free movement of the soul.

The representation therefore amounts to this: the soul always animates an etherial body which normally interpenetrates the physical form. When the soul travels from the latter there is a connecting link. At death this link is finally released, and then the etheric body in its completeness rises with the soul to its new sphere.

One naturally desires to know why, if vitality flows down this cord, from soul to distant sleeping body-why consciousness, sight, emotion, memory do not also reach

the brain and cause one's dreams to be of Paradise? Possibly it is on those rare occasions when a modicum filters down and when the brain is more than usually receptive, that we have those outstanding impressions with which we wake, remarking to ourselves, "That dream seemed more than a dream." Such dreams there are, and poor indeed is he who knows nothing of them.

After writing the above lines I put the question to my father during that part of a sitting when he had taken personal control and we were enjoying intimate conversation. He said:-

"Mind and consciousness leave the brain and go with the soul. Yet sufficient remain to make the brain alive to any accident that might happen. Then, in case of a storm, illness, or sudden alarm, the soul's return in haste would not cause so much waking shock. Yet that which remains in the brain is inconsiderable in amount. If sufficient consciousness passed down the cord to keep the brain active, there would not be sufficient left to make you conscious while with us. In that case there might be a partial consciousness, but not enough for complete consciousness in both places. So your question substantially amounts to this: why can we not be conscious in two places at once? To do so would be unusual, and, at best, only a partial and not a vivid consciousness."

From numerous allusions to this subject I select some given by my father and some by my sister. Each is dated, and it will be noticed how uniformly this teaching has extended throughout my sittings with Mrs. Leonard. My own remarks and questions are placed within brackets.

June, 1917. Feda said that my father sees my soul leaving the body sometimes during sleep. At death it would leave from the head, but in sleep from the solar plexus. He watches the soul come out and form a sort of clothing for itself. That is because of one's intuitive sense of the need of clothing, the soul naturally seeks to clothe its body, i.e., the spiritual or psychic body.

"Your father and you then go away and engage in work. (I ask why I have no recollection of it.) The brain was intended only for one set of conditions, namely the physical. To be fully cognisant of the other as well, would be too much for it to stand."

April, 1918. Feda remarked that my father had recently met in the spirit world some youths in whom I was interested, and added:-

"About one of them he was at first doubtful as to whether or not the lad had finally passed over; because it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between one newly arrived and those who are over temporarily during sleep, or while under anaesthetics. He has seen these temporary visitors looking so developed that they might have been taken for the ordinary inhabitants. Of course, they do not all appear so similar. The less developed and more material souls would be duller and coarser

in appearance, even if they soared so high, which is improbable. Many people could scarcely travel a hundred yards from their sleeping body."

August, 1919. (I asked whether, when we go to them during sleep, we seem to be our real, wakeful selves, or as if in dream condition?)

"You do not look quite as alive and alert as if you had left the body for good, but more so than when in the physical body now. The exception is at the beginning and the end the beginning is like waking, and the return is like going to sleep. Except for just at the start you are as bright and alert as at this moment."

November, 1920. My sister Etta, after alluding to what her mother had seen in the Beyond when visiting there in sleep, said:-

'Mother has seen it at night, but that is not the same thing as living there. When the soul comes to us at night it is limited by the connecting cord, it looks much the same, but does not feel the same as a freed soul.' ('Not so much awake?') 'You are not, although you may appear to be so.' ('When I join you at night do I speak about my earth life and remember it?') 'Yes, you do; but you do not remember your earth life so well as you remember that you were with us the previous night. You can remember if you came over the night before or not.'

('My two memories then are continuous, but do not intermingle?')

'Quite so. If I suddenly ask you a question about your day's doings, there is a certain effort to remember, because you are leading a dual existence. We do not lead a dual life; we are complete in one body now.'

('How do we reach you when we come at night?')

'I can only describe it as your soul first drawing itself away from your aura directly the body sleeps. In most cases there is some spirit helping, guiding you on the journey from earth, although this is not always necessary. In your case, father often comes for you.' ('We do not float up automatically, then?') 'Yes, and father holds your hand.' ('What would happen if one had no guide to hold one's hand?') 'Such would probably not go from earth, for the reason that there was no one to want them. Some are so developed that they can travel without guides; others so undeveloped they cannot go at all. Spiritual as well as psychic development is requisite; hence, some only travel on earth. Father, who has listened to what has been said, remarks that he does not always take your hand; you can go side by side with him. You've learnt to control your thought in the psychic body, and your thought is always upon going with him to the third sphere, and so you'd get there even if not guided by him. He says that he often goes to places to which he could not find his way by going mile after mile, but he is able to draw himself to a place by thought of it.'

March, 1924. ('Is my life over there consecutive?')

'Yes, you begin where you left it off last time, pick it up again and go ahead more rapidly than on earth.' ('Does one grow educated by those visits, or are the experiences scrappy?') 'It is educative experience which has influence on you for earth life. But you could not come over unless you had prepared for it and taken advantage of teaching; unless you had prepared yourself mentally for it by the things you do in earth life. The stretching capacity of the communicating cord is dependent on progression in ordinary life.'

('Yes, but is it progress in character, or in intelligence?')

'I think the character progress is more important than the mental, the thinking of and trying for good things, living up to a high ideal or by striving to do so. Striving counts for so much, even when you cannot keep up to the ideal. It is not so much the race which makes the athlete strong, as the training for it.'

August, 1924. ('Is waking after death anything different from finding oneself there during night travel?')

'It is different. A visit is not such a complete waking; for you are still bound to the physical body and limited in condition by that union. Something is going from you to the physical body, keeping it alive. So you are not nearly so much awake on visits as when finally passing over. Yet, the process is much the same. The preceding sleep may be a quarter of an hour, but after death three or four days may be required to lose the sense of physical illness, etc., which should be left behind.'"

May, 1926. ('Does the spiritual or etheric body ever sleep?')

'No, it is never unconscious. It has a separate consciousness when freed from the earthly body, and shares the consciousness of the latter while within it. It is possible, while absent during sleep, for just sufficient consciousness to be left in the physical body for the brain to register certain impressions without drawing the etheric body back. Say a noise disturbs you, or you feel cold, etc. For while the etheric body is connected with the earthly body by the etheric cord a certain stream of consciousness passes down from the one to the other. It is only when death breaks the cord that this ceases.'

('It seems remarkable that the current of consciousness passing down the cord does not inform the brain of what happens to the soul during night travel.')

'There is a stronger stream with some than with others. It may be an inherited or an induced difference. I should imagine that most mediums remember not only their dreams but also occasionally their travels.' (Here I ask Feda whether her medium remembers.) 'Not often,' she replied; with her the two are mixed together. She gets clear dreams; but what she thinks are dreams have bits poked in them of what she did while out of the body. Both get mixed. Etta says, 'It is as if you took a scene

which I once painted long ago, and should add two figures in the foreground. Anyone looking at it might not know that those two figures did not belong to the scene; for they would assume that the figures were an integral part of it.'

September, 1926. ('Is the life-line of etheric matter, which unites the visitor to your realms with his sleeping body, visible to you there?') 'Only to a very short extent, just a short length of it, and only in some circumstances. With most people it is not visible at all. With the more developed it is less visible. Mistakes happen again and again as to whether the visitor is permanently there or not.'

('When one wakes there after death does he feel just as he did when visiting there in sleep?').

'It is different in degree. After death he realises himself more intensely, and is more "all there."'

The above are selected from among thirty-five allusions to this subject. There have been some repetitions of the same statements, frequent allusions to my having been with my communicators in their realms during my sleep, and, occasionally, references to items in my dreams which they claim were fragmentary recollections of what had happened during night visits to them.

5. Absence of recollection does not disprove the reality of these excursions.

If we travel from the body why do we not remember the journey? Absence of recollection seems, to some minds, a conclusive argument against such asserted journeying. Common sense says, "If I really went away and lived an active life elsewhere, I must certainly have retained some degree of recollection."

But will this objection survive examination? Whatever happened to the soul, it is certain that the physical brain remained within the sleeping body; possibly it dreamed, but it did not travel. Can one logically expect to find in a brain, which was not present to record them, any reminiscences of the soul's journey?

A husband and wife share in common much of the home life, and the wife recalls many things which her husband said and did. But when he leaves for business, she does not go with him; and after their temporary separation he will have recollections of the day's doings about which she knows nothing. Now, it is the soul which is said to travel; the brain admittedly remains on earth. Hence, it is the soul which would know about its journey, and not necessarily the brain-consciousness.

Yet, the brain is wonderfully adaptable, and when a soul develops higher powers fresh possibilities come within the range of mental activity. Is this what has happened on those occasions when we wake to find stray hints floating in memory of things scarcely expressible in words? What mean those faint recollections of rapturous moments, of brighter surroundings, of high companionships? Why do we

sometimes wake with the strong sense of a hidden joy, even when the dream which seemed to accompany it eludes our recollection? And what is the significance of those partially recollected dream which seem to be not merely dreams, but to have glimpsed, prior to their waking confusions and stupidities, a something more than our earthly life?

We have immense power of forgetting. How little we remember, unless having recourse to a diary, those thousands of impressions registered on our consciousness this day twelvemonth past. Yet, those impressions reached the brain through our senses. More easily and completely do we forget impressions which reach the brain by other than sense channels, such as dreams. Some men aver that they never dream; possibly it is that they never recall their dreams. Most of us are vaguely aware of dreaming, yet find it difficult to recall one dream in ten. If attention be directed to one's dreams immediately on waking, it is often easy to trace a few of them; but if, instead of doing this at once, we let some hours elapse, where are our dream memories? The interests of the day have obliterated the visions of the night. Since, then, it is less easy to recall impressions reaching the brain by other than sense channels, than to remember what we have seen and heard, it may well be that we have simply failed to consciously remember what the returning soul impressed on the slumbering brain. Again, since the brain did not leave the body during sleep, and did not therefore share the experience of the soul's journey, it can only learn of these if informed of them. Until the brain has received impressions from the soul it has nothing to recall. Now, it is exactly this passage of information from one state of consciousness to another which is beset with so much difficulty.

How obstinately a name can refuse to pass from the subconscious into our conscious memory. We are certain that we know the name and that we ought to be able to produce it, yet it does not come into consciousness. If sometimes we cannot recall a name which was once in the forefront of our mind, we may anticipate an even greater difficulty in remembering those of the soul's experiences which were never within our normal consciousness. The soul may have really travelled, but has it been able to impress the awakening brain with its memories of what took place? If not, then the brain has nothing to recall. If, on the other hand, the soul did in some degree succeed, there may be a difficulty in bringing that impression into normal consciousness, since it was not received through the usual channels of sense. For the brain memory is accustomed to reproduce that which comes to it through the senses, and it cannot so easily recall experiences purely psychical or interior.

The soul shares the memory which connects with the brain; but it also has a memory of its own which the brain does not normally share. How true it is that, "The heart has its reasons which the reason does not know." We have intuitions and assurances for which our logical processes find no foundation. Yet, we know that these intuitions are, in certain departments of life, by far the safer guides.

Researches in hypnotism reveal the impressive fact that, after being awakened, the hypnotised person may be entirely unconscious of all he said and did while asleep.

This is even more startling than the obliviousness of a sleep traveller. For the hypnotised person has himself been speaking, his brain was intelligently active; but the brain of the sleep traveller was not present in the distant places where the soul is said to have enjoyed a temporary activity. If we find total oblivion in the former case, total oblivion in the latter should not surprise us.

A further fact of importance to our inquiry is reported by hypnotists. Despite the usual oblivion of the awakened person, to which we have just alluded, it is possible to make them remember. If the hypnotist, before waking the patient, commands him to remember what has been done and said, then the patient on waking is able to give an exact account of all that happened. This indicates that there exists in mental mechanism a means of transmitting to the brain, and of enabling the brain to express consciously, the memories possessed by the soul.

How, then, might we hope to bring the soul's experience into consciousness? It must be a difficult achievement, and not a thing we should expect to happen without persistent and well-directed training. It would be interesting to learn how far a course of hypnotic treatment, directed especially to this end, would enable one to bring into consciousness the soul's experiences during natural sleep. With suitable subjects, experienced hypnotisers, and prolonged investigation, the experiment might yield illuminating result.

There is yet a further illustration of our difficulty in remembering what has happened during sleep. It is found in observation of trance states. Quite often a deep-trance medium will awake and know nothing of the subjects about which he has been speaking vivaciously during the preceding hour. Where the trance has been less complete, the medium may retain a confused recollection. And in the case of one whose trance condition is but slight, there is often a clear remembrance of having heard a voice which seemed to be talking at a distance; it was his own voice heard during a partial or divided consciousness.

In our present limited understanding of memory, and of the soul, lies the cause of our incredulity when we hear of the soul's excursions in sleep. In daily life impressions reach the soul through the brain which receives them from the sense channels. The movement is from brain inwards to soul, and that is easy, natural, habitual. The reverse is difficult, and to most men it is unpractised. Some favourably constituted persons might perhaps acquire the art with less difficulty than others. There undoubtedly exists a pathway by which impressions can pass from within, from soul to brain, a path which can be cleared by use, or closed by disuse. The mystics know this path, the intuitions, conscience, and inspiration use it. The artist and the poet owe much to the traffic which passes that way; it is by this route that the deeper things of the inner life rise into the consciousness of spiritual men. Might we not therefore hope to find, reaching our awareness by this path, some of those pictures, moods and records which we had never seen or known in any outward fashion, but which were the experience of the soul alone when far away from the

brain and from the physical senses of its sleeping body? It is of this experience that certain people tell.

6. Partial recollection is asserted by some, while with others it appears to emerge in dreams.

I mention this fact for the sake of completeness, although aware how little it must mean to those who have no such experience. For how can the listener say whether the narration was a dream or something more? And being unable to decide this, he quite properly assumes the likelier of the alternatives. Dreams he knows of, but conscious glimpses of another world are unfamiliar to him, and he therefore concludes that it was a dream and nothing more. Very different is the attitude of those who are able to recall something of their experiences. Their conviction is unshakable.

I have from time to time noticed that what seemed an unrelated fragment of something different broke in upon the background of an ordinary dream and produced an impressive sense of reality. It was as though, while one gazed upon a picture, the canvas suddenly opened, giving a glimpse of real scenery and living people behind it. The persons seen are often, though not always, one's deceased friends. All too soon the scene and figures fade and the casual dream runs on again. But, in recollection those momentary glimpses rank with realities.

My soul flies singing through the skies
Blither than any bird or mortal thing,
And hears supernal melodies
Which man has never heard, but angels sing.
Yet all the while, engrossed in care,
Hearing and seeing naught, my trance I keep:-
And when my soul returns to me
She cannot tell, alas, her secret deep.

The day will dawn when I shall learn
That close-held mystery by men called "death,"
Which shall reveal my soul to me,
And rouse me from my trance of earthly breath.
Then shall I join her in her flight,
And, rapt in ecstasy, shall pass away
From this half-shadow men call "life,"
Wherein both eyes and ears are stopped with clay.

CHAPTER XXXI

A SIGNIFICANT MISTAKE

THE incident recorded in this chapter seems to prove, so far as an isolated case may prove a general truth, that the soul can leave the body before death; and further, that it may even be mistaken by those in the next life for one who, like themselves, has parted from the earthly body forever.

(This incident is more fully discussed by Mr. A.W. Trethewy, in the journal of the Society for Psychical Research, October 1926.)

The story is as follows: -

On January 6th, 1922, Feda transmitted a long message from my father and sister. It commenced thus:-

"Something about one who passed quite lately; it is one whom they have been helping, and who went rather quickly. Your father is very serious about this, as if he wishes to be careful."

Then followed clues as to the identity of the deceased, and some newspaper tests which were said to relate to him. An exact copy of the latter was forwarded the same evening to the Society for Psychical Research where it is now available for inspection. The clues and tests are stated in full hereunder. They include the following remarks: -

"'B' is given; Feda feels sure it is to be linked with the one passed over."

"He passed quite, quite lately."

Nothing of this was intelligible to me at the time. I anticipated that, as usual, the meaning would be clear on the morrow when I had opportunity for searching the newspaper. But on this occasion the inspection did not assist me.

Six days later I saw among the death notices of The Methodist Recorder:-

BEARD-January 7th at Southborough, near Tunbridge Wells, Rev. Samuel Wesley Beard; aged 80 years.

Remembering that Mr. Beard had been known to my parents, and seeing the initial "B" had been given, I decided to ask at my next sitting whether Mr. Beard was the person to whom the messages applied. The reply was

"Yes."

I next compared the messages with such information as was obtainable about Mr. Beard. The agreement was sufficient to warrant further inquiry. Yet, I hesitated to approach Mr. Beard's family, as I was unknown to them, and almost a month elapsed before I decided to introduce myself. But when I did this, and learnt the story of Mr. Beard's last illness, it became evident that my father's knowledge had been strikingly accurate. This encouraged me to inquire further. Miss Beard kindly permitted me to send her a number of questions to which she replied, and this helped me greatly.

I will now give the messages as received through Feda and append to each its verification.

"Something about one who passed quite lately; it is one whom they have been helping and who went rather quickly. Your father is very serious about this, as if he wishes to be careful. Why does he give 'M?' He keeps giving 'M,' and yet Feda does not feel as if it is the person's name, though it would connect very closely."

Miss Beard's name is Mary. She had been her father's one companion during his last five years of life.

"They speak of being surprised at the passing, as if it took them by surprise. It is one whom they thought could stiff do something on earth. It looked like being premature, but Etta shakes her head and says, 'It is all right.' Fr--, Fra--, Feda cannot get the name, but it is mixed up in a newspaper test purposely in case he failed to give it clearly this way."

They were correct in thinking Mr. Beard might have done further work. He had been preaching during the previous quarter and had promised to do so again in three months' time, but had asked to be given no appointments for a while as he was unwell.

"Fr--, Fra-- this appears to be an attempt for the name French which was found in the next day's Morning Post (see below).

Here Feda transmitted the newspaper tests, the time being 2:45 p.m.

"In The Times to-morrow, page one, column two, upper half but not quite top, say one quarter down, name of the person passed recently, not sure if Christian name or not."

Two inches from the top of this second column on the first page of the Times appears the name Samuel. This is Mr. Beard's Christian name.

"Close to it is another name, not his own, but of place this person was very much connected with."

In the same advertisement with Samuel and on the line immediately above it is Weston-super-Mare. In this town Mr. Beard worked for three years. Also, a few lines higher, appears Somerset, in which county he lived for six years and was colleague successively with my father and my uncle.

"This person will be missed. Sudden passing, but unsatisfactory health previously; some additional physical trouble led to the climax, then quickly over."

Mr. Beard was certainly missed by the Wesleyan Churches in and around Tunbridge Wells where he had for some twenty years rendered much assistance. The references to health are correct. His illness lasted two weeks, and during his last two days the condition of the throat became both painful and serious; so much so that he was given injections of morphia. It is perfectly correct to say that the end was quick.

"An appointment made with the person, important, affecting others, could not be carried out owing to the passing."

An operation had been fixed to take place on January 5th, in a London nursing home; but as the day approached he was too ill to be removed, and was in fact dying.

"Column one, nearly half-way down, find name of a near relative, living, of the above. 'J' is given as a name connected with the one passed and is to be found close to that of the near relative."

Within one inch of half-way down column one, is Mary, the name of his daughter. An initial "J" is in the same advertisement with Mary. Mr. Beard had two brothers, both of whose names commenced with "J."

"'B' is given; Feda feels sure it is to be linked with the one passed over."

This was so, the name being Beard.

A reference to the place he was shortly going to is made near the bottom of column one.

The operation was to have taken place in London. While there are several town addresses within four inches of the bottom of this column, the word London only appears once, and its position agrees with directions given.

"In the Morning Post to-morrow. He thinks this was from the back page, left side and one quarter down a name referring to the same man lately passed, as given in the Times test. Got idea re ships close thereto."

Exactly one quarter down the first left-hand column of the last page of the Morning Post is the word French. The test message is not quite explicit as to which person

the name would fit, but there had been a preliminary attempt to give a name "Fr--", and, when the attempt failed, it was stated that the name would be introduced amid the paper tests for the day. I therefore conclude that this was an attempt to indicate an old Taunton friend, Mr. French.

I had frequently heard my parents speak of the family named French at Taunton, and of Mr. French's friendship with our ministers. But it was a surprise to discover that Mr. Beard had been my father's colleague at Taunton a year before my birth there.

"Ships." The line immediately following that containing the above-named French, ends with the word Port, which perhaps, by mental association, suggested ships.

"Page five; find name of a place, half-way down left side, also mentioned in Times test."

This is unsatisfactory, inasmuch as no name appears there which had been previously alluded to. It may be a failure, but it is curious that three inches below the half-way crease of the first column at the left side of page five there should be found the word, Avalon. Avalon is the old but still used name for Glastonbury, a place at which Mr. Beard would have frequently conducted services while he was my uncle's colleague in Somerset.

This completes the examination of the tests which were given for verification from the morrow's Press and of which a copy was posted to the S.P.R. immediately after the sitting. The extent to which they agree with facts unknown to me at the time, shows that my communicators had access to information relating, not only to the newspaper offices, but also to Mr. Beard's family and personal condition.

Having completed the newspaper tests, Feda continued:-

"The one passed over belonged to different conditions, things which interested other people...not like those who only interest themselves in their homes. He was interested in so many things."

This would apply to any Wesleyan minister, but especially to one like Mr. Beard, who had travelled in many circuits and who, therefore, had numbers of old friends in different parts of the land.

"Your father shows a lot of papers, as if something was left incomplete, but he adds, 'Left in good hands. It will be seen to.' He thinks you'll hear something about those papers. There will be something about this which will be posthumous. Your father seems to think you will know about it too. It is in another's hands now, but quite good hands. This is quite important."

Although this might refer to private papers, I think it hints at an obituary notice, and if so, it was introduced to give me a further clue to the fact that a Wesleyan minister was being spoken of. Mr. Beard's obituary was published the following September, and may be read on page 113 of the Wesleyan Minutes of Conference for 1922.

"Talking of going away a little while ago, change, another place-the one who has passed over. Feda keeps getting the idea of going to another place."

Miss Beard remarks, respecting this, that there had been occasional conversation about going to Folkestone for their next holiday.

It will be admitted that the communications given about Mr. Beard, through Feda proved to be remarkably well informed. Yet, the story has followed usual lines up to this point; for my friends in the next life have repeatedly welcomed new arrivals and have elicited facts from them which were subsequently mentioned in my sittings for evidential purposes.

But I realised that this case was unique when I learnt from Miss Beard the hour of her father's passing. The Rev. Samuel W. Beard died at 1:30 a.m. on January 7th, 1922, i.e., several hours after the close of the sitting in which he was described as having "Passed quite lately."

In reply to my inquiry as to her father's condition during the day preceding his death, Miss Beard informed me that he passed those hours in unconsciousness.

Some weeks later I had a conversation with my father at a sitting in which I remarked on the fact that he had been mistaken in supposing that Mr. Beard had passed over at the time when messages concerning him were given. He replied that his first idea that Mr. Beard might not finally have passed came to him while he was in the act of transmitting the message through Feda. He continued: "I have often met people both on my own plane and on yours, spirits whom at first I took to be permanently separated from their bodies."

In view of this illuminating mistake, the following quotation receives peculiar significance. The date shows it was given two years before the Beard incident. Indeed, I had forgotten its existence.

Sitting of May 21st, 1920.

After allusion had been made to persons visiting spirit realms during the condition of sleep, I inquired whether these seemed as fully alert as those living there permanently. My father, who was controlling, replied:-

"There is a difference perceptible to those who know them well. The cord of etheric matter which still connects them with their sleeping body is drawn from their psychic body; it therefore follows that a sleep-visitor is limited by the loss of this cord

substance which is connecting him with the body. Supposing I saw someone who was only temporarily out of the body, I might not know whether his modified brightness was, or was not, his usual appearance. For among ourselves there are degrees of brightness, since some vibrate more keenly with life."

I then asked whether he would be certain to distinguish, in the case of his own relations, whether or not they had come over finally. He said:-

"If long enough with them I should know, but I might not know if I only saw them in passing. There have been cases where relatives were spoken to by those who were unaware that they had come over finally."

In the preceding chapter, we discussed the ability of the soul to leave its physical body before death. Conclusive proof is difficult to obtain. But in the incident now related we have, at least, a contribution towards such proof.

I have been led by various considerations to the belief that such partial freedom of the soul is, with people who have attained a certain measure of spiritual development, one of the unrecognised facts of human nature. The soul is not so closely tied to its earthly body as we have supposed. It occasionally travels from that body, although, on returning, it is unable to impress the normal consciousness with the record of this experience.

CHAPTER XXXII

THE MYSTERY OF OUTER SPACE

C.D.T.: Do you know more, than when on earth, about the mystery of space without boundaries, the limitless universe beyond the stars?

Father: We do not know all space, nor all that is in space, but we are aware of more than is known on earth. Beyond the stars known to you there are others; the stars you know are but a small number compared with those which exist. But beyond them all there is something which I have difficulty in describing-put it thus-a world which is not a world in any material sense, yet in a spiritual sense; not a formless or indefinite world, but an infinite condition.... I have not been to it. I only know of it through hearing it spoken of by those who are on the highest sphere in our spirit world, and therefore in closer touch with the outer world. They have ways of knowing; you yourself have ways of knowing what is beyond your world, means of knowledge which are quite inaccessible to many denizens of your earth, the ants for example. The ant lives on your sphere and belongs to the same physical conditions as you. Yet, you are living on a higher plane of thought, and have means of information impossible to the ant. The telescope shows you that there are other planets, worlds of some kind. But the ant cannot know this, although the planets exist as truly in relation to the ant as to you. Now, by analogy, you might term me an ant in spirit life; for in my world there are developed beings who know as much more than I as you know more than the ant. In time I shall grow to their state of knowledge, but it must be a gradual evolution.

So you see we know more about space than you, and yet we cannot go into it, cannot obtain first-hand knowledge of it any more than the ant is able to read your book which it crawls across.

You ask about the infinity of space. I know how stupendous the words sound. Now, think of the trunk of a tree, and then of the leaves which rustle on its branches. Those leaves are allied to each other, and it is a long way back to the main trunk and to the roots which occupy so much space and are much more in bulk than all the leaves combined. Space is not space in any sense of emptiness; it is full of the machinery which keeps going all the little universes and separate worlds. It is helpful to look on all the different worlds as leaves, because they are fed from a trunk which is space. The power which keeps your world alive originates in that limitless space.

It is a mistake to think of space as a great emptiness. If you could pass further and further away from your own sphere into that which seems to you as merely space, and if your consciousness could grasp the realities, I am sure that you would become aware of greater and greater powers, greater and greater fields of activity. It is not an emptiness, not merely a space, but power of which you are not conscious and which I simply know about, yet which keeps both you and me alive. You will, of course, say that this is God. True, God is the mainspring of the entire universe,

space, planets, everything. But He has wonderful fields of work, very wonderful planes of consciousness of some great and infinite kind which neither you nor I can comprehend. And space, as we term it, is full of these. Could you but journey away further and further from earth and from the region of the stars, your consciousness growing as you passed forth beyond them all, you would then be able to see and to hear more and more. There would be no stillness, no such inactivity as is suggested to your mind by the thought of space.

I think your idea of space is based upon the gaps existing on earth between one and another of man's activities, say the barren fields between town and town, the deserts, and so on. But there are no such gaps between God's manifestations of activity; for they are infinite. So do not try to grasp the idea of space. Think of it simply as the place in which God works. What He is doing there you cannot see, but you are feeling the result of it each minute.

CHAPTER XXXIII

A SURVEY OF RESULTS

OMITTING reference to the chapters dealing with laws underlying trance communication, this book touches on two great subjects-(a) the evidence for our friends' survival and (b) their teaching about life beyond death.

For this evidence and teaching there is desperate need in many quarters. Let him who questions it give thanks for his sheltered life, but let him be assured that the tragedy of doubt is very real, and that many, both within the Churches and outside them, are suffering mentally and morally through the absence of any wholesome certainty. He would do well to regard the condition of the world, and ask himself whether the major part of mankind is living, and the majority of nations acting, as they might be expected to act if they were realising the meaning of this life and the realities of the life to come? Multitudes are praying for peace, but is there any reasonable hope of settled peace until justice, truthfulness, honesty between man and man and also between nations, together with a practical interest in the welfare of others, become the accepted standards of conduct?

A false sense of values and low standards of conduct are being tacitly accepted by old and young. Discerning eyes see that all is not well with us, either in Church or State. What is amiss? The ancient prophet wrote: "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." And this is true to-day. There is lacking, not only a clear demonstration of the meaning of life, but also any widespread knowledge about the nature of that future existence for which this one is a preparation. The Churches will be more helpful when they are able to offer present-day evidence for the reality of life beyond bodily death. By showing what that life is like, they will enable men to realise why it is so vitally important that it should be prepared for here and now.

We are privileged to live in days when fresh knowledge is pouring in from many quarters. And in communication with those who have preceded us to the next life we have a means of extending our knowledge about the nature and activities of that life. It was supposed by some, not so long since, that man could learn nothing more about the starry heavens; but when the spectroscope and astronomical photography were brought into action they expanded our knowledge of the material universe. We are approaching an era in which man will augment his present slender information about the unseen universe by using those means of acquiring knowledge afforded him by the development of his inner faculties. The trend of this book only slightly indicates the wealth of this source.

Perhaps it will be asked what benefit may be expected from a general acceptance of this evidence for survival? I think it will do for others what it has done for me. It has supplemented and reinforced my faith, both in times of bereavement and in the prospect of old age and death. Also, it has further emphasised the value of personal religion.

Are not these real helps amid life's difficulties? During the first shock of sudden loss a man may find himself adrift upon a sea of doubt. This has been confessed by many who were amazed and humiliated at the unexpected failure of their traditional ideas in the hour of need. They have told how they realised then that there ought to be something more than they possessed. Truly, there is something more. It is something that has been designed by God; it was afforded by Jesus to his friends long ago, and it is within our reach to-day. Even without personal converse with the departed, one can be assured from the experience of others that this is possible; that death has removed only the bodily presence from our sight, and that the friend we miss keeps in closer touch with us than in days when he walked at our side. I need not expand this thought; it is my hope that it has been sufficiently illustrated in previous chapters.

Occasionally it happens that an unexpected and uninvited appearance of the departed brings consolation and support. There are several collected records of such spontaneous communications; for these happenings are not so rare as the usual silence of those who experience them might lead one to suppose. And each of these unsought communications from the life beyond gives impressive denial to the thought that God does not intend us to hear from those who pass onward. I see in them one of God's ways of showing us the possibility of such communication, and His intention of prompting us to discover the laws by which it takes place. Of these laws mediumship is found to be an essential principle. Descriptions of life on death's further side show by contrast how impoverished is the mind which chooses to dwell too much upon those limitations and privations which accompany old age; upon sickness, loss of place and pleasure, or upon the gloom which a past generation expressed by its funeral trappings.

Our friends say that, upon passing over, they found that the character which has been matured by sincere endeavour to follow the highest has qualified for immediate happiness and wider service in the new life. They say also, that those who had lived chiefly for self, experience the disadvantages and remorse inevitable to unprogressed souls. This touches on personal religion.

My father and sister strongly assert that intercourse with them should not be regarded as an end in itself, but as an aid and encouragement to communion with Christ. In my personal experience I find the proved awareness and nearness of my risen friends gives a sense of reality to prayer, and strengthens one's realisation of the divine care and sympathy. It was not for my own needs that I entered upon a personal investigation of this subject, but from a sense of its value in equipping me for service to others. Yet I, too, have received unexpected personal benefit; for it has changed belief into knowledge, and knowledge into realisation. Indeed, it has been the greatest development in my inner life since when, as a youth, I turned from thoughtless selfishness to follow Christ.

Is it not good to have certainty in place of doubt? To find belief changed into realisation? To have proof of the frequent nearness of those who died? To learn something of the nature and occupations of the first stages of life beyond death? And to be reminded afresh that the love which is prepared to sacrifice in the service of others, and which finds its historic symbol in the Cross, is life's supreme attainment?

CHAPTER XXXIV

ARMISTICE DAY, 1927

ON the recent dedication of the Menin Gate Memorial someone wrote thus:-

O God! those cemeteries around Ypres. Age nineteen, age twenty-one, age twenty-three. Then a name you knew, rows of neat, white stones in green grass, standing on parade still in white battalions. Such jolly fellows. And you stand helplessly among them-thinking.

Some suppose their dead to be extinct; gone out of being like some glad song which died away in silence, only surviving as a memory. Others hope that they may meet again with those they lost. Many add faith to that hope, looking with confidence for reunion on the morrow of death. And yet, even these are often unaware of the whole glad truth. For when we speak to them of return from death's further side, of speech, of evidential messages, we see repeated that ancient story of the incredulous disciples, to whom the women came telling a similar experience. And their words seemed unto them as idle tales, and they believed them not.

Disbelief in human survival is sadly wrong. Hope and trust are right, but they do not go far enough; they stop short of knowledge. Knowledge, and the gladness it brings, were the notes on which that first Easter Sunday closed-Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord.

It is this knowledge which we proclaim. We say, your departed certainly return, they often stand at your side as in former days, though not being clairvoyant you fail to see them. They speak to you, but not being clairaudient you do not hear them. They try to impress you with an awareness of their presence, though you deem that sudden thought of them just a fancy of your own and nothing more.

We teach further, that though one may be blind, and deaf, and dull of inner sensibility, there are others psychically gifted, through whose kind offices our loved ones can speak to us.

Even a few words from one who passed to the other side of death, words conveying assurance of his identity, can change the whole outlook of life, turning it from the chill gloom of disbelief or sad questioning, to the light and warmth of certitude.

The angels keep their ancient places;
Turn but a stone and start a wing!
'Tis ye, 'tis your estranged faces
That miss the many-splendoured thing.

To-day we call to memory those who have risen to the life beyond, and especially those who sacrificed themselves for others at duty's call. Many will picture their son

as he went to rejoin his regiment, or returned to his ship, or they recall those all too fleeting hours of his last furlough. To remember them so, as they used to be while here, is good; but to have a realisation of what they have attained and where they are-this is better far. For the world invisible then takes a homelier form. It is no strange land. So many of those who made home homely are there; they have not forgotten, they have not ceased to love, and when our own turn comes they will be waiting to welcome us. It was such a confidence as this which Jesus gave His friends; I go, said He, to prepare a place for you. And, I will not leave you comfortless.

It is said that sorrow brings us nearer God. It is not always so; it depends on how we take it. But joy, too, can raise us heavenward, and it marks a wonderful hour in life when a great sorrow is transfigured by joy. Jesus would have it so: I will see you again, He said to His friends, and your heart shall rejoice.

Here is an example of this transfigured sorrow. Quite recently an only son, an undergraduate, was killed in a road accident. I saw his mother's letter, her breaking heart asked the old question: "Is there no way by which he can tell us how it fares with him?" Through the help of my psychically gifted friend, Mrs. Leonard, I was able to send a message to the young man's parents, having first taken means to attract his attention that I might explain to him when and how he could express what he wished to say to them. And the boy took his chance eagerly. In due time the mother heard that her son had spoken through a trance sensitive, and she received his detailed evidence of identity, as well as his words of affection.

Now, how did this affect his grief-stricken parents? Let me quote from the mother's letters:-

"My husband and I are overcome with delight; it is such wonderful evidence. I had gone to our darling's grave this evening, and there my husband joined me, bringing your letter. And we felt as we have never felt since we lost our darling. I cannot tell you the joy it is to feel you have been in communication with him. My heart is full of gratitude. Of course, I never doubted the future life, but oh, the comfort of having this to strengthen one's faith."

And again, some weeks later:-

"How we do bless you for what you sent us that day. I think it saved me from a bad break-down. I never felt more utterly despondent than on that afternoon. My husband and I can never forget the feeling of confirmed hope and faith that came over us as we stood by the grave and read your letter."

I pray for the hastening of that time when this comfort shall be placed within the reach of all, and this kind of communication shall prompt to the higher communion; when messages from loved ones beyond death shall make the spirit world so clear, a reality that the souls of men will aspire to communion with the Lord of Life Himself.

The End