

Why
I Believe
THE
DEAD
ARE ALIVE

By

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To
AGNES MARION HENDERSON
"A.M.H."

*In Affectionate Appreciation of
Her Twenty-Two Years Devotion
to the Business of Soulcraft*

Why I Believe

The Dead Are Alive

Chapter I

THE CHILDISHNESS OF HORROR



BOOKS on the conscious survival of the human soul after death are as old as Pythagoras. Pythagoras, just in case you have never heard of the gentleman, was a celebrated Greek philosopher. He was born on the island of Samos some six hundred years before Christ. When I say that books on the conscious survival of the soul after death are as old as Pythagoras, I by no means write conventionally. Probably no man who ever lived, unless it be the Great Authority of Galilee himself, made a greater name as an expert in matters of physical life and death, and the capabilities of the soul for functioning above mortality, than this celebrated Greek who traveled down into Egypt in his 'teens, put himself under the tutelage of Nilotic mystics and emerged in middle life to found in the memorable colony of Crotona, in southern Italy.

Among the extraordinary doctrines that Pythagoras gave to the centuries were: Numerology----that numbers are the principles of all things----that the universe is a harmonious whole, that the heavenly bodies by their movements cause sounds, which produce the Music of the Spheres, that the soul is immortal and passes successively into many bodies and that the highest aim and blessedness of man is likeness to the Deity. Of course, little brainstrapped theologians of his day couldn't see him for snakebite and had his colony raided in the most approved modern fashion. His buildings were burnt and his colony scattered. What actually became of Pythagoras himself was never found out. Some say he dematerialized. Some say he ascended, not unlike Christ. Some even go so far as to declare that he knew so much about the secrets of life and death that he has been able to keep himself alive since the fifth century before Christ and is going up and down the world as an apparently normal human being in garb of the present. Anyhow, Pythagoras applied himself systematically and scientifically to the great business of finding out precisely what the human soul is capable of doing under any and all conditions----even the conditions of vacating the mortal body and losing it----and compiling a great library of lore for exceptional students who were by no means reluctant to explore those avenues of research. So when I remarked that books on the survival of the soul after death are as old as Pythagoras, I am really harking back to a reliable authority. Also I am implying that books on the survival of the soul after death have been published with a fair degree of steadiness and consistence ever since----and doubtless they will go on being published till types and eggshell papers are no more.

The reason for this lies in the fact that when a given person has actually started exploring for himself in valid mystical research, and begun to acquire the first cognitions that "dead" people have apparently conversed with him, his immediate reaction is to stumble wildly from the psychical laboratory and make for a typewriter with maximum speed. He wants to shout his discoveries to the universe, on the somewhat naive notion that he is the first man----or woman----in Cosmos to make them. Frankly, I set down in these opening pages of this personal testimony that I have been no exception to the impulse.

HAVING, up to the year 1928, lived nearly four decades of entirely normal existence, raised as a lad in a Methodist parsonage----as I shall doubtless have cause to refer to again----and embracing the calling of nondescript newspaperman until I graduated into the more affluent vocation of magazine writer and novelist, I looked upon all attempts to prove communication with the so-called dead as the screwball futilities of manifest maniacs.

My father's orthodoxy had taught me ever since I left kilts----kilts being the substitute for rompers when I was very young----that "there is no voice or knowledge in the grave where thou goest." In another place the Hebrew authorities said, "The dead know not anything." That settled the matter. Who was I, or my father, or any of my father's relations or colleagues in orthodoxy, to challenge the pronouncements of experts in Theology? As a matter of fact, I was far too busy being an ordinary young American with my own way to make, to give the slightest time or thought to

exploring into what some call the Eternal Verities and settling the matter one way or another.

Thirty-eight years, to be exact, I was complacently oblivious to these vast fundamentals. True, a lot of things had occurred from time to time in my life for which I had no explanation, and some had fecundities to make my flesh crawl. But I had never awakened in the moonlight of early morning and seen a spook trying to stand on its head in my bedchamber. I had never been present at a single funeral where the deceased had suddenly sat up in his casket and cried with blinking eyes, "Hey, what goes on?" In fact, I had been inclined to think that ghost-layers and spiritualists of all breeds were the acme of fakers who should be disposed of upon demise in the conventional manner of drowning cats in bags. Put 'em in a sack, tie the top stoutly, drop 'em well weighted with stones in the nearest mill-pond, and then taunt' em with the invitation to come back and haunt one.

Only once in my life had I been adequately terrified by supernatural phenomena----or what at first I took to be such----and that was a June night up behind the campus of Syracuse University, when I elected to stroll with a sweet young co-ed through a moonlit cemetery. Believe it or not, while lisping fond nothings into her ear, mine eye caught sight of one of the gravestones moving. I stopped lisping my fond nothings and stared glassy-eyed. The gravestone was moving, and there was no mistake about it. It was moving towards the pair of us, and when Cassie beheld it likewise she emitted a shriek and looped my neck crazily.

I aver that the gravestone levitated down towards us in the moonglade, and when it got within ten feet of us, it emitted a most relieving and bovine "Moo!" It was an old white

cow that had been cropping the cemetery's sweet grass with its head down. All the same, I might add that I got the' ell out of that cemetery by leaping all the gravestones that were stationary----with Cassie clutched behind me in a smear.

Real supernatural phenomena, I repeat, had left me alone. It wasn't until thirty-eight summers of my wasted young career had fled, that I actually came to grips in California----and later New York----with Facts of Life that brought me up short and bashed me in the forehead.

But when they DID happen, it seemed that I couldn't bawl about them loudly enough. I was like the usual human infant who makes the stupendous discovery that each foot on each ankle totals five toes per foot. I not only regarded this discovery as something never stumbled upon by the human race before, but I wanted to publish it in Gath and tell it raucously in the thoroughfares of Ascalon.

I did publish it in Gath and tell it raucously in the thoroughfares of Ascalon. And after a time, as I continued to go from experience to experience and from experiment to experiment in various types of psychical research, I fear me that I acquired quite a bit of a notoriety about it. None of which is saying that all people believed it. Back in 1941, when I was engaged in the bitterest kind of a political battle with predatory Marxists, I constantly met people who said: "We follow you in all your political and economic theories, and think you've done the country a splendid service by your publishings. But why have you ever let yourself become messed up in all this spiritualistic and psychical research tommyrot? Delving into such alchemistic nonsense, discounts and depreciates all the fighting you've done to save the Republic from the Communists."

Well, it would take a long time to enlighten such critics as to why I may have done so, and ten chances to one they wouldn't accredit me anyhow. But here's the thing I'm getting at

I FANCY that I'm growing a bit mellower and more rational, as the years rock along, about all this psychic and mystic lore----and I can write about most of what I've experienced, now, in a relieving retrospect.

As a matter of fact, I've reached the point in the compilation of my philosophy where there actually aren't any "dead" to me, at all.

Death simply isn't much of a factor in my psychology. True, some of my most intimate friends frequently decide to embark upon Sabbath afternoon motor rides, approach grade crossings without noting signal lights, and spatter generous consignments of their personalities over the pilots of locomotives. They are brought home in sections, even with sundry portions missing, and three days later I am summoned to follow my gift of flowers to some mortuary where a parson laments that Joe or Fred or Mabel has been "cut down" or "cut off" in his or her prime and that the ways of Providence are too abstruse to follow. There is not the slightest chance of arguing successfully that they are not "dead," because one look in the box is all that is necessary to prove that they will never climb out of it and order another cheeseburger in a neighborhood Toddle House. Physically, of course, I must concede that what was mortal of Joe or Fred or Mabel is more or less an exhibit of mundane debris. In that sense there is "death." But spiritually speaking, I am finding myself no more impressed about all of it than I am impressed by the

fact that the elm trees this autumn shed their summer leaves and will wave gaunt boughs to the American skies 'til about next April 10th.

If so be it I am in a psychical laboratory some night in the weeks succeeding, and Joe or Fred or Mabel "comes through" and cries through the lips of the Sensitive, "How'ya, Chief?" I'll not be upset in the slightest. Ten to one I will respond: "How'ya, Joe"----or Fred or Mabel as the case may be, "----how's the blooming temperature where you're working from now?"

I don't mean to be callous. I'm asking you, skeptic though you may be by reason of never having had my experiences with the "dead," to accept for the moment that whether a person has got a body or hasn't got a body, doesn't alter my attitude toward him in the slightest. Why all this pother over physical bodies?

A body to me is an instrument, a mechanism, an overcoat, that the human spirit put on by birth and occupies and functions in, for a handful of years, in order to get results of a material nature in a world of concrete substances. Otherwise it is an annoying "hunk o' lard."

It takes a long time to get this viewpoint----to arrive at the subconscious acceptance that the physical body is merely something of material convenience and utility, and that it has no more to do with the motivating spirit than the President of the United States has to do with the price at which the corner grocer sells cheese in Madison, Wisconsin.

Of course, having pursued such "studies" to some length, I've likewise accepted as a Fact of Life that such mortal spirits, previously known to me in flesh, have the option of coming back into new and unspoiled mechanisms and start-

ing the mortal tenancy all over. They have the option of doing it as many times as they have the courage and reasons for doing it. After all, it's their business.

All of which is saying indirectly that I've likewise gotten the business of so-called Reincarnation somewhat securely established in my mind.

Surely I accept that mortals come back onto this earth-plane more than once. Not to be ribald, some of them whom I meet in the day's experience, never could learn to be so dumb in one lifetime, anyhow. And the same thing goes for sagacity.

I don't fight these great fundamentals of life any more. I just call a truce with the dominies and take the findings of the seance room---and my own psychical fecundities---as I receive them. After all, fighting them isn't going to get me anywhere, and if Truth is Truth, what I'd better be about is a recognition of it, and a patterning of my daily career after it, and let the Almighty deal with the stupid.

SO WHAT I'm going to write for you now is merely a catalogue or chronology of "how I got that way," and what peculiar---and at times hair-raising---experiences came to me after the year 1928, convincing me that there is actually no such thing as "death" and that the loss of one's enhousing mortal overcoat is by no means the gravest misfortune which one's family or the world may lament.

Right now the United States poises on the brink of a devastating war with certain nations of Asia. If the plans of the predatory and designing Marxists carry out successfully, millions of fine young Americans will be impressed into military service shortly and before the brawl is over, have their

brains bashed out by a lot of Chinese pig-iron. Presently they will be back here in America, and demonstrating all over the place that they are no more dead than the people in mortal bodies are dead. The pedants will give it out that "a great wave of spiritist demonstration" is visiting afresh upon humanity. They will say it, of course, out of the depths of their abysmal ignorance.

What I simply wish to do is put down in black and white some of the outstanding adventures I have had---or contacted---or heard about---contributing to my psychology that "death" is a sophistry. I've got to predicate much of what I say upon the Reincarnational Hypothesis, of course, and for the moment, likewise, I'm asking that you ride along with me and try to get my angle. Now then, hear how the whole business started with me---bewildered, struggling, aspiring, purblind mortal exactly like yourself---suddenly plunged into all sorts of evidence that from the time I first arrived in my father's Methodist parsonage somebody had been spoofing me about losing my identity simply because I might take a motor ride some Sabbath afternoon and engage in an argument with a Baldwin locomotive.

But before we get down to tacks, I propose to talk a few pages about Pythagorean metaphysics.

Chapter II

FIRST, MOHAWK TRAIL ENIGMA



I **IS** my opinion after much observation, that no rational human being becomes a devotee of metaphysics unless he has first undergone some remarkable experience concerning natural phenomena, or has a queer welling-up of Cosmic Knowledge comes from the depths of his subconscious.

The last is more vital than most persons suspect. And it has but one origin: a definite memory of the past history of the soul, as, life on life, it experienced physical visitations!

I contend there is a substantial reason why over a million persons right here in America are disciples of faiths that make a tenet of recurrent birth. This subject of Continuity would never arise to perplex the human race if man did not carry in his subconscious mind vague recognitions of this life fundamental. His perplexity is really a form of conflict---between his own subconscious knowledge and the fiats of superstition.

For instance, we know that the human body doesn't survive, but is buried in the ground and subsequently disintegrates---and no one sheds a tear over such disintegration. Why not?

Because it isn't a cosmic verity. But the survival of the soul is a truth of the Cosmos and therefore it persists as a challenging equation. True, we don't know all the factors and rules of its solution. But the fact that there is a solution is expressed in the impulse toward determination of the process---the why and wherefore of the mystery as a mystery.

I KNOW that in my own life, up to nearly my fortieth year I had alternate periods, oscillating back and forth between doubt of continuity and conviction of it. I recall a bitter day in adolescence after I had read a pamphlet by an avowed atheist who had made out an excellent case for the termination of life with the cessation of the heart-beat. So clever was his logic that for twenty-four hours I existed in despair. I wasn't old enough to cross-question myself as to why I should feel that awful despair. What difference could it possibly have made to me that losing my identity was something to worry over? Whence came my worry? Why should it have occurred to me to want to survive at all? Such fears must have a sounder basis than mere self-awareness and the desire-wish to keep that self-awareness functioning. And after all just what was self-awareness?

Then in practical day-to-day newspaper work came flashes of vague revelation of a Reality higher and beyond this earthly endurance, that puzzled as they terrified me. I had uncanny presentiments of having lived in a certain place before, knowing features of terrain, feeling a familiarity with certain types of people that I tried to explain as hereditary instincts. Oh, more than all else, in my police reporting I would be called to see souls go out of the flesh by accident or tragedy. And I would behold on their faces a peace that

surely betokened a knowledge not of earth---an acquiescence to destiny that carried neither fright nor personal concernment.

At another time in my early thirties, I cranked a small cheap automobile in gear, at the top of a hill. It leaped into motion, bearing me down and dragging me 300 feet with my body beneath its chassis. Grimly clutching the refractory crank that had done the mischief, I was confident throughout every inch of those 300 feet that the termination of my life had certainly arrived. Yet, in that supremely tragic moment, all fear deserted me. I found myself saying, "Well, I've reached it. Now I'll see what this 'dying' is like."

And yet, on the other hand, these words were not positive proofs of psychic survival. I did much reading in biography, to see how others had solved the problem. But strangely enough, of Spiritualism and Theosophy I had little acquaintance. Looking back, it seems surpassing strange that when I lay down to sleep on an epochal night in California, and had the experience which has now been read by twenty millions of people, Spiritualism and Theosophy were even the least bit repulsive---the former because of the charlatanry practiced too often beneath its cloak, the latter because the newspapers reported the Theosophists as believing that the Master Christ would return to earth in the body of a youthful Hindu. Which was doubly repulsive. . . although again I did not pause to ask why.

MY FIRST introduction to the possible validity of natural phenomena came after World War I.

A few weeks before America joined the Allies, I was taken out of my Vermont newspaper office and sent on a war correspondent's job in the Orient. I left behind me in America, among other relatives, a brother-in-law 22 years old, with whom I had worked in a publishing business. We had been bosom pals, and had often lain together in bed at night discussing between ourselves this same question of survival. Just before I left for the Far East, however, this thing happened:

Knowing that I would probably be gone many months, on a Sunday afternoon in 1917 a group of friends and relatives made up a motor picnic on the Mohawk Trail outside of North Adams, Mass., as a little farewell outing. Among this group was this brother-in-law and a nurse from Brooklyn City Hospital, whom my brother-in-law had not met until this specific afternoon.

I shall call her Nurse Agnes.

This picnic party was be notable, though it passed at the time similar to many other outings, and the next week found me on my way to the Orient. While in Japan, the Siberian Intervention was determined upon and I enlisted in the only available position---that of Red Triangle secretary with the Japanese troops. I went to Siberia and became an impromptu consular courier, traveling 7,000 miles in that unhappy country during the early days of the Bolshevik regime. Coming down into Japan again, I found mail awaiting me that brought the first intelligence from home in many months. In that mail was a newspaper clipping containing an account of my brother-in-law's enlistment and subsequent

death of the "flu" at Camp Devens. This demise so affected my domestic affairs, that I cut short my trip and took the next eastward steamer.

Now my brother-in-law---whom I introduce as Ernest--- had married just before starting for Camp Devens, and his premature death left his bride so distraught that she turned to experiments in Spiritualism. The Spiritualists were holding their annual summer encampment at Lake Pleasant, Mass., near by, and she attended several of their sessions and contrived many sittings with trustworthy mediums. On my return to Vermont, she sought me out in quandary.

"I've heard from Ernest!" she announced. "But I don't know what to make of it. He 'came through' to a medium--- apparently---tried to convince me of his existence, and gave me explicit directions for solving financial problems left by his passing. But that wasn't all! Ernest kept saying over and over, 'Please thank the nurse of the Mohawk Trail for what she did for me!' What nurse could he have meant?"

Now Ernest's wife had not been with us on that motor picnic and had never met Nurse Agnes. Had Ernest mentioned her, I submit that his widow, Pauline, would have identified her. Still that isn't the point. Puzzled as to what the connection should have been between a soldier in Camp Devens and a graduate nurse in a Brooklyn hospital, I at once tried to get into communication with our nurse of the picnic. She had vanished! My family dismissed the matter for a time. In fact, a year passed. Then one day in Vermont we got a letter from our missing nurse. She was coming home from the Far East, where she had been in army service, and would presently visit us. The letter was mailed from Vladivostok.

Now I had been in Vladivostok several months before, and it seemed incredible that Nurse Agnes should have been stationed there without my knowing it. All the same, she had done so. Shortly after I had left for the Orient, she had resigned her position with the Brooklyn City Hospital and gone into army service.

Eventually she had been assigned to the contingent of American troops participating in the Intervention. She had arrived there with the American soldiers while I had been "in-country", and taken up her duties at the military base hospital in Golden Horn Bay.

I had come out when the war closed, gone through to Japan without seeing her, and eventually sailed home. Unique though the situation was, Nurse Agnes had been on that last picnic party on the Mohawk Trail in Massachusetts before I left the United States, and she had been back in Vladivostok when I left the Far East for my return trip home.

It was this peculiarity of leaving her behind me at each end of the trip that caused comment in my family for a period. Finally the day came when Nurse Agnes stepped off the train in Vermont, came to the house, and sat down with us for the evening meal---meal at which the conversation naturally was concerned with our Siberian experiences.

We talked about the Czechoslovakians, the Bolsheviks and the Japanese. Finally we got around to a discussion of the part played by the American soldiers in the war. That brought up a reference to the cruel inroads of influenza among the troops in the draft camps throughout the closing months of 1918. My wife was deeply affected.

"You know, of course," she remarked to Nurse Agnes, "that the flu got Ernest at Camp Devens. He was among the first of the soldiers to die from it. He never got over to France."

Nurse Agnes had a queer expression on her face. "I ought to know," she said. "Your brother Ernest died in my arms!"

For an instant an electric suspense held about our table. My wife found voice enough to ask, "Were you at Camp Devens?"

Nurse Agnes nodded. "It was my first assignment after leaving Brooklyn Hospital for the army service. I began nursing the boys at Camp Devens and stayed until orders came for my transfer to the Orient."

"And Ernest died in your arms!"

"He was one of my first patients. I remembered him at once. We were all of us on a picnic together, you recall, on the Mohawk Trail the Sunday before you left for the Coast to take ship to Japan."

Silence came then and lasted so long that Agnes demanded to be told what made it.

"Ernest came to his widowed bride, Pauline," I answered, "through a trance medium at Lake Pleasant, and told her to thank you for making his last hours comfortable."

It was then Nurse Agnes's turn to be jolted. .

CONSIDER as a scientific psychical fact, this thing that had happened. Ernest had gone to Camp Devens and died of the flu long after we had quitted the United States. His body had been shipped home to his widow and he had been buried. Pauline had not given a thought to any special nurse, or nurses, at the base hospital who might have cared for her husband, until the medium had conveyed that

revealing message at Lake Pleasant. She had been too much immersed in her grief to think of much besides her loss. "The Nurse of the Mohawk Trail" meant nothing to her, either, I say again, for had she been present on the picnic, or had Ernest mentioned her before he departed for his fatal rendezvous at camp, Pauline would have had no difficulty in placing the nurse mentioned in the medium's communication. The whole episode had been sealed, however, till Nurse Agnes came home, sat at our table, and unlocked it by her statement. The medium herself had known nothing about Pauline's visit, in order to prepare herself for giving such a message in advance, for Pauline had gone to Lake Pleasant alone and capriciously on the spur of the moment. Here, evidently, was a bona fide and unchallengeable instance of the conscious soul of our soldier-boy getting a message through to his folks after physical demise, about a person whose own testimony was required months later to make it intelligible.

I remember going to bed that night, and for many nights thereafter, trying to figure out how the medium could have rooked Pauline. There had been no connection between the medium and Nurse Agnes, for the latter had departed for Vladivostok soon after, and besides, Nurse Agnes had no use for mediums and never consulted them. Certainly she would not consult one in regard to my brother-in-law, who had simply been a deceased soldier whom she had happened to meet once, on a Sunday afternoon picnic.

When I had exhausted all explanations having to do with intentional fraud and trickery---my practical mind seeking some solution that had to be strictly material---I finally accepted the more rational causation for the incident: that Ernest must be alive, and existing in a thinking state---a state

that contained functioning memory---for him to have mentioned Nurse Agnes at all.

Ernest, as a matter of fact, was protagonist of my psychical discoveries, on and off, for the ensuing ten years. He was to bob up again and again in my experiments and experiences as I shall presently relate.

The war nurse who had closed his eyes in Camp Devens, had come back to the United States and reported her part in the little drama, in 1920.

Five or six years were to pass before I next got proof of another sort confirming his "survival"

MY NEXT concrete contact with the subject of discarnate intelligence came in 1925 in Springfield, Mass.

I had gone to that city to spend a vacation with my married sister, Edna. Among her recent acquisitions had been an ouija board. She brought it out one evening and asked me if I had ever seen one work. I pooh-poohed such nonsense till she asked me to sit down opposite her and try my hands upon it.

Immediately with celerity the tripod started moving. We went through the usual banter---or I did---accusing one another of subconsciously shoving it. But soon the little table commenced to spell out a message that I realized could only have come from Ernest again. He---or at least the planchette---was spelling out a reference to something that had happened up in Vermont between Ernest and myself that Edna did not know about. I said "across the board" to my sister, "Do you think you might be able to work this gadget without my hands upon it?"

"Why?" asked Edna.

"Because if this is Ernest operating the planchette, I want to put a question to him absolutely proving his identity without my hands formulating the answer from my subconscious mind."

"Go ahead," said Edna, "I'll try."

"Ernest," I addressed the blank atmosphere, "if you're within sound of my voice and recall our business transactions in Vermont, suppose you spell out the amount of money that you and I paid Verne Adams at Lake Raponda one Sunday afternoon as option money on lease of a building in Wilmington where we were intending to start a daily newspaper."

Having delivered myself of this, I sat back in my chair and shoved my hands to the small of my back.

With only Edna's hands on the gadget, the little wooden pointer shot swiftly about the alphabet and offered this answer:

"Ask me a hard one, Dud! We paid him ten bucks!"

IT WAS exactly the sort of answer that Ernest would have given had he been present in the flesh. Moreover, the sum named was absolutely accurate. Only he and I and the Adams party had known of the transaction. The Adams party was still up in Vermont and Edna scarcely knew of him. Only in the depths of my mind alone was the knowledge that Ernest and I had paid down a ten-dollar bill that Sunday to close the deal on the lease of that property. And as the planchette spelled out the sum, I was sitting three to four feet back from the table with my hands behind me. I know there is such a thing as Cryptothesis, or the reading of the mind by vigilant discarnates. But my sister Edna was by

no means one of these. She had simply touched her fingers lightly upon the pointer and the pointer had traveled unerringly to the figures.

What was I to think?

Edna took her hands from the board, leaned back in her chair and remarked, "You know, when I'm going about my housework during the day, I have the constant feeling that Ernest is going to step out around the corner of a door, or be waiting for me when I go upstairs."

She leaned forward and laid her fingers again upon the planchette. At once it shot into action. We followed the words it spelled---

"What's the matter with you, Edna? I'm not interested in scaring you. Don't you know that I'm your friend?"

After delivery of this quasi-consolation, the planchette wandered about the board's smooth surface for a time. Suddenly it shot into action again.

"Your Uncle Samuel," it spelled out, "is tonight lying at the point of death. We think he is about to make the Passing. You will receive a telegram in the morning that he is dead and the funeral set for Tuesday. Better get ready to attend it."

This was disconcerting. Uncle Samuel---my father's younger brother and my favorite uncle---lying at the point of death! And a funeral in prospect the first of the week! We looked at each other aghast.

"Well," I finally remarked, arising, "no matter what happens tomorrow, I'm due to get a disappointment. If the telegram comes, I've lost a beloved relative. If it doesn't come, I've lost faith in the evidence that the 'dead' are alive and can tell us what's about to happen in the future."

I wanted no more of the ouija board that night, however, and we went to troubled slumbers to await the morrow's developments.

Morning came. It brought no telegram. My Uncle Samuel was not dead.

We did not attend any funeral that Tuesday.

"Aha!" I said to Edna. "Your ouija board is a lot of applesauce!"

"Yes," she agreed ruefully, "I suppose it is."

Dismissing the whole episode from my mind as some freak of the subconscious, I went back to my literary labors in New York.

But mark you what happened---

Three months later Edna was visiting in Lynn, Mass., and started telling about the incident of the Ouija message. "What specific date was it?" my uncle's wife cried. Edna fixed the date precisely.

"That was exactly the night," my aunt affirmed, "that Sam was so afflicted with blood-poisoning from a carbuncle on his neck, that we didn't expect him to live until morning."

Edna wrote me what she had learned.

"Well," I thought to myself, "it might easily be explained by mental telepathy!"

STILL I had no real faith in the validity of Spiritism---no satisfying proofs of discarnate consciousness. I tried to "wade through" a book by Sir Oliver Lodge, and tossed it aside as bizarre or banal. I even wrote a facetious---and happily, unpublished---magazine story in which I made a great dramatic wallop out of the possibility that Raymond was

alive somewhere in flesh, but couldn't communicate with his family because it would blast his father's high prestige.

It was not until the early part of 1928, when I had withdrawn to a little writing-bungalow near the foot of Mt. Lowe in Altadena, California, that the mystic curtain suddenly rolled backward and showed me something of the colossal, beautiful machinery that operates---as I call it---behind physical life.

I have told elsewhere how I was writing a book on "The Urge of Peoples" that should try to explain great racial migrations throughout ages past. One day I came suddenly against the question: "What were races?" Why should one group of human beings be black-skinned, and another group yellow?

Before morning I would have many answers. I have told how I went to bed pondering the question, to read until I was drowsy and then drop off to sleep. I have stated that I was in excellent health, not given to any mental depression or addicted to drugs beyond the ordinary smoker's consumption of nicotine which had been going on for twenty years with no untoward results on my heart or my health. In "My Seven Minutes in Eternity" I have narrated what happened that night. I went out of the physical body-to all intents and purposes. I met Ernest face to face. I met other relatives, I met friends whom I had known in other life cycles and previous states of physical consciousness! And I knew them as familiarly and intimately as I knew those who, like Ernest, had been as close to me as Bill Pelley in this life!

Ultimately I will print later on in this story what my friends on the other side have had to say since about my visit with them that epochal night. But it wasn't until I had returned

into my body, stunned by what I had seen and learned, that I began to get proofs of continuity and individual survival that should convince others beyond all assailment that earthly life is but a visit in a room, visits in many rooms, life upon life.

If I bear a little bit heavily, and to some unpleasantly, on the process of rebirth, life cycle on life cycle in physical bodies, I ask indulgence. What I have seen, what I have been taught, what I have received as bits of mosaic in the great splendid pattern of cosmic logic, is responsible for my position. Follow through the whole extent of my delineations, however, concerning cycles of rebirth, whatever your creed or personal preferences, and perchance I may be able to alter some of your antagonisms if you have them. And what I have to say may possibly help awaken your own psychic faculties.

Of course, as I have often stated, the psychologists, the psychiatrists and the students of psychosis have since gone to great lengths to explain how I merely had a "dream" that California night. But after all is said and done, there should be more than one man's say-so to convince the skeptics that such an experience was actual and not hallucination. Regardless of how I feel toward the realism of the experience myself, the fact remains that my personal mental or spiritual adventures cannot be checked by others from the mere telling of the story alone.

So it is that I now propose to go further into my personal proofs of survival from my own investigations and experiences with others, to show how that California experience was only the commencement of a realization of a vast cosmic fact.

And that story begins with my arrival in New York City during the summer of 1928 to consult with some members of the New York Society for Psychical Research about the phenomena I had undergone.

I had suddenly found myself plunged out of my depth into a great sea of demonstrable mysticism. Scarcely knowing "what it was all about," I had found myself prime actor in a stupendous drama of Aggressive Discarnation. Of course I know now "what it was all about." It was, in a way, my role and brevet to contribute to a vast tidal-wave of enlightenment on the question of occupancy of flesh, and provide a prologue as I was able by means of my prestige in literary craftsmanship to the vast Aquarian Revelation that was slated to visit upon current humanity, altering the concepts of orthodox religion and giving man his correct cue as to what he might be doing in the three-dimensional octave and what evolutions of spirit await him when he has mastered the lessons of Mortality. For such had I volunteered to enact my life-role in the first place.

The enigma of Ernest and Nurse Agnes, resulting from that picnic on the Mohawk Trail, was the first indication that had come to me in thirty-eight years, however, that perchance this business of "the dead knowing not anything" had been the pronouncement of pompous ignoramuses.

Maybe the "dead" were a whole lot more "alive" than we mortals in flesh, down here on the sea-bottom of this ocean of atmosphere. The year 1928 was my wholesale introduction to the certainty of it. I closed my affairs in California and took an apartment in New York.

Chapter III

AFTERMATH OF SEVEN MINUTES



HAD been in a strange state of stupefaction, as it were, in the days immediately following my nocturnal experience in my Altadena bungalow.

I knew that I had "been somewhere" and met and talked in a baffling way with entities whom the world would consider as "dead." And yet, to go out in the street and proclaim it would only get me branded as an idiot or liar. What had happened to me, so long as I had no way of checking up on it through others, or proving it to others in the developments of circumstance, must always remain as a personal experience, a personal illumination.

I had no mind to take anyone into my confidence about it. In fact, I came out of seclusion with the idea of keeping it forever to myself. I was too upset philosophically, from what I had seen and heard, to do much more than ponder it and try to assimilate its astounding significance.

True, something had happened to me physically as a result of it, because I had a small office staff of employees in a Pasadena business in which I was interested, who immediately began exclaiming at some elusive alteration in my personal

appearance. But auto-suggestions arrived at in sleep, might easily be responsible for such bodily enhancement, so I let them exclaim and applied myself to business.

Finally I decided to get away from California and go to New York. I wanted a perspective on myself and my environment---not to mention the possibility of talking with students of such phenomena and finding out whether or not they could give me interpretation of some phases of Cosmology I seemed to have had relayed to me from the Other Side which I believed I had visited. If other people had undergone similar visitations that checked up with mine in detail---as to procedure and the environment visited---then I might begin to credit that my cognizance of Reality had not been self-delusion. Once during an attack of typhoid fever, I had known the seeming reality of delusions and illusions, and was not minded to hoax myself when my whole future career might depend on the validity of the episode.

THE morning before starting for New York, however, a strange thing happened, which I have already mentioned in previous writings. I was standing in the livingroom of my bungalow with briar in one hand and tobacco tin in the other. As I started to fill my pipe, something struck the tobacco tin, seemingly from beneath. The can spun an arc in the air just above my hands and spilled broadcast along the rug. At the moment of this uncanny happening, I heard my first clairaudient voice. It said---"Bill, give up your smoking!" I looked at the spilled can lying near my feet and felt a weird thrill of fright. Later in the day, when I essayed to draw forth a package of cigarettes, I heard a repetition of the first beseechment. But this thing

was notable: the following evening I commenced to have a strange aversion to the taste of tobacco. By the next morning all desire for it had gone and for the ensuing eight months I had not the slightest hunger for it in any form. I might interpolate here that one evening in Manhattan, eight months later, the same Voice that had appealed to me to give up my smoking came to me in the same manner in the course of a psychic message and instructed me to send out to the corner drugstore for a packet of cigarettes.

"We think you had better resume smoking," the instruction came. "It seems to open up your subconscious mind by relaxing your nerves and thus you are a better receiving organism. But don't dissipate in nicotine or we will kill the taste for it in you again!"

Leaving Pasadena finally, en route for New York, I was riding across New Mexico the second night out when my third dramatic experience occurred in the club car.

I WAS alone in the club car about 10:30 at night. All the other passengers had gone back to their berths. Only the Negro porter was present in the buffet, getting his affairs closed up for the day. I had put a copy of Emerson in my bag and happened at the moment to be reading his "Over-Soul." I was not asleep, not even drowsy. The car clicked monotonously eastward, eastward.

Suddenly as I turned a page, something happened! I seemed to be bathed in a deluge of pure white light on that moving Pullman. A great flood of Revelation came to me out of which a Voice spoke to me such as I had never heard before. What it said, I prefer to keep permanently to my-

self. But in that instant I knew that my bungalow experience had not been a dream, or even hallucination. Particularly I knew of the reality of that Entity whom the world now designates as Jesus of Nazareth!

I knew that He was not a mystical religious ideal.

I knew His ministry and career had been a literal actuality and that I had once seen Him when He was thus in His flesh!

I MAKE this statement guardedly and in full realization of its dramatic import. I knew in those moments in that empty club car that all the emotional reactions I had known during my life up till then about Him had not been delusions of grandeur, nor superiority complexes. Jesus of Nazareth was not afar on some distant golden throne. He was here in a modern world of Pullmans and Negro porters, radio and tabloids, chain shirt shops and talking movies.

I remained inert in that club car till long after the Negro porter was snoring in his berth toward the front of the coach. When I got to my feet and went back to my own berth, I had an entirely new concept of my future.

THIS sounds, I know, like a Messianic complex. Perhaps many a character since the Palestinian incarnation of the Master who has been able to give humanity a new interpretation of that splendid Personality, has also been dismissed into the Messianic complex classification. No matter! I knew what I knew! And I was calmly content from that night onward to let events take their course, for I had a strange feeling that all would be well if I but kept my pact.

This, I might say, has come out literally in fact!

All that had happened, however, had happened to me privately. Still there was nothing that I could present to scientific-minded persons in proof of these two phenomenal episodes. Not that it was necessary to convince others. But all the same, having been a practical newspaperman with a practical newspaperman's outlook on strange fads and "isms," I had no mind to go skewed in my thinking and develop a crack in an otherwise serviceable intellect.

I rode the rest of the way to New York not doing any reading, for reading was impossible. I watched the landscape in a stupefied daze.

Then, going across Indiana on the New York Central two days later, which happened to fall on a Sunday afternoon, I heard the Clairaudient Voice a third time. Understand, it did not come to me at my own behest or invitation. On none of the previous occasions had I expected it. So now, when I had reached the place where I dared wonder consciously about the phenomenon in New Mexico, my thought was answered with an audible sentence.

AGAIN it serves no purpose to tell what the question was which I was cogitating upon, or the answer I received. But it was a direct confirmation of the fact that there was a greater significance to my vivid concepts of Jesus throughout childhood and adolescence than mere delusions or Messianic complexes.

I got to New York appalled by what was occurring to me and to the work which I seemed bidden to do in interpreting phases of Messianic doctrine, which up to that time had been as abstruse to me as to any purblind ecclesiastic. But the

last thought in my mind was to tell anyone of these private communications, or make any claims about having contact with the Entities I was being forced to credit from overpowering contact. Neither did I expect at that time that events in circumstance would begin to bear out these prognostications which appalled me.

I got a room at the Commodore and called a lady friend whom I knew to be almost an adept in psychical research and a particularly devout and lovely soul. I apprised her of my arrival in town and asked if I could visit her in her apartment that evening. The phone conversation ended by her promising to come to the hotel and have dinner with me first.

SHE kept the appointment. But here again, I got the outward evidence of queer things afoot when she confronted me in the Commodore's foyer. Her face went white. She exclaimed: "For pity's sake, what's happened to you? You're not the same man who went to California a few months ago!"

I smiled away her temporary wonderment and we had our dinner. She persistently questioned me about my experiences since we had last seen each other. Finally, out in the ladies' lounge, I was cajoled into telling her of my nocturnal experience.

"My dear boy," were her well-remembered words, "you got out of your body---unhinged something---and went somewhere."

"How do you know?" I demanded.

"In the first place," she said, "the technique of the whole experience checks up perfectly with similar experiences which

hundreds of other persons are constantly having. Secondly, I'm psychically aware at this moment of a discarnate entity of particularly beautiful character standing near your shoulder and giving me interpretations of it in complete impressions which I understand perfectly."

YOU mean I actually died, that night in Altadena, but returned after death to my physical body?"

"Something of the sort. Have you ever done any automatic writing?"

"I've heard of it in a vague way," I said. "But I never saw it actually performed."

"Let's go up to my apartment," she suggested. "Let's prepare to take an automatic message and see if anything confirmatory comes."

A half-hour later we were settled in a beautiful room in the West Fifties with a cheery fire going in the grate and the New York noises shut out by heavy curtains. My friend had drawn a small low table over close to her knees. Now she invited me to sit down on the divan at her right, beside her. Sharpened pencils and a generous pad of paper had been provided. She turned back the cuff on her right wrist and bade me grasp her hand just below her palm.

"Hold it tightly," she instructed, "as though to keep me from writing, but leave your elbow working freely so that my whole hand and arm in conjunction with yours can make swinging penmanship."

I did so. She rested the sharpened pencil point on the pad and leaned back in easy relaxation.

Suddenly our two hands started to move in unison. The pencil before us began making rhythmic swings and circles!

IT SEEMED at first as though my friend was deliberately making the geometric figures which followed with acceleration as our combined grasp became more and more elastic. Then to my amazement, a long, round, flowing script began to form beneath the pencil, reaching the end of the line and coming back with a flourish to begin a new one.

This is what was written: "Memory is not memory if we must make new thought-bodies when we give up our material bodies. Man will some day know the truth and then we will make real bodies in the image of God.

"Make no mistake, we are those who are now in the light and we have much to tell you. 'Music of the Spheres' is no idle phrase, but the very center of the mystery of the creation of this, your universe!

"Where there is Harmony, there is Life, and all discord is Death. We of the more harmonious plane which is next above the plane of earth, make this statement to you because you are of that company whose bodies are yet of earth but whose eyes are opened to perception of the Truth. Many of us are with you, not alone at this moment but in many moments when you are unaware of our presence. We will endeavor to make more power for you in all that you undertake if you will endeavor to open yourselves more completely to our touch."

That was all! Wait as we would, no more writing appeared on the pad. Yet I knew that from the bodily position of my hostess, as well as from my own grip on her wrist, that she could not have consciously fabricated and written what lay before us on the paper. Moreover, there was so much we both wanted to know that had it been a subconscious effort,

we most certainly would have gone on writing for an indefinite period.

NOTHING happened all the next day. But I was back in my psychic friend's apartment promptly at 7:30 the ensuing evening, prepared to try the strange writing again. All this time no other manifestations of the clairaudient voice had come to me personally beyond those reported.

Promptly that we got into working posture that next night, however, the sharpened pencilpoint started off with vigor. Following is the literal lengthy message we got on the second evening of our experimenting, without a word or punctuation mark changed. I might say that I carefully preserved every scrap of paper, and for years have taken care of every word of Intelligence which has Come Over thus---or in any sitting at which I have been present---transcribing it carefully and filing it for future reference.

I HAD no intimation in any of these nightly writings as to what was imminent over the pencil. After my first awe at the phenomenon wore off, I found courage to interject questions. The flowing script would halt at any time and answer these questions carefully and considerately. But in those first evenings of communication, I sat more or less dumbfounded beside my friend and watched the words compose an intelligent and oftentimes profound exposition beneath her hand.

That she was not composig the material from the storehouse of her subconscious mind was indicated by the fact that she also was as interested and curious as myself.

After a few preliminary swirls and swinging designs, this is the second message we received---

"MANY are the ways in which we approach those we are to help. Many of your most important acts are motivated by us. We are often able to make an impression upon you when you least suspect our presence. We are in the very cores of your hearts, as it were, and from there we control your thoughts as the circulation of the blood is controlled by that organ. We are in your very midst and all you need to do is to unbolt the door.

"Memory is the very essence of what you know as Life. We know that Memory is only one phase of life, and that the more vital aspect of living is in the creation of new memories which in turn will be replaced by others. We are of particular value to you in this, because the new memories must be finer and more beautiful than those you have outgrown.

"Many are the lessons of adversity and few there be who find their true meaning and are ready to pass on to the next.

"THERE is in all the universe no force but that of Love. All hatred, all evil and all ugliness, are merely the absence of the positive pole, which is Love. Many of the evils, so called, are not even the result of the absence of this force but are the result of its operation on a plane beyond your limited comprehension.

"So be always sure when you complain of trouble that it is not a blessing in another guise. When you are distraught with the world's complexities, pause a moment in memory of us and of what we have told you, and we will speak to you in the reality of Silence. When you feel there is someone who guides you, always know that it means we are with you. Trust us, no matter how steep the path up which we lead you. There is nothing to be learned in the pleasant

paths of dalliance that lead smoothly through the valleys. The higher the hill-top, the broader the view, whether to eyes of body or of spirit.

"Sometimes your feet may falter, but remember then that only those who go on in spite of the faltering win through to the goal. Most of the world's present generation is incapable of this high enterprise. That only makes the obligation the more vital for those who are ready for it. . . .

"SINCE there is only Love in the universe, there is health and joy in the perception and appreciation of that fact. There can be no situation so grave or no situation so trivial that this law is not operative. Business is not business unless it be also Love. We are not working for the material benefit of those who serve us except as that material benefit will free them for wider and finer service. When you have served your apprenticeship in tribulation, either in this life or in an earlier one, you are ready for the freedom which comes close on the heels of financial independence.

"Know that in the world of True Reality obligations are only privileges! Now is the moment of fulfillment which was planned from the beginning. We have been with you because we all make up a company that will carry on what has been begun in all ages since first man made an image and Art was born.

"It is a goodly company, this fellowship of those who love Beauty and therefore open their hearts to Truth. They have not always been conscious of their high destiny and some of them have dropped the chalice from hands made weak with selfishness or paralyzed with hate. And yet even

these lesser ones had flashes of truth more vital than all the organized religions of the world in their lust for power.

"NOT theology but Art is the very handmaiden of God, and the chosen priesthood of the Temple is recruited, not from the clergy in their frocks but from the ranks of artists, clad in the humble smocks which are the mark of their trade. Not that only the painter is the priest; we liked that figure of speech and so made one branch of Art stand for all the rest.

"No matter how far Man may go along his destined path of evolution, the artist must still in imagination blaze the trail which the world of men will follow, with the scientist well toward the rear and the theologian struggling along behind. This does not include all scientists or all theologians; occasionally one of them is also an artist. And just insofar as he is an artist, he is a force for the good he preaches or the knowledge with which he would enlighten the world.

"For Art is the grandest of all the Mysteries.

"As we have no formulae for the creation of the thing we call Life, so we have no definition for the thing we call Art. Words are only symbols and when you apply them to the eternal verities they become only symbols for the limitation of the human concept.

"So Art is to each man the highest good he is able to conceive, and the deepest beauty he is able to perceive, in whatever aspect of Man, Nature or God he is at the moment contemplating.

"If his conception is in its essence true, if his perception is in its essence accurate, and if in his heart the forces of love are operative, then he has what we call the Creative Instinct

and the thing which he produces is worthy to be called Art. "Only remember, . . . that there may be Art in the simplest act of the humblest creature's day.

"Art is spirit, and they that worship her must worship her in spirit and in truth. Many of the greatest artists have known the truth and shut their hearts to her because the price was too heavy to pay.

"They did not know that all the price was the relinquishing of the bonds of limitation, and that only in paying the price could they taste the very joys for which they refused it!"

I SUBMIT that this sort of thing, exactly as I have reprinted it above, with scarcely a punctuation mark altered, would cause any reasoning person to credit its origin. Of course it could have been composed in the lady's subconscious and the fact that we had received it in the context of the foregoing did not prove that the "dead" were alive and were giving it to us. Nevertheless, I accepted it as post-mortem communication for the time being and waited to see what more would develop. It is physically impossible in the space at my command to go on reprinting the messages that continued to come over in the fortnight that now ensued. At least it is impossible to continue reprinting the matter within this series of narratives of my own experiences which finally convinced me that discarnate intelligence was an actuality. Over a period of 26 years I continued to receive these papers, and my original purpose in founding a publishing house was to reprint the most interesting and vital of them.

For two weeks, however, I was in almost constant evening attendance on my Unseen Mentors in my friend's apartment. Then my private affairs necessitated my return to

the Pacific Coast. My going, nevertheless, was marked by its bit of psychical drama.

WE WERE writing together one evening on an expositional message when the pencil stopped suddenly. For some moments it lay inert. Then it started up suddenly and said---

"Leave New York, William! Go at once to California. You have planned to stop off in Chicago. We advise you not to do so. Go immediately to Pasadena as your presence is urgently needed out there for reasons that will become apparent to you on your arrival."

This directive disrupted plans I had made to stop off in the midland city and do some fiction work for a group of magazines published there. I demurred at going through to the Coast at once. The pencil wrote---

"If when you get to Chicago you feel a strong impulse not to tarry, obey it. You will know that it is we guiding you, because of events in California climaxing in such a way that you will be sorry if you miss them."

I had no intimation of what those events might be. Nonetheless I returned to my hotel that final evening, packed my grips, and made reservations on a train leaving late the following night.

But all through the night I had a queer presentiment that I had taken reservations on the wrong train. I could hear nothing clairaudiently in support of this impression; still it bothered me. I got up next morning determined to ask my friend if she could arrange to sit with me that afternoon and find out if I were being warned away from some sort of catastrophe. She complied during the forenoon and we got

this message---"Of course what you are feeling is our influence directing you. We do not want you to take the train you have decided upon. Go upon the Century at one-forty this afternoon. You will see the reasons for this later. You will also find that reservations on the Century will be readily obtainable for you."

AT THE time I fully supposed that some sort of accident was due to happen to the train I had first selected. Later I discovered the reason to be something entirely different but no less vital.

I bade good-bye to my companion, got reservations on the Century as indicated, and left Manhattan for Chicago. Whereupon this thing occurred---

Increasingly I felt that I should not tarry, but get to the Coast at once. I alighted in Chicago around noontime next day and made immediate reservations for the California journey via the Santa Fe. The Santa Fe train however, did not leave until 8 o'clock that evening. So I went wandering about Chicago "killing time."

If my memory serves me correctly, I believe it was on Thanksgiving Day, 1928, that I thus went wandering about the Windy City---either Thanksgiving Day or a Sunday, for the streets in the downtown section were deserted of traffic. Up one street and down another I strolled; with a queer feeling that my footsteps were being directed. I wondered if I were being led to meet someone who might have an important bearing on my affairs. But I encountered only strangers and began to be a bit disappointed. Finally I saw a movie house down a side street and directed my steps thither.

I will not record what film it was that I paid admission to see. But this is notable: the film story had a plot so analogous to my own affairs at the moment that the similarity was uncanny. And the denouement of the drama sent me out of the theatre and over to the LaSalle Hotel where I composed a letter to someone back East to whom I had not written for months. While this incident is too personal to narrate in detail, I discovered when I got to the Pacific Coast---because of unopened mail waiting there for me---that had I not witnessed that photoplay in Chicago and written that resultant letter the exact hour that I did, I would have become involved in a particularly ugly and expensive lawsuit.

PERHAPS it is rationalizing to say that my Unseen Friend altered my train route, walked me about Chicago and into that particular movie house to see that specific film and write the ensuing letter, in order to save me that lawsuit. Rationalizing or not, that is what happened all the same, although one wonders why they could not have told me directly over the pencil in New York to write the letter and save myself the lawsuit. In fact, on asking later why the latter course was not pursued, the answer came-

"Had we told you how things stood with the person to whom you wrote the pacifying letter, you would have gotten in contact with him personally while in New York and your personal contact would have aggravated, not mitigated the situation. We took that method of guiding you also, to get you accustomed to obeying such 'hunches' in order that in future affairs you might the more readily have confidence in us."

Whether this was discarnate direction or not, the incident

is of interest. It happened and had a beneficial result. At any rate, I took the Santa Fe for California at 8 o'clock and three days later alighted in Pasadena without incident en route. Going to my office I discovered nothing there of sufficient import to hasten me West from Manhattan, and again I wondered if it had all been subconscious mind. On going to my home however, I discovered a message there that seemed to give a different aspect to the trip.

In California I had another lady acquaintance with whom I was involved in a business deal. We had together acquired some real estate that we were subdividing, but I had not heard from this friend during my absence in New York. I assumed she was following her vocation of trained nurse in the Pasadena Hospital. This message awaited me---

"Mother is very ill and not expected to live. I am down in Pomona caring for her. If you wish to see me for any reason, communicate with me there. I shall stay with her until she either recovers or passes."

Extremely concerned for the health of my friend's mother, I got out my car and made the hour's trip down to Pomona that same afternoon. Arriving at the home, I found I had not come a moment too soon. The mother was not expected to live through the night.

SHE DID not live through the night. And in that circumstance I saw the reason why I had been brought West in such a hurry, for the death of this elderly lady---whom I had known more or less intimately---later had a direct and vital bearing on my own psychic work.

She passed over at five minutes after six o'clock that same afternoon. And at her passing, this thing occurred--- All of her children had been called to her bedside and were with her when the end came. I did not go into the death chamber, feeling it an intrusion on the privacy of a family of which I was not a member. I sat in the living room trying to read a magazine, from time to time overhearing low-voiced comments of nurse and doctor by the bedside in the next room. Once, a moment or two after six o'clock my nurse friend emerged and said in tearful tones "She's almost gone; we can hardly detect any pulse." Then she entered the sick-room again.

At exactly five minutes past six o'clock, trying to apply myself to my magazine under such distressing circumstances, I suddenly felt a strange rush of cold exhilarating air. The day was warm; no doors or windows were open. Where could it have come from? What could it be?

I experienced a swift, sharp tensing of every nerve and muscle in my body as though the current from a galvanic battery were holding me for an instant in its grip. And with it was an "impression" of the sick mother's personality so strong that it seemed as though I must address her!

Instantly a sharp, despairing wail sounded in the adjoining chamber. A general sobbing followed. One of the sons came out of the sick-room.

"Mother's gone!" he stated simply. And he went out upon the veranda.

But I knew his mother had gone. I had known it at the electric instant of her passing. She seemed to have gone directly through me in her transition!

Anyway, that is how it felt.

THE HOUSEHOLD was of course upset for the rest of that evening. It was after eight o'clock, when the undertaker's wagon had left with the body, before my nurse friend was ready to accompany me back to Pasadena for the interim until the funeral.

To comfort her, on the way back I recounted to her my psychical experiences in Manhattan and the messages that had seemed to come from the Unseen.

"We'll be back in Pasadena by nine o'clock," said I. "As the hour isn't so very late, suppose we drive up to the bungalow and try the automatic writing together exactly as it was done in New York, only I'll hold the pencil."

We drove to my Altadena bungalow and prepared materials for automatic writing after the methods I had followed with my adept friend in Manhattan.

I had no idea of what might come over. It was honest experimenting in the hope that we might receive some word about the status of my companion's mother who had made the great transition that night at six o'clock. We sat at the desk in my living room, our only companion my big police dog. This dog stretched out before the hearth fire. The evening hilltop was strangely silent.

Suddenly the dog gave a wince as we waited with the tip of the pencil poised on the pad. She came up on her haunches with an uneasy growl; the hair arose on the scruff of her neck, and ears like steel shells seemed to be watching someone or "something" that had come into the room, invisible to my companion and myself.

Almost at once, the pencil began to move of its own volition!

WHAT IT was writing, at first I could not decipher. The penmanship had a queer right-handed slant that at times leaned over so far as to appear nearly horizontal. All the words were joined together to the end of the line.

Meanwhile the dog drew back toward a corner with a surprised, uneasy look and cocked her head curiously in the vicinity of the desk as though unable to figure out exactly what was happening.

Suddenly my friend gave a startled gasp and relaxed the hold on my wrist.

"It's writing in German!" she cried. " And I recognize the penmanship! It's my Grandfather S. . . . 's, who died twenty years ago!"

Personally I knew scarcely a word of German. Certainly if my subconscious mind had anything to do with the phenomenon produced, it could not be accused of writing German sentences in a penmanship recognizable as that of a man dead for two decades.

"What does it say?" I asked.

She replied: "It says, 'Your mother is now with us and will be quite all right. Do not grieve for her. She is much happier now that she is delivered of her load of physical pain.' "

The hand continued to write and my companion continued to translate---

"Do not expect any word from her directly for several weeks and perhaps months. She has a long period of slumber ahead of her in which she must recover her strength.' "

There was more, much more, but the material was private to my friend and appertained to her family affairs.

"Are you sure this is your grandfather's writing?" I asked in an interval for rest.

"It would be impossible to forget his writing, as you see," she replied. "It compares with his writing in our family Bible."

To test out the truth of the grandfather's identity I began to ask questions, where he was born, the names of his children, other details of his life which my friend could corroborate or contradict.

In practically every case the pencil replied in German giving the true facts, even to spelling out the name of a town in Germany of which I had never heard!

Of course cryptothesis, or subconscious mind-reading, might have accounted for it, but from later developments in New York I had cause to be convinced that we really had made contact with the grandfather. I will chronicle them later.

My friend was overcome. Here seemed to be evidence enough to convince any reasonable person that we were in contact. But more startling revelations were in store.

SUDDENLY, almost between sentences, the handwriting took a veer and altered in character. From leaning to the right, it now tipped abruptly backward and leaned toward the left--- a wholly altered penmanship. Here were the words produced---

"Hello, Dud, you old son of a gun! . . . I've been a long time trying to get through to you and now that I've got to you, I'm not going to give you up!"

My companion asked, "Who could be addressing you in any such manner?"

It was my turn to feel surprise. Outside of my immediate family, all members of whom were still alive, the only person who had ever called me by a contraction of my middle name was the brother-in-law, Ernest, mentioned in the second chapter of this book.

But more than the salutation gripped me. Ernest and I had been in business together the last few months of his life, enough so that from day-to-day contact I recognized his penmanship. He was left-handed and had a most peculiar manner of forming his capital letters.

Before me on the pad were letter-perfect samples of Ernest's peculiar handwriting, unmistakable in formation.

Accepting that he was present therefore, I went on to ask him questions about himself. Not only did I get sensible answers that seemed accurate on the face of them, but he told me things about certain members of the family---all of whom were residing on the other side of the continent---that I afterward found to be accurate when I came East and made inquiry.

MEANWHILE my police dog was acting most peculiarly.

She was not exactly fearful or angered, so much as excited. She paced around the room, hitting taborets and chairs, and knocking books and magazines off upon the rug. Finally she began a series of short, excited barkings---taking up her position in the hallway door and peering around the fireplace corner with more choppy barkings. Again and again I called to her to be quiet.

Suddenly the pencil wrote, "Do not scold your dog. She merely senses or sees our presence."

It was not Ernest's handwriting. It was the same penmanship in which my other friend and I had received our communications in that New York apartment, two weeks before. Before we ended the experiment that first evening one other remarkable incident occurred. The pencil continuing to write in the latter penmanship, started voluntarily giving me information about my past incarnations.

OF THESE, I cannot write. They are personal and private to myself alone. But they constitute some of the most remarkable phases and aspects of this whole enlightenment.

"On a certain day in the year 1913 you were in B. . . ." wrote the pencil. "You were standing in front of a certain monument in B. . . ., You were reading an inscription on that monument. You were reading your own inscription!"

Lest the accusation of a superiority complex arise here, let me say that the persons designated as my own former impersonations during the past 2000 years have not been people that would ever have emanated from my own subconscious of my own election. They have been people who kicked up more of a rumpus on the human stage than humanity especially liked at the time, and always in some proselytizing capacity that wrought alterations in the mode of humanity's living.

I have been few famous soldiers, poets, statesmen or potentates. The persons that I now am convinced that I have been were philosophical personages---somewhat unfamiliar to the public in their historical lives---and not until I hunted out their little-known biographies did I realize with a strange sensation up and down my spine that the incidents set forth in those biographies coincided to the letter with weird presentiments

and recurrent dreams which I had experienced all through childhood and adolescence.

IN MY "Seven Minutes" episode I had plenty of evidence to justify belief in the reincarnational hypothesis. But it had never occurred to me to wonder what other lives I had lived or how I had arrived at my present status of consciousness. I simply accepted the fact that I had lived other lives as I now accept the fact that I am living this life.

But over the entire year that now ensued, the most dramatic confirmation of these identities began to creep up in my affairs until I finally threw aside my skepticism and adopted an attitude of "Well, what of it?"

Let me add, however, that I am not one of those believers in reincarnation who hold that they have been famous persons in every life. Many of the lives with which I am reasonably familiar now, were quite "unwept, unhonored and unsung" ---thank God for that!

THAT evening with my nurse friend was the first of a series which we spent together taking down communications that could have had no reasonable source within our subconscious selves. For the pencil soon began to branch out into illuminatory discussions of metaphysics and treat of matters of which I had never heard. Months later in the East I was to discover that the papers I had begun to take thus in distant California constituted the fundamental premise of the whole esoteric doctrine known as Soulcraft.

We had been writing thus for a matter of three weeks, however, when in the middle of a profound discourse, the pencil began to cut strange capers. It started to write irrelevant

material. It made curlicues and pictures. It would "go dead," to start up again with queer jerks and dashes.

Finally one evening along toward eleven o'clock, it wrote "Hurry down to your office tonight. You have received an important check in the mail today that at present lies on your office rug where it became separated from the afternoon mail. Unless you rescue it, the night janitor may sweep it up in the rubbish."

I had an office at the time in a Pasadena business block and the message bore all the earmarks of friendly solicitation. As it was nearing time to deliver my companion at her home five miles away, we got into my car and went down to search for the missing check.

We aroused the night janitor, went up to the third floor of the building and unlocked the office.

No check was on the rug.

WE SEARCHED diligently. The janitor declared he had not swept the suite and no one had entered it since the employees had left.

Going into the inner room, we sat down before my business desk and resumed our positions with pencil and paper, asking explanation of the strange occurrence. The pencil responded jerkily but finally wrote---

"Sorry, old man. We made an error. It was not on your office floor that we saw the letter with check lying but on the floor of the post office. Better get over there at once and make inquiries."

With this explanation we went across town to the post office and gained the attention of the night clerk. Without

informing him of the source of our information, we asked him to make a search and ascertain if such a letter had come to me that day from the East---for the sender of the letter and the size of the check had been indicated.

The report was negative. I was puzzled and not a little troubled. What on earth was the matter?

Back to the office we went and made demand for another explanation, although the time was now nearing midnight.

"In the morning," wrote the pencil, "go to the post office immediately the postmaster himself, Mr. Black, is in his office and make him show you the contents of Lock Box 1736. He will turn out the missing letter to you from it--- where it has been picked up and put by mistake."

I LET the matter go for the night, took my companion home and returned to my own. Next morning I went to see the postmaster. Here was a strange angle of the case, by the way. In the message the pencil had designated the postmaster as Mr. Black. Personally at that time I did not know the postmaster's name. Making inquiries for him next morning, however, I found his name to be Mr. Knight. The idea was there, but had not been correctly interpreted.

No matter, I asked him to look in Lock Box 1736, which the pencil had declared was rented to a Mr. Slocum.

"That couldn't be possible," Mr. Knight said to me at once. "We have only two hundred lock boxes in this post office."

Postmaster Knight at Pasadena will doubtless recall the incident although he never knew exactly what sort of a puzzle I was working out.

"Is there a Mr. Slocum who rents a box in this office?"
I asked him.

"There is," Mr. Knight replied, giving me more courtesy than I have ever had at any post office before or since.

"Will you look in his box then, and tell me if there is a letter there for me tossed in there by mistake?" He would and he did.

There was no letter at all in Mr. Slocum's box!

I WAS now fully convinced that some sort of hoax was being played on me, but was also determined to learn how far it would go. As soon as I could contact my friend to write more with her, we got another alibi.

"Of course Mr. Slocum came in while you were on the way to the post office and emptied his box. He has carried your letter with check away with him. But he is an honest man and he will return it to you with apologies when he sees his error. You will find that it will turn up in your other post office box in Altadena."

I waited a day and made inquiries at Altadena. No letter appeared.

I went to the Western Union office and sent a wire East, asking the person from whom the check was said to be coming, if he had ever mailed me any such check.

The answer came back:

CANNOT UNDERSTAND YOUR QUERY STOP HAVE
MAILED NO CHECK SINCE WEEK AGO THURSDAY

The thing was a hoax from beginning to end.

I went back to the pencil and asked for explanation.

The pencil stayed "dead"

Up to this time I was unaware that there were such entities in existence as makers of mischief in the affairs of psychic persons, and that the levels just above mortal life held "unclean spirits who delight to confuse."

I assumed, as most people assume when they are convinced of the continuity of life, that anything given from the Unseen Dimensions must necessarily be truthful because of the sources and methods from which it is derived.

I had been brought up in the good old Methodist notion that when people died they immediately became heaven-like, or if they were "wicked" they were consigned to a Pit where there was wailing and gnashing of teeth---certainly not possessed of much chance for hoaxing and baffling mortal folk going about their honest affairs.

It took me several weeks to come into a recognition of my own people---the truth-tellers and bona fide instructors whose word could be more or less relied upon---by the technique of recognizing their "rates of vibration." I had opened up nerve centers in my body by my Seven Minutes experience which enabled me to sense this vibration caused by the presences of people near me, either in flesh or out of it. But I had not learned that each person has a different vibratory rate depending upon his identity, cosmic age, and the immortal "group" to which he belongs.

I had not become aware of the difference in these rates of vibration that would identify helpful, constructive, sympathetic persons from those whose only desire was to get expression by influencing whomever they were allowed to influence when psychical conditions on both sides were complied with.

I believed then, and I still believe, that the major portion of my early communications were simply pure and came from the individuals they affected to come from. I am convinced of this not only from the nature of the material transmitted to me, but through the vibratory discrimination I soon developed at the cost of great spiritual tumult and torment.

Every person who essays to investigate the machinery behind life, must pass through this period and learn the bitter lesson of experience.

It is typified in Christ's career by His Forty Days in the Wilderness where He was "tempted of Satan," taken to an exceedingly high mountain and shown the kingdoms of the world, taken to the heights of the temple and told to dash Himself down.

In the mystic studies of the East, the period is known as the time of Pledge Fever. Immediately the novice has pledged himself to study and expound these great constructive doctrines that will free the human race from its bondage of error and ignorance, he at once invites all manner of confusion and bafflement in his affairs. Decadent, malignant entities who can operate out of unseen areas of time and space precisely like the inspirational, constructive people, appear to do everything possible in their powers of darkness to weaken the resolve and turn the pupil back into the fogs of doubt, distress and piteous timidity.

Wise teachers of the mysteries know that this will come to every bona fide worker with great potentialities for constructive good. But I had no teachers. I was learning by the good old method of trial and error.

And I learned.

People constantly ask me why this sort of frustration of goodly works is "permitted." They seem to think that such activities should be prohibited or controlled by divine fiat. They forget in their indignation that mortal beings, in bodies or out of them, are absolutely free spirits who can do whatever they please, or be whatever they please.

If this election were not possible, the Almighty could make the universe "good" between now and midnight by speaking the Word. He does no such thing because the spirit of every man and woman is a literal cell of God developing in its own way as it chooses to develop. If it chooses to develop in Light and constructive Love, it goes on by the nature of its own activities into higher and higher forms of spiritual evolution. If it chooses to retrograde into darkness and confusions, it simply commits a sort of identity-suicide and extinguishes its own life, returning ultimately to the great ocean of universal spirit with its identity lost forever.

There are millions of souls who evolve to a certain point, then lose that inspiration to go onward because of some great temptation, shock or mental experience in one of their lives. They become recalcitrant and vicious, and instead of taking finer forms, life after life, they reappear as grosser and grosser persons, more and more ugly, more and more stupid, till in their moribund spleen and vengeance they become mass antagonists of those who have not defaulted but are developing and mounting steadily upward.

These are the "demons"---and the only demons---of Scripture and legend. But their power for mischief is incalculable when they find a newly awakened person who is not yet wise to their purposes and antics. They lose no opportunity to discredit

the advancing soul by throwing monkey wrenches into his affairs and frightening him away from further constructive effort.

That is why so much stamina is required to push on in spite of the adversity and bafflement which they introduce, and win through to correct methods for overcoming their functioning and mass activities.

AGAIN and again we got messages---or what purported to be messages---about my intimate affairs, which continued to be inaccurate. I was sorrowfully angry that such behavior should be allowed. I had gone on blind faith that somehow, somewhere, I had unseen friends who would not let that sort of thing happen. Finally this came---

"You are urgently needed in New York. A very dear friend of yours intends to commit suicide and you must halt it. Go east at once as soon as you can settle your affairs. Talk with this person. You will find that what we say is true."

"I'll go nowhere," said I flatly, "until you give me concrete proof that you are what you say you are and that you are telling me the truth. I refuse to be hoaxed into a cross-country trip. I can't afford it."

"You may have this proof," the pencil answered. "Next Tuesday at half past three in the afternoon, a man will walk into your office and without any solicitation from you, volunteer to loan you a certain sum of money. If he does so, it should be prima facie evidence to you that we are not hoaxing you."

"All right," I answered aloud, "if anyone puts real money into my hand for a New York journey, I will accept the message as bona fide and act upon it."

TUESDAY came. During the lunch hour four men came in to consult with me about a real estate deal. We lunched together and returned to my office. I left orders with my secretary that she was to call me out at once if anyone entered at 3:30 who especially wanted to see me. Then I continued my business.

At half past three we were still discussing the deal. No stranger had appeared and did not appear. I was sour about "unseen friends" and automatic writing in general. At four o'clock our conference broke up and one by one my friends withdrew. Finally one man was left. As he, too, arose to go, he straightened in his chair and asked with puzzled frown,

"Bill, do you especially want money for a trip east?"

"Maybe," I said, startled, "but why do you ask?"

"I ask because for three hours I've been sitting here feeling funny about things. I've felt that I ought to offer you the loan of a sum of money. It's a real distress to me. How much do you want to borrow for the trip?" Here was I, confronting a man in my office at the indicated time, who of his own volition stated that he felt he should loan me a sum of money for some purpose that he could not define. And how much did I want?

"Five hundred dollars," I replied to him, somewhat experimentally, wondering how consciously he was aware that he was being used.

He leaned forward without a word, drew out his checkbook and wrote me his check. He did not even want a promissory note. At the door he said, "it's funny, Bill, but now that I've done that, I feel strangely relieved."

He closed the door and went out to the elevators. I glanced at his check. It was made out for \$750.

I HAD received then, an apparently bona fide message, requesting my return to Manhattan. The day and hour had been accurate although instead of entering my office at 3: 30 *my man had been in it all the time!*

I felt that I had to keep my part of the pact, and immediately arranged my affairs to go back to New York and halt a suicide.

I took the Sante Fe east, the following afternoon.

IT WAS now the first of December. Reaching Grand Central station after an uneventful fiveday journey across America, I went through the concourse and secured a room at the Commodore Hotel. At once I phoned the woman friend with whom I had done my first automatic writing, telling her of strange developments on the Coast and asking that she come over and have lunch with me.

I recall that I had enjoyed a bath while awaiting the luncheon hour, and was crossing my room in a state of undress, when I suddenly stopped short in the middle of the floor.

I was being addressed by someone invisible! It was not exactly a voice that persons present might have heard. It had a queer muffled quality, as though it were being spoken inside my head.

"Put a pencil in your left hand," it ordered, "and sit down at a table with paper before you and the tip of the pencil on the paper.

THIS WAS not only weird, it was something of a bother. I had a luncheon engagement to keep. I was somewhat distressed by the prophesied nature of my trip to New York---that I was

wanted in Manhattan to restrain a close friend from committing suicide. Nevertheless, still in dishabille, I did as I was asked. I got out a pencil and poised it on a sheet of hotel stationery.

The pencil commenced to write, practically of its own volition, *from right to left*, and kept on until the script had filled the sheet. I had to hold it up to a mirror subsequently, in order to read it.

Now I am not left-handed and have never written left-handed. Moreover, all my writing in conjunction with the two women friends previously reported had been done in the usual manner from left to right. I had never seen this new process performed before, and had not believed that it could be done until I actually beheld the pencil in my own hand doing it.

This is the substance of the strangely inverted script---
"You are to become a Mentor in a world of bleak science that is slowly undermining faith in things spiritual, and you will be the means of stopping much of the faithlessness of the present generation by your advice and teaching."

Sensing that this was not all of the communication that was intended, I came back from the mirror where I had deciphered the above, took a clean sheet of paper and saw the following written---

"You are to help men and women get a clearer and closer understanding of their places in the divine scheme of things, and help them to an understanding of eternal truths. You are thus favored because you have opened your heart to beauty and to truth."

Twelve o'clock came and I was still filling pages with the writing which I continually had to carry across the room to the mirror in order to read. By the time I halted, I had barely time to

dress myself for my luncheon. But I carried some of the sheets downstairs to show to my friend when she arrived. She took her small mirror from her purse, as we sat across from each other at the luncheon table, and used it to decipher the penmanship.

"This is the clearest mirror writing I've ever seen!" she exclaimed. "I want you to loan it to me and let me take it down to the Society for Psychical Research as an exhibit."

I DEMURRED at this. I didn't want myself researched. But that night, alone in my room after the events of the afternoon I am presently to chronicle, I gave the whole evening over to the strange backhand script. And I began to learn matters about myself that by no stretch of the human imagination could ever be the vaporings of my own subconscious mind.

These matters were of a nature so private and peculiar to me alone that I could easily discern why they might have been withheld until that time and not "sent across" to me until they could be given without any second person present to learn of them.

With the luncheon out of the way, however, I had the afternoon's ordeal ahead of me, of searching for the person who was about to end his life---according to the warning I had received in California.

THIS PERSON lived in uptown New York. I took the subway to his street, for my previous instruction had declared that I would be led to find him at home. I went to his apartment hotel and asked the girl at the switchboard to send up my name.

I might have said in previous paragraphs that the original warning about this person's imminent deed had implied that he

would murder himself by illuminating gas because of a "jam" he was "in" with a person of the opposite sex. When the girl at the switchboard rang and rang without getting any answer, I became alarmed. Had I really arrived too late? I was on the point of asking that the apartment door be forced when the elevator operator came down from above stairs and declared---

"The party you're trying to get has gone out to the movies and won't be back until seven o'clock. I brought him down about ten minutes ago and he left a message for. because he was expecting a call."

This expected call, however, had nothing to do with myself.

I DID A whimsical thing to see if it would "work." I went out to the corner newsstand and bought a newspaper. Its margins afforded me space for writing a message. I went into an alcove of the nearby building out of the wind, took a pencil from my pocket and poised the tip on a margin of the newspaper as I stood there out of sight of pedestrians. I asked, what was the status of the affair, and what was I to do next?

Even on a public street, with the roar of New York traffic about me, the pencil wrote without slip or falter---

"He will not take his life today, but if you want to intercept and meet him, go back down to Grand Central Terminal, Gate 28, and you will find him there, waiting to meet a friend on an incoming train."

"Then he hasn't gone to the movies?" I asked.

The pencil wrote, "No!"

I WENT BACK downtown, again intrigued to see how far these instructions would carry with accuracy. I could not believe that I had been furnished with funds and brought way across the continent to repeat such a performance as I had undergone with the missing check purported to have been mailed me earlier from New York. I was proceeding now in a studious mood, or a researcher's mood. I knew that strange forces were operating and engineering all this phenomena and I determined to probe to the bottom of their activities. Somewhere in it must be something that was constructive.

Arriving in front of Grand Central Terminal I felt such a twitching and pulling and jabbing in my supersensitive left arm, that I turned into the terminal and went to the designated gate.

The gate was unlighted. The bulletin of incoming trains was blank. There were no people, known or unknown to me, lingering in its vicinity.

Demanding an accounting, I drew back out of sight, as I had on the street uptown, and gave the entities motivating all this "monkey business" another chance to explain themselves.

"We made a mistake about the gate," came the mirror-writing answer. "Go over toward the cigar stand and you will see him standing there."

I went.

"YOU'VE got the wrong cigar stand," was the next explanation---or alibi---that came over the pencil. I tried once more to follow directions. Nothing came of it.

I went back to my hotel, called the person uptown whom I had crossed the country to meet, and in due time got connection with him.

"Are you all right?" I asked.

"Of course I'm all right," came his hearty response.

"What about So-and-So?" I asked, mentioning the name of the person because of whom he was to have taken his life.

"I haven't seen that party for a year and a half," came his assurance.

The next day I met the would-be suicide personally, talked at length with him, found that he had no more idea of taking his life than I had of taking mine. Mischief and hoax, all of it!

And I had taken a 3,000 mile trip across America, obligating myself for a \$750 loan, to do it.

CLOSETING myself in my hotel room that night, I proceeded to let the mirror-writing go where it would. I wanted to see what would come over, in the hope of gaining some clue as to the possible identity of the one responsible for it.

For two or three hours I filled sheet after sheet with mirror- script, pausing at the end of each page to transcribe it in regular penmanship on a side pad of paper. And instead of any definite directions about my practical affairs, instead of alibis and explanations of the antics of the afternoon, the Script wrote in clear, forceful, positive handwriting a little more profound exposition of cosmic doctrine than I had received hitherto, either in New York or Altadena. I almost forgot the mischief of the week and day in following these intriguing solutions and interpretations

of great Behind-Life riddles and processes, as they came over line after line.

Of course, as the same method had been responsible for writing me mischievous directions, I had no license to assume that these solutions and interpretations were any more authentic or responsible or correct, than the worldly directions had been. But this thing happened---between ten and eleven o'clock, when I was becoming slightly exhausted mentally and physically with the writing, the pencil began behaving strangely. The writing grew weak, wavering, and uncertain. There were scrawls and lapses in the discourse.

Then it picked up again as before.

But now the tone and motif of the writing had altered. What was coming over to me was a lengthy dissertation on the intimate private character of some of my dearest, closest acquaintances.

FOR AN hour and a half I sat writing, or recording, the most elaborate and "juiciest" bits of scandal and slander about these friends, that could be imagined. Intimate details of their private lives were laid bare to me. I was warned that this person was a private pervert, and that person was a rogue.

These details, rich in gossip and malign implications, reached a point where I halted the taking of them in disgust. Some of them were so cleverly intertwined with acts and behavior of the persons involved which I already knew about, but which on the surface of them seemed harmless enough, that the whole communication was as disgusting as it was diabolical.

I had no one to advise me what to do, what "forces" I was toying with, what parts of the communication I could believe,

if any whatever, and what not. I fought a stiff battle with myself that night, whether or not I would continue to lend myself to this sort of perversion and irresponsible nonsense.

The next day, I recall, was Sunday. Sleeping until noontime, I arose and called the woman with whom I had done my first writing. She was one of those who had been most generously belabored in the previous evening's material.

"I've received a lot of communication," I explained over the phone, "that I want your counsel on. May I come up this afternoon and show it to you? Perhaps you can give me a cue as to whether I should continue or stop it altogether."

She generously assented and at two o'clock I was again in her apartment. She read the "messages." . . .

"Do you know anything about the activities of people on the astral planes?" she demanded.

"No," I told her.

"Have you gone thus far in this dangerous business without being informed that the discarnate octaves immediately above---or outside of---the mortal are crammed with 'people' who want to interfere with the affairs of physical life and run them according to their own notions?"

"Where would I obtain such information?" I asked her.

"Well, they are," she instructed me. "This idea that when men and women 'die' they immediately proceed to some far-off place where they either wander about in coma or 'sleep in Jesus' till the Judgment Day, doesn't stack up at all with what we find demonstrated in seance rooms. Those discarnates simply lose their bodies, and being earth-bound, or held by habit to their former environments, they proceed right along to interfere with the life-situations of their former intimates and try to direct their

careers from the astral. It's a pernicious and mischievous business but none the less it happens. Mortals in flesh get the directions and think that 'God' or 'guardian angels' are counseling them---beings that must be infallible. They're really only the discarnate souls of relatives who have lost their bodies. And they know no more what they're talking about than they have known in mortality. Suppose we get out the writing materials and let's try to contact supernal and 'graduated' beings who can give us some counsel on what to do in your present predicament."

I agreed eagerly and she brought forth her writing-board.

Chapter IV

TAKING DISCARNATE ADVICE



THE FIRST time I made such frank admissions about my original clairaudient complications, I aroused a wave of criticism that I had in nowise expected. Large numbers of people seemed to think that I was hurting my own standing by candidly narrating the mischiefs and interferences I had experienced instead of receiving crystal-clear and infallible communications. "If you got false or subversive messages even once," they argued, "how can you say that you did not get false and subversive messages before and afterward?"

My answer to such doubters has uniformly been that by telling the actual truth as to what happened, and being absolutely frank about the pitfalls and trip-ups that I encountered, I have believed myself doing the very opposite of shaking confidence in my integrity or the veracity of bona fide communications when I had 'found' myself in all the disturbing business and mastered the technique of discriminating between the worthy messages of real mentors and the annoying vaporings of discarnate 'kibitzers.'

I am showing people exactly what happens in this sort of development so that they may know what is occurring when they

encounter similar phenomena---as they certainly will---and I am disclosing what the steps and attainments have been that now enable me to say that I believe my Sources to be correct and dependable.

And, by the way, I want to serve notice here and now that I am not strategizing in all of, this, in order to build a great following for myself, or be taken for any modern Moses, leading people out of a spiritual wilderness. I declare that I lack the acumen to so strategize, even to carry myself to the point at which I find myself already.

If a stronger power than mine were not guiding and directing all this, I would long ago have gone down to defeat.

THEN there is another point that should be borne in mind. True adepts and investigators into these mysterious fields above the mortal know that if I declared myself faultless in my progress---if I announced that I had never gotten into the hands of "wrong people" in my experiences---they would have every right to look somewhat askance upon my integrity as well as my adeptness. Because, as I say, these misfortunes do hound those who open these centers in themselves.

They hounded Christ Himself. What other interpretation can we put upon His Temptation in the Wilderness but the attempt of evil entities to gain control of His resplendent organism while He was in a developing state?

This is by no means any alibi for my previous assertion concerning frankness in dealing with my audience. I am merely trying to impress on confused or dubious critics that what I am now printing in this book of Psychic Memoirs actually

happened between twenty and thirty years in the past. Much water has flowed under the Bridge of Experience since these happenings. I believe that later I found ways and means of armoring myself against the tactics of these ignorant, half-developed discarnates who seem not to understand what it is that they are doing. But be that as it may, I do ask my readers to suspend judgment on my veracity and dependability until they have read the full account of what I have to narrate.

AFTER coming to New York on what seemed a wild goose chase, and having much balderdash and slanderous material given me over the automatic pencil when I was alone and wearied with much writing, I had gone up to my friend's apartment to get such explanation as I could from those who might instruct her in the true tenets of what was occurring.

We made the writing-board ready as I related at the end of my last chapter and after a few moments an Invisible Mentor began to write---

William must get these things from experience else he is never going to be of value as an instructor to others. He must learn the identities of his own kith and kin in this work, how to form accurate contact with them, and how to know he has received dependable material that has actually come from them. No appreciable harm has come to him to date, and we will not allow serious harm to come to him, excepting that which may arise by his own willful disillusion within his own spirit.

IMMEDIATELY I asked if it was right and fair to let me obligate myself for \$750, to make the long cross-country trip, merely to learn that I had been the butt of petty practical jokers. Whereupon the Pencil wrote--

No such thing has happened. You were given that money to come to Manhattan for a worthwhile reason that will presently be explained. In the next few days you are to be thrown into contact with people you should meet in this work--people you would not have been able to meet in any other way than by being here in the East at this time. We, not the antic-maker, arranged that expense-money for you. But the antic-maker cut in with an audible explanation for the trip which you seized on in your subconscious mind, shutting out the true voices of your friends so that no other explanation seemed valid to you. We had to let the matter rest until you discovered the bogus explanation; then we could correct you, as we propose to do now.

"WHAT about all this slander and gossip that has been coming over since I've been here?" I demanded, much chagrined. After all, I felt that I had cooperated with the so-called Unseen and should not be thus penalized with hoaxing. Whereupon my true friends and mentors wrote the following bit of exquisite sentiment--

"Those of us who operate upon the higher planes of Love cannot, and would not if we could, pass on to you information about those you love that would cause either of you pain.

"Whatever else we are, we are NOT gossips. If there are those on this side who are gossips, they are much like such

persons on your side, and most of what they pass on to you is the fabrication of diseased fancy.

"The things of the Thought World are not a whole lot different from the things of the earth-world except that we have access to the thoughts and emotions of people which you do not.

"you must remember that all sorts of institutions exist for the commitment of insane people on your side, but over here on the Lower Levels close to earth they are uniformly at large and can do quite as much damage on both sides as they can in the flesh on the earth side when they are not restrained. So you can imagine what a bedlam of vibrations sometimes exists over here when we want to concentrate with you most.

"These 'crazy souls' are obsessed with picking shining marks for their attacks, as they know that they cannot be perceived and yet can perceive the results of their mischief. They are like a lot of noisy children and the nursery is often a thumping nuisance.

"What we mean to tell you is, do not let yourself be misled by such people. What makes sense on your side makes sense here---and vice versa. What makes profitable converse here is doubly true upon your side."

AFTER TWELVE years of working consistently in clairaudiency, I can now subscribe to all this as true.

For the guidance of my good friends allover the nation who may even now be "coming through the wry," I am going to give over the balance of this chapter to my second clairaudient paper which I received on the following evening, as I am certain the advice and observations it contains will help them as it then

helped me. Next chapter I shall tell of the true reason for my being called to New York, and the events that started to transpire, ending my residence on the West Coast for good and culminating in the writing of "My Seven Minutes in Eternity" for the American Magazine.

Eventually I discarded the automatic pencil and the mirror writing, but that happened in a dramatic sequence of itself after I had gone back for the last time to California to close my affairs.

As I continued to have tip-ups and antagonism with the Pencil, I finally got this message-

"YOU are doing too much of the solo writing. Your nerve centers are becoming oversensitized and must have rest. Don't you think there are others here who know the trick of pressing on the right nerve? This is what it amounts to, but the plan I should like to try is this---

"You choose an hour each day when you can surely give it to us and for one hour we will write. Do not try to transcribe anything during that hour. Wait till it is over. This will make it easier for us to control conditions though even then there are certain elements that are in your control. That is, your physical condition or your mind may make a wall between us that we cannot penetrate. When this happens, your own subconscious, not wanting you to be disappointed, takes things over. It is then that all sorts of promises are made which seem to be deception on our part.

WE ARE giving you this warning because you cannot often in the least know the wall has been erected. Over-anxiety to get us and to make the right distinctions, is often the strongest wall you can build. You have to be on your guard also against those malign influences that can get to you when we are not on guard and that are inevitably attracted when the atmosphere is fogged by Doubt, Weariness and Emotional Strain. You are straining too much. Quiet means quiet all the way through---body, soul, mind, brain, nerves, spirit. Too much of this straining makes a condition so over-sensitized that it results in one of two things: either your vibrations are lowered in tone and you are open to almost any force that comes along, or you are almost completely shut away from this side and your subconscious gets busy looking for some wish or fear or hope or question that has previously been expressed, and building it up and decorating it.

"In regard to your business affairs, we have never given you hours, days, or sums of money. But we have made definite attempts to let you know that they were going in your favor. You are in such a nervous and sensitive state now that you cannot trust anything that comes to you without some stabilizing vibrations such as your companion seems to have achieved tonight.

"Remember, we may give you sailing directions but we do not take the wheel. And we do not give sailing directions to go two ways at once. How can we help it if you persist in joining up the radio, and taking the telephone off the hook, and then while we are talking, accepting all that is coming from all three sources as from us?

"We do take command insofar as your safety, and the success of your whole voyage, is concerned. As to the best and quickest daily charting of your course, we leave that to you.

"We do not say that we cannot give you advance information. We can see the train of events for varying periods ahead. We know where the track leads and what time the train should arrive. But we can never guarantee that the engine will not develop a hot-box and delay the train. We cannot even guarantee that an unexpected storm will not wash out a bridge and wreck it, that is, for the ordinary things of life. If the journey is one that is vital to you, we are ahead of the train and making sure that no mishaps can occur.

"You have no conception of the Power of Thought, even on your plane, and for almost two weeks you have been sending out thoughts destructive to the very things you were most keen about. We know you could not help it, considering the state of doubt that you were in, but that did not keep it from checkmating some of our efforts. Do not be upset. We do not mean that any harm has been done except that Delay is always a factor that brings greater chances for something to go wrong.

"You were in a state of doubt that was deeper than your conscious mind and applied to all the circumstances surrounding you. At first this was not very active, but it was enough to let through the things which in their turn increased the doubt and made it assume proportions that were serious handicaps to all that we were trying to do. You can check, you can question, to see if we are what we say. But you must never doubt that we are making the effort to reach you!

"You say that you understood that you had nothing to do but wait and we would serve you. What else would anyone on this side do if he wanted you to fail---if it meant more than to be calm and quiet and patient?

"There are times of crisis, when after you have done all that is in you to do, we step in and do the rest for you. But there is no crisis in your affairs now excepting your relations to us and the problems we present. You must remember that crises are always of the spirit, never of the pocketbook. Sure, calm and free, that is the touchstone that gives you strength and wisdom to handle all of your everyday problems. Your impatience has been the tool used by your enemies in our world to get to you. You cannot send out at the same time vibrations of Love and Harmony, and vibrations of Impatience and Doubt.

"We want you to go to it and do your utmost. But remember always that it is Activity keyed to Love that is constructive, and Impatience or an attempt to force things unnaturally, may only stunt their growth.

"You are very weary, my boy; it is the weariness of one who has been sorely tried. But if even our gracious Lord must wrestle with the demons of Doubt, how shall any mortal escape?"

WE PAUSED here in the writing for a moment. And during this pause, an eery thing happened. "I feel so strange!" my friend cried suddenly. "I hope that I'm not going into a trance, or fainting".

The next instant I seemed to be conscious of a sensation in the room that I can best describe as 'angel wings beating softly.' The most uncanny tremors ran up and down my

spine. What was in that room with us---but invisible? *Something!* Then the pencil in my friend's fingers began to 'act up.' It came alive and started off as though by itself in a most exquisite flowing Spencerian script---

"Oh ye of little faith! . . . and yet, how could it be otherwise until the memory of Those Days is restored by the complete triumph of Spirit over Matter?"

Immediately, as the pencil came to a halt, the 'beating' sensation ceased. I looked at my companion. She was limp and inert beside me---as though she had fallen to sleep. For myself, I had after-effects as from a charge from a galvanic battery. What---or Who---had been close in that apartment, close enough to make a pencil move in a sleeping woman's hand? Did I need to ask? But the intelligence was by no means over for that evening. My companion recovered.

"What happened?" she cried.

I pointed to the beautiful writing on her lap.

She managed a dry swallow and drew a ragged breath. But the pencil was writing in her hand again-

"I F YOU will do the things we now recommend, it may help.

"Ask no questions about material affairs; we will be with you in them and if you add to your judgment a sure, calm faith in us, you will find things working out, and when they seem to go astray you will know there is a reason and will trust us.

"Put more confidence in this than in any other source of teaching or instruction. Check everything and be sure that any message we give you can be shared with your intimates.

"Write alone only one hour a day, preferably the same hour. If you feel the impulse at any other time, resist it. If I want you, I will rap on something three times and then two times. When I do that, ask me to repeat.

"Then you will know that I am here.

"But never accept anything wholly unless you know that it is in harmony with the principles we have given you, and your heart speaks for them.

"Do what you can in all your affairs and be sure that we are with you. You do not know how often what seems to be disaster may be the averting of a bigger one.

"Take better care of your health and get back your inner glow.

"In conclusion: do not worry about the time lost. It is all gain in the final analysis. After all, not many people could learn a lesson as vital as this in a few weeks. You could not do it if you had not learned so much *before this life*."

The penmanship of this latter message had not been in the exquisite script, but in writing similar to that of the first part of the evening.

Both of us were appalled by being the recipients of the foregoing sentiments.

"Can I believe," I faltered, "that we could possibly have made any contact tonight with---"

My stupefied thought was reflected by that phenomenon of the gigantic 'wings' beating again. But this time my companion did not lose consciousness. The exquisite script was coming again from the pencil point, as both of us held our breaths to see what might be written. This was the 'reply' to my thought---

"O my dearly beloved! . . . how shall I make you know that I am nearer than breathing and closer than hands and feet?"

"Albert is writing now, but that was a Greater than I. When your heart is open to Him He will always speak. Goodnight! . . . We all tonight have shared in the glory that has been about you and we join our prayers to yours that its radiance may dwell in your hearts forever!"

THE WRITING seemed to be over for the night. But what a night! I remember that a couple of hours later, in a sort of daze, I dropped into the Childs Restaurant near the Grand Central Terminal for something to eat before seeking my bed. I viewed the ordinary two-legged mortals about me and sought to get through my head that I was still living in the same mundane world.

For that night's writing I had made the 3,000-mile journey across from California. Had it been worth it?

It certainly had!

Clapter V

THE "DEAD" ARE CONFUSED



ATTEST that it necessitates a peculiar I temperament to explore the higher manifestations of life and deliberately seek to acquaint one's self with the aspects of existence above the mortal.

The average curiosity-seeker who "goes in" for psychical research, automatic writing, clairaudience or metaphysical phenomena of any kind, lands in all varieties of snarls because he expects higher manifestations of life to accord with those on this earthly level, and when they do not do so, he becomes suspicious or discouraged. Then too, there are cases where the inability to correlate the methods, manners, customs, and thought processes of the different levels, preys on the mind of the amateur investigator; he attributes these inconsistencies to the prankings of devils; he thinks he has "sold himself" to evil forces and continually brooding over it causes a rupture in his reason.

THERE are many students who have gone further into phenomenal phases of psychical research---the so-called "supematural"---than I profess to have gone. But over several years of intensive study and exploring, I have come to this conclusion---

If the various levels of life were not different in their manifestations, there would be no necessity for life to exist at different levels.

It is because they are different that we have Research---to find out wherein they are different. This, as well as to prove that those various levels exist.

The profoundest thinkers and investigators in these matters agree---and their experiments go to prove---that people do not alter their temperaments in the slightest by "dying," but they do awaken to a world vastly different in environment. In orienting themselves to that environment---or in the combination of these two factors, temperament and changed environment---some phenomena are produced that are often confusing on this mortal level.

I QUOTE from a manuscript that came into my office for publication in a later issue of my magazine: "People on the earth are much disposed to herd together according to their kind. The rich seek each other, the poor huddle into crowded tenements, the thieves and gangsters have their resorts. Every city has its Four Hundred section, its Bohemian Quarter, and its slums. In the Land Beyond the Veil, people are also separated---on the basis of their moral development---into levels, more commonly called "planes" or "spheres" that surround the planet.

"The 'spheres' of lowest vibration---though of a vastly higher vibration than what we know on earth---are closest to the earth---in fact, the lowest intermingles with the earth's surface. In a regular ascension from the center are spheres of higher and higher vibration, and in each of these spheres reside people---ex-human beings---of various degrees of evolutionary

development, the ignorant and the sinful occupying the lower spheres and attaining to higher spheres as they advance in love and wisdom."

TO QUOTE further: "When a truly good man dies he is usually not conscious in the full sense, for quite a space of time. He passes somewhat quickly through the lower spheres, to about the Fourth---or whatever corresponds in vibration to the moral development he has attained. Those of wicked lives remain in the First Sphere, being what is known as Earth-Bound spirits. They are unconscious for a long while after death, and when they arouse, find themselves in a region of almost total darkness, bare of vegetation and inhabited by the lowest of the low and the vilest of the vile. This condition corresponds to the Purgatory taught by the Roman Church. Swedenborg speaks of it as 'The Hells'

"Those who are simply ignorant and weak, rather than downright depraved and vicious, find themselves in the Second Sphere, where it is lighter, and there is more opportunity to gain knowledge of higher and better things.

"The great mass of everyday, ordinary people, not very wise, neither good nor bad, just full of blunders and stumbling along---these find themselves in the Third Sphere. Here is where Raymond, son of Sir Oliver Lodge, tells us he landed, and though his intelligence and moral development very shortly permitted his rising to the Fifth Sphere, yet he announced that he was going to stay in the Third and await his parents, and so not chance going beyond them and missing them when they came over.

"THE VERY best of mortals, men and women whose lives have been developed to the service of mankind, go to still higher spheres, each sphere being thus inhabited by beings of parallel development, and therefore harmonious and happy. The higher the sphere, the smaller the population, is the condition that follows, and the numbers in the higher spheres are reduced by the custom of those advanced souls' spending most of their time in spheres below their own, where they go to teach and help the less advanced and weaker members of the race. Wherever they go they are at once recognized by their brightness. There is no uncertainty as to their moral standing. No hypocrite in the 'heaven world' can pass for better than he is, and no saint can fail to be known.

"A real Master, resident of the Ninth or Tenth Sphere, is a most splendid object to look upon, with serene and lovely countenance, superb beauty and dignity, and a brilliance dazzling to the eyes."

I MENTION these matters because as one advances in research, he finds they account for much of the inconsistency in phenomena, and confusing reports of the "after-life," as given by those who have shuffled off their mortal coils. They also account for the inability of certain souls to communicate at all, while certain vile souls, on the very lowest planes next to earth, spend most of their time raising the Old Harry with the lives of sensitive people whom they can control and obsess as soon as the psychical centers have been awakened without full knowledge of how to utilize them.

The question is frequently asked me, why is it that I am expounding so much about the Earthly Revisitation hypothesis,

life on life, when hundreds of other sensitives, equally as good recorders, who make contact with those in higher planes, do not get confirmatory statements about the process at all?

I REMEMBER once, in my own development and lack of knowledge of these matters, crying out in anger and exasperation: "I wish these people on the Other Side would get together and agree on their fundamentals to tell those of us on this side!"

Now I know that there are literally millions of discarnate souls on the Other Side, inhabiting the lower spheres where they have no difficulty in making contact with their friends in physical flesh, who know no more about the great life principles than they knew while they were mortal men and women. Souls who know about the process of earthly rebirth are high and advanced, on planes well away from the earth's surface. They are the ones most completely apprised of the phenomena at work in letting souls get down into earthly bodies---so that they are able to tell us in detail about it. Those below them find themselves behaving at the behest of Forces that to them are as blind and unexplainable as those that catch a mortal person in the whorl of a Kansas windstorm. He would not be able to tell where the wind came from, what brought it about, or where it was blowing him. He would only know that he was going along.

But by the same token that there are expert meteorologists who know all about how these natural storms are caused, where they came from and where they will expend themselves, so there are the Great Souls up in the Lofty Spheres, who take much time and trouble to explain to those still

in earthly bodies who will listen and profit, just what happens to them, in and out of life, cycle on cycle.

FOR THE information of the sincerely curious, I might say that I have reason to believe that in my discarnate experience which I called "My Seven Minutes in Eternity," I attained to the Seventh Sphere---where I found many of my friends residing in the most colossal beauty and harmony of environment and relationships. I say this for what it is worth to those who enjoy a knowledge of such matters. But it seems to be rational and reasonable, because of the machinery that I feel I have developed, that I am cutting through the reaches of the various lower levels and getting my instruction that I am passing on to my fellows now from Great and Wise Mentors who are residing upon the Ninth and Tenth Spheres of activity.

It is really a form of super radio, that I believe I---and many others---have developed within our organisms over the cycles of lives we have lived and the many descents we have made into flesh to become masters of the process.

Be that as it may, I had to attain to conscious knowledge of these vital facts in a new earthly body this time, by trial and error with the lesser developed entities, by instructions over the automatic pencil, and by the final development of my Inner Ear, before I was able to penetrate up to that Thought velocity where I could get simon-pure instruction.

It is a process that seems to be necessary to perfect all over again in each life cycle, although I know now that I did bring much through with me subconsciously when I entered my present body nearly seven decades ago.

I had to reach that stage of cosmic learning by definite experiencing, so that I could recognize to what Level of Thought any given soul had communicated with me, by the knowledge of cosmic facts that the had to communicate.

I HAD gone through an agonizing period of disillusion up to the time the Master Messages began to be delivered to me. Whenever I became depressed or fretted, I had opened my sensitive equipment to persons One, Two, and Three Planes high---in a manner of speaking. They were the ones who were tricking or confusing me.

And yet I did have a subconscious realization that there was something higher and better to contact, and that by keeping on I would contact it. In a manner of speaking, I was "remembering my own kith and kin" back up there on those lofty levels of Thought and Service. I knew that they would not let me down. Ultimately I had to win through to my goal.

That subconscious faith, it was, that kept me going, when otherwise I would have ditched the whole business as the work of sheer evil.

It was to awaken me to this subconscious knowledge that I found now that I had been brought back to New York. I had been put in funds, and I had traveled back to Manhattan from California, not to be hoaxed and disillusioned by those on the first two planes of life who had found they could make themselves known in my affairs, but to meet certain members of my own group in mortal flesh who were more fully awakened than I was, propinquity with whom soon began to bestir my own subconscious as to our group-missions.

All this time I had steadfastly kept from writing about my discarnate experience in California, and I had told few friends about it. I continued to write clairaudiently, night after night, to meet people more awakened than myself, to feel the dim stirring of recollection in my mind and heart. The weeks began to go by.

I remained in New York, living at the Commodore Hotel, writing many stories and articles for the national magazines, trying to absorb the realization of the stupendous things those High Masters were occasionally getting down to the Group.

December passed.

One morning in January, I got a queer, sharp command I shall never forget.

THE EDITORS of the American Magazine had again and again suggested that I write the story of my "rejuvenation," but as I have said before in these pages, I had no desire to emulate Sir A. Conan Doyle and "spoil" my writing career by "going Spiritualist" . . . Really, I never expected to write of my experience---and what was following it in clairaudient development---unless it might be for private distribution.

One morning early in January, I had come up from breakfast and had prepared myself to write a fiction story, when a semi-audible voice spoke to me in tones of terse command---

All is propitious. Write the story of your Dispensation today. You will find that it will be accepted with alacrity and will have the repercussion in enlightenment that we want to produce in society at this special time.

I was cheerfully willing to cooperate then. I sat down at my machine, twirled in paper, and wrote "My Seven Minutes in Eternity" in slightly less than two hours.

Some of the pages seemed literally to "write themselves."

I finished the manuscript, jogged it up, clipped it in a folder, took up my hat after hurriedly reading what I had written, and went up to the American Magazine offices. It was then about noontime.

"Well, I've written the article that you wanted," I said. "Here's the story of 'getting out of my body' that night six or eight months ago."

The editress before whom I laid down the manuscript had already pinned on her hat---they pinned their hats on in those days---and was ready to go to lunch. But she delayed in order to read the first two or three pages of that "Seven Minutes" article. Suddenly she sprang up and went into the office of the editor-in-chief. She was gone forty minutes. In those forty minutes I cooled my heels and wondered if I had made a supernal ass of myself.

But Merle Crowell himself came in. There were tears on his face.

"I've just read the story of your discarnate experience," he said. "We're buying it from you and dispatching it to the printing-plant in Springfield, Ohio, this afternoon to catch the current issue of The American that's now about to go to press."

What they actually did was to stop the presses in Ohio and insert my Seven Minutes in Eternity story, beginning with page one, 'pulling' the featured article that had already 'opened' the March, 1929, issue of the magazine.

Two weeks later, some three million people read my account of the hyperdimensional visitation I had made out of my Altadena, California, bungalow some eight months beffore.

The Crowell Publishing Company paid me \$1500 for the contribution.

Within a week it had sold out the current issue of The American Magazine, and a mail comparable to Col. Charles Lindbergh's after he had flown to Paris, began to show up in the offices of the publishers.

I had thrown a major switch in my personal career. . .

Chapter VI

PROPHECY CAME NEXT



LITTLE realized, as I lay down to sleep that memorable night in May, 1928, that I had come to the end of my secular career. All that I had lived since birth, up to that moment, had been nothing but worldly preparation for that which was to open with the coming of morning. My life was to change, my thinking was to change, even my mind and its properties were to change. I was to find out the true reasons for my life at all, and proceed henceforth to discharge my Job.

The discarnate experience came and went. I found myself in possession of strange talents and powers. I went through six months of increasing awakening to the realities of life, and the significance of my experience.

But it was not until I had consented to write the story of the whole uncanny episode for the American Magazine that my career opened definitely into channels that were to lead to . . . Soulcraft!

My interests in California had called me back there again, and I was living temporarily in Pasadena, when "My Seven Minutes in Eternity" was published throughout the nation.

Over and over again throughout my automatic writing work, the phrase had been used in connection with comment on the story, "Now is the time that was planned from the Beginning." . . . but just what was meant I could not then decide.

With the appearance of the magazine, however, on the nation's newsstands, I was quickly to realize that Kismet had spoken strangely but truly.

I HAD supposed that when that article appeared I would have to run a gauntlet of raillery or skepticism, slander or abuse. I had decided in advance to be prepared for commiseration from those who would think that my head had gone addled. I had an armor of defense-mechanism around myself---an air of indifference to the outcome that I by no means felt inside.

My first reactions came from people with whom I had been intimate in business relationships in Pasadena and Hollywood.

Instead of an outburst of skepticism and scoffing, people sought me out with the magazine surreptitiously concealed about their persons, to close my office door mysteriously and ask for confidential interviews while they gave me information.

I began to discover that the same experience had been undergone by my most intimate friends.

Man after man came into my office, apologized for his confession, then launched into details of psychic or discarnate experiences that soon had me wondering "where I had been all my life," that so many people about me had been undergoing them in a silence that had never permitted me to know there were such things in the world.

I SHALL never forget one experience with such a man late one night in an almost-empty office where we had repaired for a private conversation.

I had gone back to California this time with the idea of permanently closing up my affairs, disposing of the bungalow home in which the experience had occurred, and returning to New York to make Manhattan my residence. With great difficulty I nipped off the threads of enterprise after enterprise in which I was embroiled, sold the lease on my office, disposed of such effects as I did not mean to transfer to Manhattan, and offered my real estate for sale. The landlord of the building in which my offices had been, allowed me an empty room where I had moved a desk and some chairs. I sat in this room one night with a business associate with whom I had been connected for a year without the slightest inkling of knowledge that such matters were even known to him by hearsay.

As we sat talking, I felt a strange vibration in my vicinity as though someone had taken a position behind me. My left arm, which had been supersensitized since I came back into my body that night six months before, told me that we were not alone in that office. Glancing at my companion, who had been talking until that moment about a business project, I saw his eyes widen and heard his voice sink till it trailed to a whisper.

"What's the matter?" I asked.

"Do you know there's someone standing behind you?" he asked.

"Yes," I admitted, wondering how he knew. "Do you mean you can see---?".

"---he stands about six-feet-two or three, dressed in long white robes. . . I can't see his features, they're so brilliant . . .

he's got his hand on your left shoulder. . . now he's moved it to your right. . ."

All this time my friend---a solid, substantial business man---was gaping at the empty wall-space behind me. "I'm aware of it," I assented. "I can feel the hand."

"I see," Joe faltered, "a n-name . . . as though in burning letters, just over your head and across his chest. I can see the letters BAR. . . H A V A . . . I can't read the rest-it's blurred in his brilliance."

I was puzzled. The name meant nothing then. Later in New York I was to recall my friend's second-sight phenomena with startling implications.

The "vision" faded and we resumed our talk.

I WENT over to Hollywood and met a friend with whom I had associated in my film ventures. Of all persons on the West Coast, I expected facetious comment from him. When I walked into his office, he had a copy of the American Magazine lying upon his desk, opened to my article. He looked up with a whimsical smile.

"Thank God, Bill," said he, laying his opened palm upon the page, you've come to your senses at last.

"What do you mean, come to my senses?"

"Somehow I always thought you'd awaken someday to certain facts of life. It's come in one night. You ought to be grateful."

I had spent this man's money, worn his clothes, slept in the same bed with him, driven his car, over a three-year period, being in the closest business associations with him the while---without ever knowing that he was an adept in metaphysics

and performed such strange feats as talking with his brother nightly in a distant country by physical thought transference, besides having many experiences out of his body, in which he had seen himself in previous incarnations.

So it went.

Once I had "broken the restraint" or reticence by my article, I found scores of people ready to talk about such matters and attest to the validity of such phenomena. People in film-land whom I had supposed would "razz" me until it hurt, would call me on the phone, waylay me in corridors, ask me into corners---to discuss similar experiences of their own and ask interpretation. Several of these confidants had seen their relatives pass out of their bodies at death.

It was all most unbelievable.

I GAVE away Laska, my police dog, to a friend, dismantled my bungalow, packed my goods for shipment.

And yet night on night I was still doing my daily allotment of automatic writing, getting a grounding in metaphysical fundamentals that later was to stagger me again when in New York I came to compare the knowledge in my messages with profound books on the same subjects received by others.

Not only was it wholly unnecessary for me to read occult books written by others, but gradually I discovered that in many cases the wisdom I had been allotted surpassed that which had been compiled by the most erudite metaphysicians. I will return to these later in my story.

FINALLY one night I took another upward step.

With the goods of my household in process of moving, only a few chairs and a table cleared for use amid the crates and boxes, I was seated in a corner of what had been my library dictating my mirror-penmanship aloud to my nurse-friend who had come up to assist me in my packing.

Late in the clear California twilight, with scarcely a sound to break the crystal stillness, I glanced up at her in puzzled surprise.

"These words I'm writing backward. . . I'm hearing them spoken distinctly to me before my pencil pushes them out on paper!" I cried.

"You're sure?" she asked. "Or is it your imagination?"

"They're being spoken clearly and distinctly within my head. I don't need the pencil! I can hear them as plainly as I hear your voice. Take down what I give you as long as it continues." She started to do so.

The Voice continued to talk on and on. Frequently I interrupted it when some word was spoken that I did not understand.

Someone within that room, invisible, was definitely speaking to me, and I was hearing him!

The voice talked on and on, into the hours of early night. In the quarter-century that has passed since these weeks of which I am writing, I suppose five thousand persons have put the question to me, about how it "feels" to get the clairaudient voice inside one's head? Do I hear it literarily or do I merely "think"? Truth to tell, the phenomenon savors of both. I hear the communicating voice addressing me "in thought." But strangely enough, I frequently know when the communicator is chuckling "in thought." I have been in the midst of a message of gravest

import when the room's telephone has rung. I have excused myself as I might to guests who were present in the flesh. I have carried on a lengthy phone conversation about some business matter, to return to my chair and have the "voice" resume the clairaudient dictation from the middle of a paragraph.

That it is an independent intellectual force operating externally seems attested as well by the fact that on other occasions I have had this thought Voice speak to me in languages other than English---and ancient biblical Aramaic is the only tongue with which I am familiar outside of English. Six to twelve pages of purest Sanskrit was thus "dictated" or "overheard" one evening later in Manhattan---which on being recorded phonetically was quickly and readily translated by Sanskrit scholars who saw the original.

I was to spend a prodigious *nine years* recording the 844 pages of the *Golden Scripts*, and twenty-five years recording the 1,500,000 words of the Great Soulcraft doctrine that now is world-wide in its reading public. Today, up here in 1954, the physical rematerialization of many of these Mentors has long-since corroborated and confirmed what they have so generously conveyed to me.

After that night I continued to rely on that clear Inner Ear.

To show how accurate it became, this happened:

After a fortnight of continued instruction in actual events ahead in my life, many of which have since come true, I found myself complaining because I was being held in California by an escrow that I could not close until I had more money.

I felt it absolutely essential to return to Manhattan. But go I could not till the money was raised.

I had stopped sleeping in the bungalow and taken a room in a hotel in Pomona in order to be near some friends who

lived there. Each night, after a day spent in closing my Pasadena affairs, I would get into my car and drive the thirty miles to Pomona and bed.

One night I was especially upset at the way things were dragging. Suddenly came the Voice:

"You will have the money within 24 hours and be on the Santa Fee train tomorrow afternoon!"

"More mischief!" I lamented. "There's not the ghost of a chance of my getting the cash I need within 24 hours. A miracle would have to happen."

I had a bad half-hour. The Mischief-Makers were appearing again, evidently to hoax me so at a time so important. I abused them. I told them to pack themselves off and get out of my life.

The Voice was insistent, gentle, patient.

"You will have the money within 24 hours and be on the Santa Fe train tomorrow afternoon!"

My friend and I ended our scripts in dismay. If any such money failed to materialize, I didn't know what to do thereafter, or what Voices to trust. I locked the bungalow, backed the car from the driveway, took my friend home and started for Pomona.

I had a bad drive down. My life had all gone sixes and sevens. If I were to be hoaxed about this money promise, how could I depend on the other intimations of impending events and my part in them?

By the time I reached Pomona I was flaying myself for being so gullible as to so disrupt my affairs to follow such a Will-o'-the-Wisp. What had seemed so alluring was as the voice of forty

devils sneering and jeering at me. And I was begging myself to go on serving them. Or so I thought. Then this happened swiftly:

I found a garage for my car and walked over to the hotel. As I came in the door, the night-clerk sang out: "New York's been trying to get you on the long distance phone ever since 8 o'clock, Mr. Pelley. They'll call again at 11 o'clock and asked that you be here."

New York! Who would call me at such an hour from Manhattan?

At 11 o'clock I was in the lobby when the phone-bell rang. It was one of the editors of the American Magazine.

"What are you doing out there all this time?" was the disgruntled demand across the continent. "There's a mail like Lindbergh's awaiting your answering here in the office from your Seven-Minutes article."

"I CAN'T go back till I've closed an escrow out here that will take a lot of money," I explained.

"How much money?" I named the sum.

"Is that all that's holding you? If we have that sum advanced to you by bank draft the first thing in the morning, will you be on the returning Santa Fe train tomorrow afternoon?"

"I will!" I promised.

"California is four hours behind New York in the matter of time. We'll have our bank transfer you the money so it will be available to you by the time you get out of bed in the morning.

I fumbled the receiver upon its hook.

At nine-thirty next morning when I got to Pasadena, the sum was on deposit in my bank. I closed my escrow, caught the 2:30 train.

The Voice had not hoaxed me. I was heading east, to New York for good.

ON MY arrival in New York after closing my affairs on the western coast, I took a bachelor apartment in the West Fifties and converted it into a combination living quarters and office. I furnished this apartment with the appointments of my California bungalow. I mention these furnishings because of an incident that occurred in connection with them, which I shall describe in a future chapter on Levitation of the Consciousness.

The biggest job that confronted me in that strange spring and summer of 1929 was the answering of the tremendous mail that came to me as a result of publishing "My Seven Minutes in Eternity," in the American Magazine. Daily I would go over to the offices of the Crowell Publishing Company, on Park Avenue, and bring back armfuls of unopened letters in sheaves of heavy manila envelopes. I have never fully counted how many of these there were, for they have been continually arriving over the years that have since intervened. They ran over thirty thousand.

Those letters which I took away with me were addressed to me personally. The editors of the American Magazine received an equally appalling burden of mail. The American's circulation at the time Seven Minutes was printed, was approximately 2,250,000 copies. The great advertisers of the nation figure legitimately that every copy of a standard magazine is read by four to five people before it is finally

given away, filed away, or destroyed. Figured on this basis, it may be suggested that "My Seven Minutes in Eternity" was read in that magazine alone by something like ten millions of people.

Not all of them took the trouble to write either me or the publishers, expressing themselves upon the article, else I should probably be answering vast quantities of mail even to this day. But enough letters were received so that I kept one, and sometimes two, stenographers busy for nine months, acknowledging or commenting on the astounding epistles that the article prompted.

HAVING read the first letters, I sorted them into classifications. I found that at least 50 percent of them were merely letters of commendation, praising me for my "courage" in penning and printing such an article and attesting to the unspeakable inspiration the article had proven to my correspondents. The majority of these begged me to go on and tell them more of such experiences; in fact, I understand that request was the burden of almost 90 percent of the mail that went directly to the American's publishers. To these I gave a more or less formal reply, thanking the writers for their interest and good wishes and promising to let them know when I next published anything further of similar tenor in the nation's press.

The second great classification came from writers who had undergone similar experiences and wanted me to know about them. Some of these narratives would run to dozens of typewritten pages. Strange psychical experiences, adventures in the levitation of consciousness to distant parts of the earth or into the higher planes, the attested materializations of people who

had "passed on"---these began to pile up until I realized that all unwittingly I had the nucleus for a miniature psychical research society in my private files.

But what staggered me most of all in these testimony letters was the great number of persons from every walk of life, of every age and of both sexes, who avowed to a similar experience---or similar experiences---at some time in their present lives. And here was the amazing evidence that these correspondents were not fabricating---

In four cases out of five they would not only affirm having gone through exactly the same sensations as I went through in my own discarnate experience, but they would go further and give me details and descriptions about the sublimated planes of consciousness which I knew to be true because I had witnessed them on my own adventure, and yet I had said nothing about them in the article nor mentioned them to a living soul!

HOW DID these people get their information unless they had penetrated to a definite place, as I had claimed to have penetrated to a definite place, and seen or contacted exactly what I recalled having seen or contacted?

In only two cases that I recall were there details given in letters that persuaded me the writers were fabricating, or the victims of delusions of grandeur.

I recall in particular one astounding sheet of manuscript which I started to read, sent me from an address up in Massachusetts. As I perused the sheet I became increasingly astounded. Whoever had written the text was giving me the most minute description of what I said and did that night on the plane that I reached after quitting my body.

It attested to my personal behavior; it spoke of the specific friends I contacted; it mentioned the mistakes of which I was guilty, in not recognizing certain "dead" friends at once on account of their enhanced personal aspect over that which I had known of them in mortal life.

How did this writer come to be apprised of such definite and truthful details? I got to the bottom of the sheet and found this footnote:

"The above communication was sent through Mrs. Blank sitting in S.....,Mass., on last Thursday evening, by Dr. N....., attesting to the veracity of Mr. Pelley's published narrative. Dr. N..... is a spirit and has 'been over' since 1925."

THE THIRD class of correspondents comprised that great army of readers who had recently lost loved ones of their own and wanted more specific details of their survival, their daily lives, customs, and possible abilities to communicate. Some of these begged for more light in a way so pitiful that it wrung my heart.

They propounded questions to me which I simply had to answer. And yet the answers involved long expositions of cosmic law that would have been magazine articles in themselves. Some of them meant replies that would have taken me a half a day to answer. I simply could not do it. And yet the appeal of them haunted me.

There must be some way of getting this vital information out to people, information that current theology kept people from procuring, telling them that such was "sin"I meditated on this problem through the balance of that year, trying to explain to the most pathetic cases, in as satisfactory a way as possible, why I had to respond in a manner so circumscribed.

MEANWHILE, this flood of correspondence was running into money that I could not afford. People begging me for advanced information would enclose a two-cent stamp for reply, and apologize profusely for taking up my time. Thereby they assumed they had done their whole duty, and there were many who later wrote abusively, accusing me of fraud, when I failed for purely economic reasons, to give them the satisfaction they sought. If I had really had such an experience, and was possessed of so much information about the higher planes of life and the fact of survival, why was I not frank and generous with my responses?

I was spending three to five hundred dollars a week even to be courteous to these thousands of inquirers. No matter how short a letter I wrote, and I simply could not be short to most of them, the cost of answering was averaging 50c per letter. The American Magazine did not, and would not, help me stand a cent of this expense, although the publishers did make certain advances to me against future deliveries of fiction manuscripts when the demands on my time answering this correspondence withheld me from turning out my usual fiction and thus keeping up with my current expenses. Moreover, the American's editors emphatically did not want any further articles on this great subject, after perceiving the furor which the first had stirred up. "It is obvious that we cannot make the American a metaphysical magazine," they announced, "and that is just what we might do if we continued to publish more articles by you along the same line. Moreover, we know of no corps of trained writers capable of handling such material in addition to yourself, and we must think of our other writers. There are just as good writers as yourself in these United States, and we must play equally with all of them;

we cannot afford to let you become indispensable to us. Go back to your fiction and try to forget this whole *faux pas* in publishing Seven Minutes, as soon as possible!"

BUT THERE was no such thing as "trying to forget the whole *faux pas*" . . . for the public would not let me do it. Answering a correspondent's first letter as politely and exhaustively as I could, did not solve the problem. For every one-page letter that I would finally get around to answer, a five-page letter would come back from that same person. Moreover, great numbers of them would pass my replies about, and that would breed more letters.

But that was not all. So titanic was the interest in this question of survival as I had attested to it, that the March issue of the American containing the original version of Seven Minutes disappeared from not only the nation's newsstands---selling out clean!---but it disappeared from library shelves and cellars and attics where past issues of magazines usually arrived before reaching the junk-man.

Every back-number magazine shop, not only in Manhattan but throughout the country, became suddenly denuded of American Magazines for March, 1929. Uniformly they brought \$1.00 a number whenever they could be located. I have known of cases where prices as high as \$10.00 were paid for this specific issue. I saw scores of instances where the article was clipped out, pasted together, and carried in a pocketbook until it was ready to fall apart from much handling.

So when an American Magazine could not be procured with the article in it, other publishers began to write the editors,

or myself, asking permission to reprint the story in their own magazines and thus supply the demand. As I had written the article to get a great truth out to the public, and not to make money---since I could have written a fiction story in the same time and made twice as much money as I got for Seven Minutes---permission was freely given for republication.

I had in my library at one time fully twenty publications besides the American that had reprinted the account. This added hundreds of thousands more to the number of readers who had seen the account as it first appeared. These too began writing their quota of letters.

AS A reasonably popular writing-man, I had penalized myself heavily for daring to open up a subject in which the reading public showed such interest. I had been with the American Magazine on and off as contributor since its inception in its present form in 1915. Once before, in September, 1917, I had written a bit of literary work for them that had cleaned out all copies on the nation's newsstands. The Crowell Publishing Company was my "bread and butter" in a manner of speaking.

It is not generally known to the public that writers uniformly go by "families" . . . there is The Saturday Evening Post group, the Hearst group, the Crowell group. High-priced popular writers acquire such personal relationships with editors from constant contact with them that they follow the legitimate practice of making all first submissions to the editors of the group who publish most of their material and give them greatest favors in the way of exploitation. I had been more or less identified with

the Crowell group ever since the regime of the American's great editor, John Siddell, that ended with his death in 1923.

But now having written *Seven Minutes*, it gradually came to me that I had been too successful in stirring up a mare's nest. One of the American's editors said publicly at a luncheon one noontime, which I attended at the home of a friend in East 74th Street: "Publishing Pelley's *Seven Minutes* was one of the most disastrous mistakes the American ever made. It aroused a demand on the part of the public which the magazine couldn't continue to supply. But worse than that, it diverted Pelley from a highly successful writing career. It turned a first-rate popular author into a second-rate metaphysician who has yet to prove himself."

This, remember, was in 1929.

SHORTLY after the publication of *Seven Minutes*, those editorial luminaries on the American who had most to do with getting the original article published, handed in their resignations and left the company. I wrote two fiction stories for the magazine, mostly in the endeavor to discharge the advances made me when I could not work because of the mail that needed answering. Just before the resignation of this editorial regime, I also wrote a short serial for the American, with a slightly mystical motif. When the new editor took charge, I saw him only once and that not by his invitation. He graciously said that he had always liked my material, but that the American intended to conform to new standards of publishing; it was "going in" for sports, business articles, typically Americana from the metropolitan

viewpoint. The story with the small-town, or mystical motif, was to be persona non grata.

I have written little since for the American Magazine.

BUT I could not suppress the interest that had been started. Mail, mail, mail! Day after day! Why didn't I write more for the American? Why didn't I write more like Seven Minutes for other magazines?

I tried, and the material was consistently refused---excepting in some of the smaller five-and-ten cent store periodicals where my name went unnoticed. Yet something had to be done! It came to me with overwhelming force that under the skin of the average person there was more real interest in this great subject than in all the "sports, business articles, and Americana from the metropolitan viewpoint" that would find publication in American periodicals in the next twenty years.

Whereupon came astounding directions from psychic sources instructing me to write a novel that should explain to distraught and perplexed people what they so avidly wanted to know.

Chapter VII

STRANGE AID IN MY BUSINESS



THE SUMMER of 1929 which now came on, seemed to be one full program of a series of psychical happenings. I had seen evidences of discarnate guidance so pronounced in my affairs up to this time, that there no longer remained any subconscious doubt in my mind that relatives and friends whom the world called dead were not only alive but in touch with me and intensely interested in everything I did.

This attitude of mind left the door wide open for anything to happen. It consequently happened. And I grew to think little of it.

As I have said elsewhere in these pages again and again, by admitting the imponderable we have the ponderable demonstrated.

I accepted the fact that the dead were not only alive but far more sentient and active than people are in the mortal state. And while unusual occurrences brought their quota of surprise, in the main I ceased to be awed.

I continued the taking of psychical transcripts day after day and night after night. Two outstanding events occurred to show how supernormal guidance manifested.

The first was the sale of my third novel, "Drag," as a motion-picture production; the second was the writing of my fourth novel, "Golden Rubbish."

I WAS taking a doctrinal message in the apartment of a friend one evening early in the summer when there came an informal aftermath to the discourse. The Friend who had been transmitting the communication always chatted a few moments with me before ringing off on the Cosmic Wire. This particular evening he declared to me:

We rejoice to tell you that something extremely pleasant is in prospect for you. We look ahead and see a man in a certain office signing papers of sale on literary property which you own, that will mean a large amount of money for you.

I have always been skeptical of messages which purported to predict "large amounts of money," legacies, and other expositions of unusual good fortune. It has been my experience that if these things are to happen, they will happen anyway. To talk about them and discuss them in advance frequently sets vibrations in motion that defeat the end in materialization.

Besides, it is a favorite dodge of the mischief-makers to predict wonderful good fortune that fails to materialize and thus cause loss of faith and confidence in psychical interpretation. So I said:

"That's fine. When and how does it happen?" The answer came in the clearest clairaudience:

"Tomorrow morning you will receive a 'phone-call from a man here in the city who wants to buy the rights of your novel 'Drag.' He will make you an offer that seems ridiculously low. Do not accept it at once. Wait for my voice instructing you. I will advise you what is going on in the inside of his brain; he has been instructed to buy the work within a certain price but he will not tell you what that price is, at first; you set your figure high and bargain with him; when you come within the neighborhood of the price he has been authorized to pay, I will advise you and do you close your deal. Do you refuse to be hoaxed or intimidated. He wants this book and is willing to pay a satisfactory sum for it. I will be an unseen third party to the deal because you are in need of the funds to carry on our mutual work. Do not forget. No matter how the trading goes, wait for my voice advising you when to close your deal."

I WENT home wondering whether I confronted a new manifestation of mischief. Those were anxious sequences, waiting for the Higher Counsel to prove up in event whether or not the voices could be trusted.

Nevertheless, around 8:30 the following morning I was awakened by the ringing of the phone near the head of my bed. My motion-picture agent was on the wire.

"I've just received a call from First National Pictures," he informed me. "They're interested in buying the movie rights to 'Drag' to make into a production starring Dick Barthelmess. We're to have a conference with their New York purchasing

representative at ten o'clock. Please be at my office and we'll go over and discuss the deal together."

At ten o'clock we were in the office of the picture concern on upper Madison Avenue. I learned that my Counselor of the evening before had been absolutely accurate in his statements. The trading commenced. Pursuing the tenets of his calling, our buyer started in by telling me what a frightful writer I was, and how the novel that he wanted to purchase was shopworn goods that I ought to feel honored to have First National make for nothing. But he graciously condescended to name a figure---which I as graciously condescended to refuse---by which the transfer of the rights might become valid in law.

WHAT no one in that room, at least in mortal form, knew but myself was the fact that we three mortals were not alone. I could "feel" the vibration of my unseen Friend's presence in my sensitized left side like a galvanic battery. I knew he was standing about 20 inches from my left shoulder, taking in all that transpired.

Clearly in my Inner Ear came his voice. "Tell him you want the following amount of money for the rights," and a sum was named almost three times what our buyer had first proposed. I did so.

"Are you crazy?" cried our buyer. "We wouldn't pay that much for movie rights to a best seller by a first class author!"

"Suppose we split the difference," suggested my agent. "Never!" cried the picture man, "but I'll come up three hundred dollars."

Then I'll come down three hundred," I rejoined, making the result equally as absurd.

Up and down, back and forth we jockeyed. Again and again my unseen counselor at my shoulder advised me at each new offer:

"He's not telling you the truth as to the highest price he's been authorized to pay. Keep on trading."

Several times we drifted off upon other subjects. Again and again we came back to how much the movie rights to the book were worth. It had been ten o'clock when we entered the buyer's office. At a quarter to twelve he jumped to his feet, thumped a copy of the book upon his desk and cried:

"Listen to me, both of you! I'm going to tell you the topnotch price I can possibly offer you. If you don't want to trade on it, everything's off."

He named a new price. Distinctly and emphatically in my ear my counselor cried:

"He's telling you the truth. Accept it and close your deal. But make him give you a certified check before you leave this office."

"Okay," I said aloud. "But only on condition that you draw my check at once."

I walked out with the check in my pocket.

THE adept student in psychical phenomena may raise the question concerning this episode as to whether or not the whole affair might not have been my clairvoyant powers coupled with the practice of cryptothesis or subconscious mind-reading which

I translated to myself in terms of a discarnate voice of an unseen friend at my elbow.

My answer is: It was indeed possible but not probable. I base this contention on the vibratory phenomena that went with his presence, and the nature of his asides to me clairaudiently from time to time during the trading.

He gave me a more or less literal recount of exactly the thoughts that were transpiring in that buyer's mind, things which it would not be in the nature of my own perceptions, conscious or subconscious, to receive.

Also, if I had this gift of cryptothesis, why should it be confined only to business deals of this kind? Why do I not have it for use in a hundred other situations? I solemnly affirm that I have not. It was only for this one sequence that the clairaudient voice came to me advising me so. Try as I may, I cannot summon a repetition of the performance at will.

I TOOK the money, relieved a badly strained financial situation which had accrued from pulling up stakes and moving to New York from California. Then a month or so later a similar phenomenon happened "out of a clear sky," so to speak.

Again I was in communication clairaudiently taking a doctrinal message. The Voice added:

"During the week that is ahead, you are going to be invited to a dinner with a certain New York publisher. He will proposition you to write a book for him. When he makes you the proposal, do you accept it. The book will be dictated to you by us for a very special purpose in connection with the

work you are doing. He will make you the proposal at our instigation although he will not be aware of it. "

At the time I received this news I had no intention of writing a new novel. I was far too busy with other things. But two or three days passed and then I was suddenly invited to go to the old Waldorf-Astoria to hear a lecture by Dr. Crandon, husband of the famous trance-medium, Marjory, of Boston.

The friend who gave me the invitation mentioned off-handedly that she had also invited one of the members of the publishing firm of G. P. Putnam Sons to go along with us. We would have dinner first and drive over for the lecture afterward.

HERE, apparently, was the opening that had been predicted, I accepted both invitations and on the evening in question sat through the meal with no proposals coming from my newly-found publisher friend.

Not until we were approaching the Waldorf in a cab did the talk turn on the literary work that I might have in prospect. I mentioned something to the effect that I had had such poor luck with my last publisher that I had no heart to write another novel for anyone just then.

"Do you mean you're thinking of changing publishers?" he demanded.

"Perhaps," I bantered, "if I got a proposition good enough."

"We wouldn't take you away from another publisher unless you wanted to make the break yourself," he declared. "But if you're seriously thinking of changing, won't you come and see me before signing up with anybody else?"

Again the Voice seemed to know what it had been talking about. I said that I'd drop in and talk with him about it the following afternoon.

TO MAKE a lengthy episode brief, I had a new contract for three novels signed, sealed, delivered, and stored away in my safe deposit box, within a week!

But what to write about?

I recall that I was not in an especial "story-telling mood" . . . the creative impulse was not really strong enough just then---with all that was happening to me psychically---to apply myself over the extended period of time that a book requires for its composition.

I went home and looked through my old manuscripts of partially-written plots such as every writer has stored away in his bureau drawers against faulty inspiration. Finally I found the beginnings of a story that I had begun three years before and abandoned. It presented possibilities and as I had the product sold before it was produced, I felt justified in reopening the yarn and seeing how it went under possible psychic guidance.

No sooner had I revamped the premise of the plot and gotten launched in the first two or three chapters, than I was aware of that strange vibratory exhilaration at my left shoulder.

Someone was standing there, directing what I was writing! Chapters flowed out from beneath my typewriter keys with amazing facility. It seemed time after time that I was merely taking dictation. The language and the style were not my own. I would type whole pages as swiftly as my fingertips could touch the keys.

The moment came finally when I leaned back in some perplexity and demanded:

"Is someone literally dictating this story to me?" The answer came distinctly: Of course! I asked: "Who is it?"

Whereup I heard the name of a world-famous author spoken as plainly as I might have heard it addressed to me across a telephone wire.

"I can't believe it," I told a friend who later came into the room. "Why should a man so famous spend his time following me around, giving me a story in his own style, when he'll never get any credit for having composed it? I feel as though I were sailing under false colors, anyhow."

Within a week I was getting absolute proof that this great author---several years dead---was indeed aiding me, and the reasons why he was doing so.

He spoke to me confirming it, by a voice heard in a room by half a dozen people who were present at the episode!

Chapter VIII

I TALK WITH "DEAD" FRIENDS



NOW come to the most intriguing, and---to my way of thinking---the most convincing phase of my personal experiences, attesting to me beyond all doubt that there is no such thing as Death or blotting out of the personal consciousness.

It is one thing for a person to claim that he has had some sort of sojourn in another octave of time and space, and quite another for him to prove it. It is one thing to claim that he has "hearing" so finely attuned to Thought Speech that he can pick up messages from the higher realms of life and still another to demonstrate scientifically that he is not subconsciously composing what he "hears," though he may not be consciously aware of it.

But in the winter of 1929, in New York City, and on into the spring and summer of 1930, I had a series of experiences which there seems to be no refuting, rationalizing of, or explaining by any other method than that I was actually talking with the souls of people who have gone Beyond the Veil. It will take several chapters for me to relate in detail all that happened. But the first experience happened while I was writing my esoteric novel, "Golden Rubbish."

I HAVE mentioned that while writing this book it seemed to me that whole pages, and even chapters, were being dictated to me faster than I could record them on the typewriter. I was making no effort to "think up what I was writing," but the words poured into my brain in such connected, logical, and artistic fashion that all I had to do was put them down, and I had my story. Whereat I cried:

"Is anybody dictating this narrative to me?"

The answer came back distinctly: "Yes! You have so much work to do that you are being helped in composition by---," naming a celebrated author who had "gone over" during the past decade.

As I recently stated in these pages, I was skeptical that any such personage should be devoting his world-famous talents to aiding me. Why should he do it? And yet beyond a doubt, whole sequences of the story were his, in his style and filled with his idioms.

I had read much of this author and admired him much. But I had never become so imbued with his style that I had subconsciously copied it; in fact, my style in my three other novels and scores of short stories was about as far removed from his as two author's styles could possibly be.

This was borne out so graphically in the story itself that many people have since refused to believe the novel was mine when it appeared in print. It was in fact, a curious hodge-podge of two men's literary styles and is a curious exhibit of what can happen when this type of clairaudience is practiced consciously.

TO CONVINCING me that I was indeed taking the dictation of another brain in my story, this strange episode occurred:

I had reached a place in the narrative where I wanted to describe Louise Garland's resentment at her early life---or at life in general---because it had denied her social advantages. She was furious at the way she was bested time and again in the social comities, and her lack of childhood training brought her social handicaps that maddened her.

I struggled with the right word to describe her plight. Suddenly my famous author's voice said gently in my ear: "Use the word 'interclusions,' William!"

"Interclusions!" I cried aloud. "There's no such word; at least I never heard of it."

"Oh yes, there is," my discarnate helper returned. "Consult your dictionary and you'll find I'm right."

I recall that I walked into the front living-room where my big dictionary was kept, and hunted for the word. I found it! And it meant exactly the thought I had been struggling to get over.

Little 'proofs' like that can sometimes be more convincing than spectacular seance-room manifestations. In the séance-room manifestation there is always the wonder as to whether or not the Sensitive has put over a trick or illusion.

I went back to my machine and used the word. But I did much thinking the balance of that day. More dramatic things had happened to me, and were slated to happen to me still, convincing me that those in the Higher Dimensions can communicate with people in mortality at will. But the 'speaking' to me of this utterly strange word---a word I had not known as existing---made a profound psychological effect on me. There

was to be still more concrete proof of this author-discarnate, however.

That week I made the acquaintance of that very remarkable psychic, George Wehner.

I DO NOT know whether you have ever chanced to see, much less to read, George Wehner's autobiography, "A Curious Life." It was published by Dutton, I think, back in 1930. In it he told exactly how he came to recognize and develop his peculiar talents.

George was a commercial artist, about 30 years old, a bachelor, who had shown the remarkable faculty from childhood of separating his soul-mind from his physical body, vacating the latter, and handing it over to "disembodied" souls from a higher level of life who wished to use his organism for a brief visit to earth conditions. In other words, he abandoned his own physical mechanism with which he had been born and gave it over to the temporary use of some "dead" person, allowing its spirit-soul to come into it, take possession of it and use it as though it were his own. George got out of his own bodily vehicle, in other words and loaned it for a couple of hours to souls who had lost their own bodies by the process we commonly know as "death," thus permitting them to converse with their former relatives or friends precisely as though they had had their former bodies restored to them.

An interchange of souls took place, and on a score of nights I saw it happen. George "went off" with his mother---so he told me once---for an evening with her in the discarnate octave, and permitted discarnate or bodiless spirits to inhabit his physical self until his return when mortal 'visiting' was over.

He would arrive at my apartment, where I always had friends gathered to witness the phenomenon, about 8 o'clock in the evening. The room would be closed and heavily curtained; it was usually lighted by one floor lamp. George would relax himself in a chair with his head thrown back comfortably and those of us in a semicircle about him would recite the Lord's Prayer to tranquillize all of us. Then I would turn the dials of my radio until I came on some selection of dreamy music that aided the medium in falling into a trance. George would at first appear to drop to sleep. His eyes would close, his head would droop. Next it would seem as though his eyeballs sank into his skull. His face took on a waxy corpse like hue; his mouth fell open and his tongue filled it.

It seemed to those of us who were watching that a dead man sat in the chair before us!

The breathing became phlegmatic, then seemed to stop altogether; the hands grew cyanotic. Eight or ten minutes of this, with the radio finally shut off and silence in the room where all the doors had also been shut.

Then suddenly it would appear to us that our "dead man" was in distress! The breathing resumed, signs of vitality came in his face, but his head would start jerking and rolling in his collar. His hands would come up and claw at his throat. A moment of this and then he would start whistling.

AT FIRST sittings it was all rather terrifying. But I soon got used to it. When the whistling came, I learned that George's spirit had left his body and it had been taken possession of by

the soul of a young musician, who told us one night that he had been killed in an accident in Detroit some years before. He always rendered us an obligato of his own composition before the real work of the evening commenced with the entities.

Frank stayed with us for about ten minutes and then the transition took place as before. George's body went through another period of distress and then the deep bass voice of an American Indian would issue from the medium's lips with a salutatory "How!"

THE question is repeatedly asked by the novitiate why so many mediums have these American Indian "controls"---or souls who act as guards and protectors while the rightful soul is out of its body, to see that it does not become permanently possessed by entities who have no right to such permanent possession.

The answer seems to be that our American Indians lived so close to nature that they are still vibrating in what might be called the "elementals." That is, having always lived in close earthly conditions throughout their mortal lives, they are more conversant with work of this nature, and it gives them an opportunity for service peculiar to their earthly capacities.

Be that as it may, the voice of an aged Indian issued from George's lips and greeted us each in turn. He gave his name as White Cloud and persisted in singing us a ditty in his own language. The rendition over, he addressed me personally.

"You like my people?" he asked.

I said that of course I liked his people.

"You make words walk on paper," was his manner of describing my vocation as an author.

I assented to this, also.

"You make words walk on paper about my people," he informed me next. "You make words walk on paper about old chief. You are good man. You make words walk on paper about your people who are good men. They help old chief who is good man," and he waited for me to confirm this.

I SEARCHED my memory. What was he talking about? Then it came to me. Twelve years bygone I had traveled for a time with a Wild West Show outfit to get some firsthand material for a series of stories that appeared in *The Saturday Evening Post*. There had been many Indians with our outfit. One sedate old Ogallalah chief had intrigued me by his size. I had become acquainted with him and written a yarn about him.

And White Cloud knew about it and was recalling it to my attention.

Not another person in the room had known I had written such a story. I asked White Cloud to suggest more details about the plot of the story. He did so! He was quite correct.

Perhaps he read my subconscious mind to accomplish this. I cannot say and the matter is unimportant.

What is of importance is, that on this particular night White Cloud had no sooner finished his comment on my *Saturday Evening Post* story about the old Ogallalah chief, than we beheld Wehner's body sinking into its "dead" aspect again and we knew that a substitution of souls was taking place.

When the substitution had been made, and the body in the chair had shown signs of reanimation, I beheld the muscles of the face altering till the expression of a celebrated author of English sea stories had become so plain that the identity might be recognized. This author, *by the way*, "went over" in 1923.

When this entering spirit-soul had oriented himself to the Wehner mechanism, he started a strange motion with his right hand, while his elbow rested on the chair-arm. Afterwards I grasped that the motion of the hand and wrist was really the capricious swinging of an invisible monocle. . . .

"Good evening," he greeted me and my companions.

"Good evening," I replied, properly awed if this was indeed the speaking soul of the world-famous literary-man whose books are known in every quarter of the globe.

"This is---," giving the name of the famous author who had addressed me clairaudiently several days before.

Continuing to swing the invisible monocle, he turned to me, seated on his left and asked whimsically as if identifying himself---

"Well, William, have you learned the meaning of the word 'interclusions' yet?"

Here was a double-check on the incident of the previous afternoon when I had been alone in my apartment and heard obviously this man's thought-speech in my ear only. Wehner had known nothing of the dictionary reference. I certainly had not been expecting either the famous author's advent into George's mechanism nor any allusion on his part to his dictionary suggestion. How to explain it? It was easier and saner for me to accept the obvious and concede that the clairaudient speech

was bona fide than it was for me to figure out the hocus-pocus in it---if the episode were fabricated.

It might have been cryptothesis, or subconscious mind-reading, I grant anew---if the incident had comprised allusion to the word and nothing else. But I forthwith proceeded to have a lengthy conversation with this particular author about the book we were jointly engaged in writing, about literary work in general, about incidents in his own writing career that were not generally known and which were not in my subconscious mind at all.

Not only did he confirm his previous contact with me by discussing audibly through George's larynx, points of story development which we had previously debated clairaudiently, but he gave me information about his own work while in mortal life that would be priceless if the public could only be convinced that I had actually talked with his "departed" soul.

I recall that I said to him: "It seems a little bit unfair for you to dictate literary productions for me out of your own fine mind and experience, and by your skilled technique, giving them to me for publication as my own. I feel that in putting out such material over my own signature, I am masquerading under false colors."

Smiling indulgently he answered: "My dear William, you will discover as you go along in this work that such is the procedure. In aiding you I am but paying my debt to others who in my own mortal writing career, aided me. I got all my own books psychically, from another dimension, exactly as every author does, whether he is conscious of it or not. And when you return to us after your own work is completed, you will repay not me, but some other craftsman who needs higher supervision."

"Are you still writing?" I asked him.

"Certainly," he answered.

"What disposition do you make of your writings when done in the higher realms of consciousness?"

"We have great libraries over here," he replied, "whose size and contents your mind could not grasp. We write for people in the higher dimensions exactly as we wrote in life for those in the three-dimensional world. More often we compose, however, for transmission to some mortal author to aid him in his career, although he may accredit our help only in the sense of 'inspiration.' "

"But why were you especially drawn to help me?"

"First, because I had read and admired your work before I made the Transition, and was able to get close to your character mentally and spiritually when I had shed the husk of my physical self. Second, and the more important, I am interested in you for the greater work of spiritual revelation which you are attempting."

"You mean psychical work?"

"I mean the candid way in which you are telling the public the truths about what each person actually encounters on passing through the change called Death. It would make such a vast difference in mortal psychology, and the interrelationships of men everywhere, to have actual facts of common knowledge---abolishing all fear of Death and thus making life itself more beautiful---that we all want to assist in such revelations. You would scarcely accredit the identities of some of the souls who collaborate to give you the messages which you receive and pass on to the public."

MY CELEBRATED author-friend stayed with us almost a half-hour, discussing literary methods, technique, careers of other famous authors whom he claimed he was living among on a higher plane---material which by no stretch of the human imagination could have been in the subconscious brains of either George or myself. Then he bade us a polite adieu and we beheld George's physical body in the process of devitalization and gradual moribund coma. We sat discussing among ourselves some of the precepts we had just heard---for one of my friends present was a prominent New York magazine editor---when sudden vitality appeared to seize hold of George's body and a woman's voice issued forth from his lips.

"Hello, Bill!" came the clear, surprised greeting. "How long have you been interested in this sort of thing?"

"Who is it?" I inquired.

"June!" came the answer in a tone that seemed exasperated that I did not grasp it at once. "June Mathis!" In a flash I adjusted myself.

I was talking with the soul-personality of a famous Hollywood scenarist who had "gone over" some two years before on sudden demise while at a play in a New York theater.

Looking backward over ten years of the most dramatic of experiences in psychical research, I am forced to assert that no other one incident has since furnished me with more conclusive and irrefutable proof that there is survival after mortal death, than the appearance of this woman in George's physical instrument, and the conversation which consumed the next half-hour between us. Talking "face to face" with people who have made the Passing is always a hair-raising experience.

I had known her on and off for a three-year period on the West Coast while I had been out there making movies prior to my "awakening." She had at one time been story-editor for one of the big film companies and I had sat in her office for lengthy periods and discussed prospective screen material with her.

Here was a person whom I had definitely known in life in recent years, of whom I could ask questions, the answers to which were known only to myself---thus proving the survival of personality irrefutably.

"Haven't you heard of my Seven Minutes in Eternity article in the American Magazine?" I bantered.

"Yes," she replied, "only just tonight. But the world over here is a dozen times the size of the world of mortality, although contacts are pretty much the same. I heard about you tonight through your English author-friend and came along to be present because of my great admiration for him."

I had a way to check up on this woman--- unquestionably. It was a way that George Wehner could never fabricate, if all this were a phenomenon of his subconscious mind.

"Do you recall where I last met you in earth life?" I asked.

Just before she "died" in the National Theater in New York, June had married one Balboni---an Italian gentleman of parts who I understand became head of Mussolini's state movie monopoly in Italy. Husband and wife had made a movie of their own from a script called the "Vienna Melody." But they had decided this name not to be a good box-office "pull", so they had---wittingly or unwittingly---purloined the name of my first novel "The Greater Glory" for their picture. I had been required to

sue them in the California courts for this bit of appropriation, and had won a decision. They had recompensed me \$2,500 for this use of my title. In consequence, my first pleasant contact with June had terminated in a legal coolness. However, tonight---occupying George Wehner's body for the moment, she seemed to have recovered from it.

But I recalled definitely where I had last seen her in the physical flesh---a meeting that was known only to the two of us. I had been out to the First-National-Warner studios in Burbank, just before quitting California, and had inadvertently come face to face with June at the flowered gate just behind the administration building. None but the pair of us had been around. I had opened the gate for her and spoken to her pleasantly. But the memory of our recent lawsuit over the "Greater Glory" title had still rankled and she had given me only a perfunctory nod. No matter! She had come through to New York the next fortnight, gone to the National Theater to witness a play, and dropped dead of heart failure in one of the aisles between the acts. Now I wanted the June Mathis spirit-soul in Wehner's body to tell me where we had met face to face for the final time in California. The spirit in Wehner "thought" for a time.

"Yes," she responded. "Out in the rear of one of the executive buildings at First National Studios in Burbank, California. We met at the gate over one of the walks that led to the stages." This was absolutely accurate, but how could George, the medium, know it---if it was George masquerading as June?

Come on, you materialists and skeptics who declare that "death ends everything" and that there is "no device nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest." If June Mathis'

discarnate but perfectly conscious and remembering spirit were not located in George Wehner's organism that night in New York, how did whatever personality WAS in George Wehner, know how to reply to me accurately in the matter of this last spot and place in which June and I had ever come face to face?

Try and explain it by your fantastic theories of cryptothesis if you can! I say you can't do it--or rather, that our "explanations" must be three times as fantastic as the one made obvious by this Mathis-Wehner-Pelley episode. If you want more positive proof than this that personality and consciousness endure after physical demise, I'm afraid I can't give it to you.

I CANNOT report in detail the conversation that followed, because it appertained to private contacts, relationships, and business associations that June and I had experienced in screenland. But here is the absolute proof on which I rely, that I was talking to June, and that she is very much alive in her new phase of consciousness.

She made intimate statements about her contacts and business associates while in life, and confided data to me about the personal affairs of people in movie-land, that I had to check up on when I was next in California, and which I proved to be absolutely correct!

Here was information about this woman's activities while in mortal life, and her trade and professional relationships, that in a manner of speaking were secrets "buried with her." By no chance could they have been known to anyone present, either the medium or myself. Yet here she was, telling them to me. And

they turned out quite correct when I made inquiries in Hollywood months later.

She told me what certain Hollywood officials were doing in the business at the moment, what future plans they had for the industry, which were to be trusted and respected in future dealings, and which were untrustworthy and to be avoided.

Incidentally, she confided that she in turn had become a great screen writer while in mortality through having a thorough knowledge of psychics. She said that a world-famous movie star, in whose career she assisted, had been clairaudient as I was clairaudient. They had shut themselves away in a Hollywood room together time after time and gotten story material from others in a higher dimension which she had sold to Hollywood producers without the slightest difficulty. All her professional life and affairs were guided by instructions received in this manner.

It was a half-hour's talk with an old friend just as graphic and real as though she was there in her own physical body. And yet in Hollywood during her earth-life it had been "touch and go" between us. She was no intimate of mine. We had met in trade contacts as fellow authors and nothing more. There was no especial tie between us, impelling her to look me up.

The visit ended and June withdrew. It was a perfectly gorgeous time that I enjoyed with "deceased" literary celebrities on this particular evening of which I write. June had no sooner vacated the Wehner mechanism than a soft, beautiful and obviously cultured spirit-soul took possession of the Wehner mechanism.

"Robert Louis Stevenson!" it announced.

THIS was pretty "tall" . . .

Were all the famous authors of Eternity crowding into the Wehner body that night, intent on honoring me with their felicitations? Frankly, I was a bit skeptical at first. But not after Robert Louis started talking.

He began to tell us---myself, and the group that was present that evening---of his "explorations" on the bottom of the Pacific in the discarnate condition, since he had been living in the unobstructed universe.

"Why are we thus honored?" I wanted to know. "Authors," he explained gently, "are a special family unto themselves in the Higher Dimensions. Their mutual profession unites them together. We who have been over on this plane for a time have come to identify the Great Souls who are incarnate in the bodies of unknown people of the present earth-period, and we want to do what we can to facilitate their present worldly labors. As for my researches, I wish that I could prevail upon you to take clairaudiently the result of my Pacific Ocean researches since my demise in Samoa. I have been down to unbelievable depths. You have no idea of what is hidden by that great body of water. I was not only impressed by the submerged Lemurian cities but by the forms of animal life that exist on the deep floor of the Pacific. For instance, there are worms down there that never have seen the light of day, that measure thirty to a hundred feet in length. They are tremendously scaled, to withstand the water pressure at the depths at which they live. Occasionally a submarine volcano or earthquake precipitates them to the surface, and when they appear at the top of the water, sailors behold them and take tales of 'sea-serpents' in to port. But actually they aren't serpents---they're worms!"

The description of the submerged Pacific life that the spirit purporting to be Robert Louis Stevenson gave us that night made us forget that we were present at a sort of spiritualistic seance.

"Will you take a manuscript clairaudiently which I have written?" he requested.

I was "snowed under" with literary work at the time, and yet didn't wish to appear impolite.

"you come to me clairaudiently as you can," I said, "and if I can get your 'voice' I'll transcribe your manuscript."

It was a couple of months before we actually made the contact, however, and I only "captured" one chapter of the Stevensonian manuscript. I still have it in my books of "scripts."

I HAVE never had much patience with the type of investigator in psychical research who passes over the obvious explanation for phenomena simply because it is obvious and frantically hunts for causes of unusual happenings on the principle: "---if something ain't wrong, t'aint right." Such a type is not an investigator, anyway. He is not interested in getting at the truth. He is perpetually witch-hunting fraud. If he cannot find fraud, he is subconsciously disgruntled. He does not accredit that in failing to find fraud he may have confronted new and startling discoveries. He says: "If I have failed to find fraud, it doesn't prove that fraud does not exist; it merely indicates that I have not been smart enough to detect it."

All this is viciously negative. No engineer would go about investigating the possibilities in electricity by first assuming that electricity does not exist.

Yet that is precisely what happens in the matter of psychical researchers of the type who try to convince themselves of the truth of survival, negatively.

ENTERING into this subject with the serious attention it deserves, we find people disposed to accredit only that which they can perceive with their physical senses. They fail utterly to take into account that those with whom they are establishing contact are operating from a dimension where all the laws of procedure applicable to the mortally finite do not maintain. Consequently when they do not get the same kind of proof in manifestation that they get in the material world, they are either disgruntled or skeptical.

It is a childish attitude, but one that often works incontestable harm, inasmuch as it leaves the researcher open to constant doubtings, and these doubtings in turn reduce the investigator to that state where all sorts of misrepresentations occur from the dimension being investigated.

Now the alternative to all this is not to cast all phenomena aside and say that it is falsehood and fabrication, but to take into consideration the handicaps and limitations which people on the Other Side are under in forming contact with This Side, and appreciate in a way that our problems are their problems as well, inverted or turned about.

They want to form contact with us and convince us of their existence, but they have just as much difficulty in manifesting in the conditions of our dimension as we have in manifesting in theirs. So we have to look for proof of their existence to the kind of manifestation that is reducible to the medium in or from which they perform.

This is not rationalizing, but the truest part of truth, as thousands of sincere and positive investigators have discovered to their profit.

Which is all another way of saying that people on the Other Side give evidence of their survival via the mental senses---mentality being the medium in which they function---whereas we on this plane give evidence of our survival via the physical senses. And the wise constructive investigator has to correlate the two.

Now and then this is done successfully, as in the incident I am about to relate.

ONE EVENING in the Wehner sittings, a person who Identified himself simply as "Frank" came through and talked with one woman member of our group that I shall refer to hereinafter as "Minnie." He claimed that just after the Spanish War he had been killed in Detroit in a streetcar accident. Succeeding to occupancy of George's mechanism for the moment, he conversed with Minnie about himself and his ante mortem adventures in a way that allowed Minnie absolutely to identify him. They chatted as old friends, because Frank had reduced himself, as it were, to the physical by being allowed to use Wehner's mortal mechanism. I was auditor to the conversation that went on. They referred to childhood pals and outings together which by no manner of coincidence the medium Wehner could have known about.

If the claim is made that the medium might have possessed himself of all this knowledge beforehand, I want to ask two questions: How did he know that Minnie was going to be present that evening, so as to prepare himself and acquire all

this information in advance, and how could he possibly acquire a plethora of such information that he had a ready and absolutely accurate answer for any reference which she made to past acquaintances that came to her mind at the moment?

It would have been necessary for the medium to spend weeks running down the information and get it in such perfect form that he knew the "ins and outs" of Minnie's life as adequately as she knew it herself, in order to carry on such a conversation as we listened to between them, that evening.

I AM PERFECTLY aware that a great library of information exists among charlatans, which they exchange among themselves for a consideration, informing them of the past histories of those coming to sittings. But here was a case of a woman who was an utter stranger to the medium, whom he did not know beforehand was going to be present this particular night, and who asked questions on the spur of the moment as they came into her head about people who could not possibly have been known to any others than herself and the friend who had died at the time of the Spanish War. The streetcar accident in Detroit she had not known about.

If there is a simple and reasonable explanation for such happenings, why not accept it in preference for one that is so involved and preposterous that it exceeds in phenomena the obvious one of survival and contact?

Minnie and Frank talked together as old friends, and not in one single reference or allusion was there a flaw in the information, an evasion, or a hesitancy, in carrying on the complete conversation.

But Frank was only a precursor of the much greater evidence that was presently coming, proving survival

definitely in an episode that stands out in my own thinking and acceptance, higher and clearer than almost anything else that has happened to me within recent years.

A few nights later we were in seance with Wehner and the same moribund conditions of his body were evident as before. Suddenly after one of his physical revivifications, the voice of a little old lady---feeble as became her years---sounded from the mouth of the medium. She was not talking in English, however. She was talking in German. .

It was Minnie's grandmother directly addressing her, with the intonation, accent, and idioms of that particular woman's speech, which no one could have duplicated without knowing her personally.

And Minnie's grandmother had been on the Other Side something like forty years!

It was a somewhat poignant reunion. I sat to one side and witnessed the whole of it.

Haplessly, however, I do not understand German.

THEY discussed different members of the family, details concerning the last illness of Minnie's mother-who had Gone Over a few weeks previously---idiosyncrasies of friends and situations, domestic and financial, which prevailed among them.

After recalling little intimacies between them which had occurred four decades before, and which Minnie had well-nigh forgotten, the grandmother gave as near-perfect evidence of positive survival as I have thus far confronted.

She proceeded to sing a droll little German folk song to Minnie, with which she had rocked Minnie to sleep as a child!

HERE was no medium asking for cues and lead-lines on another's life, fumbling and evading, suggesting and fabricating, making slips and mistakes, and generally groping to present the illusion of a discarnate person sending a message. Here was all the evidence of a grandmother and granddaughter meeting after a forty-year separation and chatting about life as they had lived it in intimate contact in a little Iowa town among people long forgotten.

It was not invited, the medium could not have known who was to be present that evening---in fact, he knew almost nothing of Minnie or her association with me or the work at that time.

Even a little dachshund named "Tip" was brought into the conversation, and Minnie had to search her memory to recall that when she was about three years old her family had owned such a dog for a time, but that her mother had been forced to put it out of the way because a neighborhood puppy afflicted with rabies had bitten it. Her mother was fearful that the dachshund might develop hydrophobia and bite the young children with whom it romped.

Her grandmother declared that the soul of that long-forgotten pet was now with her mother in the Higher Level of conscious life, and was her incessant companion!

THE whole session was one of the highlights of my psychical experiences. Other manifestations I have had---from my own "dead" relatives and others---but none were quite so clear and convincing as the rendering of that pathetic lullaby in German, which by no reasonable chance could have been fabricated under the circumstances. The medium would have had to be possessed of the entire life-knowledge of those

who were functioning in this peculiar mental-physical manner, and there was no source or sources of such information in existence outside of the brain of Minnie herself!

In the face of such evidence is it gullibility to accept the obvious explanation: that Minnie's grandmother was alive and was functioning---conclusively proved to both mental and physical senses---through George's organism?

The claim is often put forth that persons trying to identify themselves from the Higher Levels use too peculiar allusions to accomplish it. They call to mind descriptions of persons, scenes, or episodes, which the one on the physical side thinks frail, insignificant, or to which they do not have ready mental access in memory. But suppose that a friend you have not seen or heard from for twenty years suddenly calls you up on the telephone from a distant city and says: "This is Joe Smith. Don't you remember me? We went to school together twenty years ago in Oshkosh. Don't you recall the picnic at Watson's Glen? I was the boy with the red hair." You may have forgotten most of the people in Oshkosh excepting those you have retained contact with in the interim, you may have forgotten any specific picnic at Watson's Glen, for you went to a score of them while you lived as a child in Oshkosh. And scores of companions might have had red hair. On the other hand, Joe Smith with the red hair saw that picnic through wholly different eyes and re- membered you distinctly. Furthermore, it may have been the only picnic he ever attended at the Glen. The episode stands out in his memory and he uses it to identify himself. But because it has not remained with equal clearness in your memory is no proof that Joe Smith is a hoax, or that the man at me other end of the line is an

impersonator. He may be, of course, but the chances are twenty to one that he isn't, because he would know that sooner or later he could recall something to you that would either irrefutably identify him or expose him.

So it is in identifying those who have been graduated from mortality over a period of time. Giving them the benefit of me doubt leads to other contacts that gradually prove they are bona fide acquaintances of other years.

Whereas to slam down the mental receiver on the hook and assume impersonation and hoax as a policy, can result in nothing but total termination of any contact whatever.

Results depend entirely on proper cooperation!

I ARGUE along these lines, not because I am over-eager to establish contact with those who have gone and therefore seize on such phenomena as reasonable proof, so much as because I have found this psychological attitude to be productive of the most astounding and convincing results.

Minnie's German grandmother talked to her for half an hour on the most intimate phases of their family relationships, referred to happenings back over forty years in a little city in southern Iowa, and then terminated the visit finally with the singing of the lullaby.

How could George Wehner ever have gotten that detail concerning Minnie's family into his subconscious mind in a million years, without having been a member of Minnie's family himself? How could he have known what the lullaby was, which Minnie's *grossmutter* had sung to her, nearly a half-century in the past? Minnie had practically forgotten it herself. The voice which came from Wehner's throat was not his own, but the old lady's

personal voice---something it would have been difficult to fabricate. True, it was produced audibly by Wehner's vocal chords, but the pitch or tone of anyone's voice is largely determined by the tension or "frequency" of his own individuality.

How could the whole feat, I demand, have been accomplished by other methods than those indicated---the interchange of spiritual personalities in the one body? The whole thing was done in a fully lighted room and without the slightest preparation having been made in regard to who would be present.

I have had plenty of cause to learn all about the breed of psychic renegade who makes appointments to give some student-seeker private "readings" of a phenomenal nature, and who reads up on the innocent and gullible victim---eccentricities, experiences and family complications---or gets such information from colleague scoundrels, and equipped with such information merely turns it back to the victim as psychically acquired. None of this could have happened at the Wehner sittings, even if he had been that kind of Sensitive---which emphatically he was not. In the first place, George almost never knew who was going to be present at these groups in my apartment until he had arrived there and been introduced. Sometimes I did not know who was to be there, myself. Many of my group's members would bring in friends unannounced. But George---or whatever spirit-souls came into his organism---would converse with these last minute arrivals quite as intimately as Minnie's grandmother talked with her about their family life back in Iowa.

Another phase of the strange business was this---

Lest it be argued that Wehner as a "sensitive" could read the subconscious minds of such sitters, how explain the fact that time and time again throughout the balance of that summer of 1929, as we held the gatherings one evening a week, the "occupying" souls would impart information---later found to be absolutely correct---that had not been in our subconscious minds at all? June Mathis did this several times. "

She chatted with me about Hollywood and movie-colony affairs as if she might have come on from the West Coast within the week, and when I next went through to California and checked on what she had told me, I discovered she had been right, to the hair.

It's merely a rationalization of something that can't be otherwise than the obvious, to call all such phenomena "the action of subconscious mind." What sort of action, and just what part of subconscious mind? The rationalization in scores of instances was far more unlikely and even bizarre or fantastic than accepting the fact of consciousness-survival.

Chapter IX

THOUGHTS ARE THINGS



HAVE uniformly kept to the viewpoint in examining or receiving these higher and more delicate exhibits of life, that personal actuality and identity require establishing by something more reliable than fantastic displays of phenomena to physical senses. What I mean is: it would satisfy most people to see with what they term "their own eyes" the fully materialized body of a friend or relative that had previously been lowered into a cemetery grave. They would then subscribe to the evidence of their senses, or what they take to be such, that the identical person was not dead but very much alive and the question of survival no question at all. What they want for proof is Form, or rather, Appearance. Given this, they are appalled but satisfied.

On the other hand I have never yet encountered a researcher in psychics of any prestige or experience who has not agreed that nothing is easier to trick than the eye. When I say trick, I do not mean intentional hoax. I mean illusion. If the apparently materialized figure of one's grandfather walks out of a medium's cabinet, corresponding as to size, features, whiskers and general corpulence to what the old gentleman resembled a week before his physical death, there is reasonable indication

that his Light Body has somehow gotten itself clothed with ectoplasm and that it is indeed he whom one visited in the country on so many pleasant vacations when one was young. But if, in the conversations that ensue, the materialized personality cannot describe where his farm was located, or give the first names of his children, or carry on intelligent intercourse concerning the principal happenings in his long and venerable life, then something is decidedly wrong and though the projection look like one's forebear, even to the mole below his eye, little or nothing is proved beyond the fact that a replica of one's grandparent's figure is existing in the room.

Speaking for myself, I have never been one to scurry around from seance room to seance room, observing the "work" of this or that medium, watching for deceits or witch-hunting frauds, and taking delight in stirring up and recording fresh psychical sensations to gratify curiosity or "prove" survival. Somehow my inclinations didn't exercise that way. Particularly they didn't exercise that way after I began to realize the terrific potency of so-called Thought Forms. Also in my Higher Instruction I continually had hints as to Astral Husks of people who had in turn "died" out of the next elevated octaves and left their more tenuous "remains" for possible occupancy by mischief-makers or renegades.

What I did instinctively was to concede the probability of spiritual survival, make it after a fashion a fundamental of my thinking, and thereafter let things happen. Uniformly, I say, they happened. But when it came to checking validities and identities, I found myself giving forty times as much credence to a proof of survival contained in the German folksong rendered by Minnie's grandmother as I did to

materializations that pounded tables, creaked chairs, levitated trumpets or picked up some fat man and hung him from the steam pipes. I say this, no matter what familiar aspects such materializations take. After all, personality is a thing of spirit. I know you, and you know me, directly and definitely because of what is embedded in the way of knowledge of one another and our concerns, in our minds. If you die physically while I am owing you a sizable sum of money, and you find a way to contact me after your passing, either through a clairaudient message or a mediumistic materialization, and cannot tell me how much the sum was and under what conditions the debt was contracted, I have every right to entertain reservations as to your identity till you do tell me. "Dead or alive," you may well remember all right, whether in your new orientation you may have forgiven me the debt or not. So what I call Mind Proofs have been the criteria of identity on which I have relied up across the last dozen years, to establish implied contact with personalities I have known in overcoats of flesh.

I would far rather have two or three irrefutable Mind Proofs to demonstrate to me that the "dead" are alive, than all the ectoplasmic materializations that could be crowded into a seance room the size of Grand Central Terminal. Again I say, Thought Forms and Astral Husks offer too many chances for wilful or witless deceiving.

THE OTHER day, visiting in Baltimore, one of my colleagues told me of a medium whose seance he had recently attended, who materialized some twenty-two separate and distinct persons during the course of the evening---a remarkable feat no matter how you view it. Among these persons was my

friend's own sister who had passed over while a girl but attained to her majority in the elevated octave.

This sister succeeded in accomplishing a materialization so opaque that as she sat down in the chair next to her brother, she caused the chair to creak beneath her "weight." She sat beside her brother for ten to twenty minutes, touched him occasionally as an affectionate woman will, discussed family complications from the angle of intimate knowledge and deported herself to all intents and purposes exactly as she might have done had she returned in her physical body.

The thing that made the materialization of interest to me particularly, was my host's description of the beautiful flowing robe which he said his sister wore. Her materialization was so complete that she allowed him to take a fold of the "fabric" in his hands and stretch it between his eyes and the light. He told me that it seemed to be of the same wonderfully soft substance that composes a bat's wing---yet possessed of a sheen as exquisite as rayon. Anyhow, it had no weave in it.

All the same, I was far more convinced of her hyperdimensional personality from the fact that she had seemed to know everything which had passed between her brother and myself in the political campaign of five or six years ago, and that she had been keeping track of my own personal activities along patriotic lines since and imparted to her brother details of them which he could have had no way of knowing about unless he had remained a member of my intimate personal circle. Which decidedly he had not. . . .

On the other hand, consider the episode described to me by Dr. Henry Hardwicke and his wife of Niagara Falls, N. Y., the first time I visited at his home to arrange with him for going to

North Carolina and lecturing on psychics at Galahad School in Asheville.

PERHAPS you may have heard of the celebrated medium, Marjory, wife of the physician, Dr. Crandon of 10 Lyme Street, Boston, who attracted national attention for her remarkable exploits in connection with her deceased brother, Walter Stimpson, during the 1920's. If not, I had better mention her, for it ties into the Hardwicke incident I am about to relate.

As mutual acquaintances told me the story, Dr. Crandon had been a physician in Niagara Falls, N. Y., before going to Boston to take up practice there. Being a local colleague of Dr. Hardwicke's, my later psychics professor of course knew him well. In fact, I understand they had been brother physicians in the same neighborhood. But in due time the Crandons moved to Boston, where Mrs. Crandon's brother, Walter Stimpson, was killed in a motorcar accident about 1922.

Mrs. Crandon naturally grieved for the lad, by no means being aware of her own mediumistic abilities or what was specifically to result from his "death."

One night---and I admit that I am now relying on memory for the details---the doctor's wife went to dinner at a friend's home in Newton or Newton Highlands, when, after talking about Walter, she felt a strange lassitude stealing over her. Presently her head went down on her arm amid the teacups. Guests thought she had fainted or dropped into a nap. Instead, her husband's quick examination showed her to have fallen into coma. Suddenly as though from the center of the uncleared table, the literal and audible voice of the "dead" brother, Walter,

spoke to the whole dinner group. He greeted them cheerfully and energetically, explaining in the following few minutes that if the actinic rays could be filtered out of the illumination in the room, it would be seen that he had taken ectoplasm from his sister's body and fashioned it into a synthetic larynx through which he was addressing them.

This was later found to be so, because photographs of that ectoplasmic larynx were taken on another occasion. There was nothing "phony" about such pictures because I have personally seen and examined them, and I know something about "trick photography" as a result of my eight years at moviemaking in Hollywood. . . . Anyhow, that was the beginning of the Walter demonstrations. They became of outstanding importance in psychical research, because over the next three years Walter materialized his hands and caused some seventy-two sets of his fingerprints to be impressed on dental plate wax under conditions which precluded all trickery, and upon comparison with prints left by Walter on toilet articles and objects in his room before his death, were attested by the Boston Police Department to be irrefutably authentic. I may come back to Walter later. But to get back to Dr. Hardwicke and Thought Forms.

IT WAS a Sunday afternoon in the spring of 1932 that I sat with Dr. Hardwicke and wife in their living room in Niagara Falls and our conversation turned upon Walter and Marjory.

"One of the most marvelous things I have heard of in connection with psychical research," remarked Dr. Hardwicke, "happened right here in this room. Dr. Crandon was back here in

the city and had dropped in for a half-hour's chat to renew old acquaintances. It was not quite dark and we had the lamps switched on. Half a dozen relatives and neighbors had come in. We were sitting in chairs about this room when all of a sudden we heard Walter's voice---audible to all of us. 'Hello, Henry!' he cried, addressing me. 'Think I'm dead, do you? Man, what couldn't I show you if I could only use that nice rich yellow aura of yours!' I recognized the boy as I had known him a couple of years before. 'Go ahead,' I assented jokingly." Whereupon Dr. Hardwicke recounted to me how he presently felt a strange drowsiness stealing over him, and a few minutes later, to all appearances, had dropped fast asleep. Whereupon his wife, Kate---who later came to Galahad School with him---took up and completed the narrative. "Walter started talking to us," said Mrs. Hardwicke, "about the terrific potency of Thought Forms. When we thought positive and dynamic thoughts, he contended, we actually projected a literal creation into the Higher Octave universe. 'For instance, and to prove what I mean,' Walter said, 'Suppose you pull off the stunt of "thinking into existence" the light-pattern body of a bird on the corner of the upright piano. Then I'm going to see if I can take ectoplasm out of Henry's carcass and coat the pattern body so that all of you can see it. Wait!' We waited," narrated Mrs. Hardwicke. "And believe it or not, in a moment or so we were conscious of a strange fluttering on the corner of the piano among the mementos and photographs. A small sparrow hawk took off from the top of the piano---while Henry continued to sleep---and darted three times around the room. Finally it came to light on Mrs. Jones's head."

The name of this lady wasn't Jones, by the way, but it will serve to describe what presently happened as Mrs. Hardwicke related it.

"Mrs. Jones let out a startled shriek and instinctively raised her hands to brush it off. 'Don't touch it!' cried Walter, still talking audibly to us, though none of us could see him. But he spoke too late. Mrs. Jones had already touched it."

I MIGHT say, myself, by the way, that this same Mrs. Jones was present there in the living room when the Hardwicks told me these details, and she corroborated all of them. In fact, she interjected at this point. "It felt exactly as though I'd thrust the tips of my fingers into a jar of cold menthol. But the bird did fly off my head at the contact."

"I'll say it did," added Mrs. Hardwicke. "It swooped three times around the room almost faster than the eye could follow it, and then made a swift dart for my right ankle. Moreover, it came to rest clinging to that ankle. Its tiny claws cut through my silk stocking and drew blood. I screamed and tried to kick it off. Everyone here knows that the tiny wounds that its claws made, were two to three weeks in healing up and disappearing."

"What became of it?" I asked both Hardwicks.

"Walter's voice broke in," concluded Kate, "with the exclamation: 'I guess this thing has gone far enough. I'll take the ectoplasm off.' Again, believe it or not, that tiny sparrow hawk simply dissolved from its grip on my flesh. It seemed as though it turned to smoke and was gone. 'I wish I could get it through your heads,' Walter told us, 'that you people in mortal bodies use your minds to manufacture such Thought Forms a thousand times a day, and that those Thought Forms are literal things---or they

would be literal in your dimension if they could only be coated with etheric substance. Be careful what you think! You're projecting literal creations into the higher octaves, just as that sparrow hawk was nothing but your own envisionment.' "

I had no reason to doubt the Hardwickes or to assume that they had any motives for hoaxing me with such an anecdote. Later I was to see and possess actual camera snaps of similar thought forms, photographed through the filters of a quartz lens. Such cameras do not lie. They retain what is *THERE*.

I learned of an experiment conducted in New York in 1930 or thereabout, when a research worker assembled six people before a bare white wall. On the wall he marked out an area six feet high and about thirty inches wide. At it he pointed his quartz-lens camera and inserted a plate.

"I want you six people," he said, "to imagine with all the thought force at your command, the literal presence of Abraham Lincoln standing in that space, as in life. I'm going to keep my camera lens opened on it and see what it produces." The thing that resulted was a queer impression of six Lincolns, superimposed one over the other, but with features of face and figure that could be recognized anywhere.

He had photographed literal projections from six human minds. I mention them as contention that it may be entirely possible for a person to go into a seance room wanting to contact a certain departed loved one, hold the thought of that person's appearance in his mind, and get a Thought Form coated with the medium's ectoplasm, in result. The eye could be tricked, of course. But unless there were intelligent and motivating spirit inside the Thought Form---grandparent or

otherwise---I for one would be skeptical as to whether he was my forebear, dead or alive, real or fancied.

I would want him to converse with me on what he had done specifically when as a boy I visited his home in Lynn, Mass., and report precisely what subjects we had discussed during the long talks we had together. Then I would accept that he was father's dad, indeed. . . .

YET IN my own case, and continuing the same thought, consider this---

In the late spring of 1932, it happened that I delivered a series of five lectures in Norfolk, Va., on precisely these subjects. Night after night, down to my right in the audience as I faced it from the platform, I noticed an important-looking gentleman of middle age in a naval uniform. Finally, toward the end of the week, I was moved to go down and speak to him.

"I'm Captain J---," he told me, "of the United States Battleship M---, which is laid up in dry dock here this month. I'm Scotch by ancestry and was born with the gift of second sight. All my life I've been intrigued by these demonstrations of higher existence, but I've been coming out to your lectures here night after night for quite a different reason than to hear you speak. Much of what you've said, I've known for years."

"Well," I asked, "what has brought you out?"

"The demonstrations of help you get from the two gentlemen on the platform with you," he replied.

"Nobody has been with me on the platform!" I exclaimed. "Even the chairman went down and sat in the front row of the audience after introducing me."

"Maybe," laughed the navy man, "that's what you think! But I've been able to see two personages on that platform with you. One is a tall, dignified man in a flowing white robe with a bright golden beard and blue eyes. His job seems to be scanning that audience with an eagle eye to make sure no one in it intends to do you harm. Call him your invisible bodyguard, for that's what he seems to be. The other man on the platform is an elderly gentleman in modern dress, with a short gray beard and a mane of iron-gray hair. Also he has a peculiar mannerism of pushing his beard down flat upon his chest and tilting his right eyebrow with a sharp twinkling eye beneath." I recall that I gaped a bit. He was describing my grandfather Frederick William, to a tee.

"Well," I asked, "why is he there with me?"

"He seems to act in giving you your cues," replied the captain. "Hour after hour as you've been speaking here this week, he'll step close to your left shoulder as you conclude a thought or exposition of some point in your discourse. He'll whisper something into your ear. Immediately inspiration will break over your face and you'll pick up a fresh thought and go on with it.

Grandfather Pelley might "materialize" the husk of himself in a hundred seance rooms, but not one of them would so convince me of his survival and literality as did Captain J's perfect description of him that night in Norfolk.

It's the spirit-soul identification that convinces me of the correctness of such contacts. You can have the bat-wing robes on the materialized bodies of your sisters. But I want my deceased grandpop to tell me what he spanked me for in the cellar bulkhead in the year 1894. If he remembers---as I remember---I'm prepared to concede he's still the literal Frederick William. . . .

Chapter X

WONDER BENEATH A CHAIR



AND YET materializations do have their place in persuading the ultra-skeptical that there are forms of life, or octaves of reality, that are entirely apart from the state we call Mortality. I bring to mind an instance of this in the case of a certain medical doctor who came down to the summer school in Asheville in 1932. I will give him the name of Dawley. That wasn't his name---as I remarked of the woman in the previous chapter who knocked the sparrow hawk off her head---but I do have to be careful about using correct names in pages such as these, because of the unwelcome publicity from curiosity seekers that immediately results when such a book as this is published. I can, however, locate the gentleman if a situation arises where my claims are seriously challenged. Dr. Dawley came down to Asheville with his wife and remained throughout the summer. Originally he had been a physician at the Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, but subsequently had become one of the outstanding endocrinologists at the Rockefeller Institute in New York.

Late one night in August of 1932, I sat with him on a moon-lit veranda in Asheville and asked him how or why he had contrived to acquire an interest in the subjects I was publicizing at the school.

"To explain satisfactorily," he said, "I would have to tell you of a thing that happened when Ada and I were first married."

Ada was his wife, a former nurse at the Massachusetts General Hospital, whom he had married some ten to fifteen years in the past. She was sitting a few feet away, and confirmed what he presently said.

WE HAD not been married many weeks," Dr. Dawley related, "before I became conscious that Ada was leaving our apartment in Boston every Thursday night, going out somewhere in the city and not returning till after midnight. As she volunteered no information explaining these trips, I began to grow suspicious. Where was she going, and why didn't she offer to explain her absences? It may have been a caddish thing to do, but I admit that after several weeks of it, I made up my mind to follow her.

"The night that I did so, I saw her go over to Huntington Avenue and finally turn into a brownstone-front that was in every way a private residence. Then I loitered around outside till she reappeared---which was nearly one o'clock. I accosted her and demanded to be told what she had been doing in the place.

"She answered me: 'Next Thursday night, you come along with me. I haven't told you about these Thursday-night absences of mine because I didn't think you'd be interested. Your mind is too scientific.'

"I waited with ill-concealed impatience till the following week, however, and when Thursday night came, she kept her

promise. Into the brownstone-front I went with her, and presently I found myself in a big front room furnished only with a rug, a floor lamp, a victrola, and a ring of hard-bottomed chairs. There were twelve to fifteen of them.

"THE PEOPLE to whom I was presently introduced were refined, educated, and in every way desirable to know. They presently took their places in the big front room, alternating a man and a woman around the circle. Ultimately someone started the victrola playing soothing music. We were instructed to join hands. Ada was sitting on my left. I took her hand and the hand of the strange woman on my right. It seemed rather silly at the moment, but I was determined to go through with it and learn what had made such demands on the Thursday-night time of my new wife. Some ten or fifteen minutes we had been sitting so, when a startling thing happened. . . .

"Ada's chair began to wobble. It began to heave and rock, as though an invisible force were pushing it upward from the floor. Finally with a little cry, she got out of it. The leader--- I suppose you'd call him a medium---made a quick cry for us not to break hands, but there was no doubt that something had pushed Ada's chair upward and an instant later it went over with a thud.

"Something was actually under that chair. I was as close to it as I am to you at this moment. It was a great rotating ball of substance that looked like greyish-white molasses candy, some two feet in diameter, in convulsive motion. I watched it, stupefied.

"Finally it propelled itself out before me in the center of the circle. The room was well-enough lighted to watch closely exactly how it behaved. It writhed and contracted and elongated and took shape. Then it began to assume the form of a human torso, with arms and legs growing at the corners. A protuberance like a head came out. What I was actually watching was the 'build-up' of a mature human body---a woman's body. Believe it or not, by the end of ten to twelve minutes a fully formed and respectably dressed girl of some twenty-five to thirty years was fully molded in the center of the group and to all intents and purposes quite the counterpart of any of the mortal women in that room. Somebody broke the chain of hand-holding then, and righted the wooden chair which had tipped over under Ada. This strangely materialized person thereupon sat down in it. Right beside me!

"I gather that she rather enjoyed my stupefaction. 'Well, Doctor,' she queried me, 'what do you think of that?'"

I interrupted the Doctor to comment: "Then Ada had Simply been going but each night to some sort of spiritualistic seance? Hadn't you ever had experience of such phenomena?"

"No," said Dawley, "and if I hadn't seen what I had, with my own eyes, I would have taken it for fact that I had married a psychopath---that is, if she'd ever come back to the apartment and tried to explain what happened at these meetings she attended."

"Well, the woman was fully materialized. What happened next?"

"Although I'd seen the apparition shape itself right before my eyes," Dawley went on, "I still didn't know what to make of it."

A fully grown and handsome young woman had evolved out of the great blob of ectoplasm that had somehow gotten under Ada's chair---from where, I couldn't say. She sat down beside me with a sort of Mona Lisa smile on her face and dared me to be skeptical. I seemed to be the only one in the room who was particularly startled. I remember that I asked her, 'Are you real, or am I suffering some sort of illusion?' She replied to me, 'Oh, I'm real enough. Would you care to make an examination?' Being a physician, I said to her, 'Yes, I would-if you'll permit it.' She said that she would. You see, I wanted to find out to my own satisfaction if she was just a husk or shell of a female, or a regular woman all the way through."

DR. DAWLEY paused to toss the ash of his cigar over the veranda railing.

"Well," he said, "I motioned to Ada, and we took the materialized lady into a small side bedroom. I made an examination of her, all right. And believe me, she was as solid and substantial, internally as well as externally, as my own bride, Ada. That is what astounded me. All her organs were quite as normal as any living woman's---I mean any woman in physical flesh. She got a great kick out of my increasing stupefaction.

" 'So you expected to find me a paper-mache lady, did you?' she bantered when I admitted I was satisfied.

" 'I don't know what I expected,' I replied.

"Anyhow, we went back to the group. And for the next half-hour I got a discourse on hyperdimensional reality that altered entirely my thinking and my practice.

"What she told me was, that people on 'dying' merely pulled their spiritual souls or thinking consciousness out from

their gross physical flesh, as a more tenuous pattern-body at once went into function on a higher frequency of electronic energy in Matter. They were by no means plunged at once into any theological courtroom, with God himself up on the dais to 'judge the quick and the dead.' There was no sensation occurring to them that they were actually 'dead' at all. They were continuing to exist in the same scenes and orientations that they had known in mortality. They could see people in this materialistic third dimension but conversely the people of the third dimension couldn't see them. What this girl had actually done, after a clumsy fashion of explaining it, had been to lower her vibrations to a point where she became perceptible to people of the third dimension---using the medium's ectoplasm to solidify her Light-Self and reduce it to a substantiality where I could see her and touch her as I had lately done in the bedroom. It was a real education in psychics that I got that night, and for a long time afterward I couldn't make out whether I fancied it or not. Of course, whether I fancied it or not made not the slightest difference in the actuality of the conditions that people like her confronted when they passed through the change called Death. Still, it was all so novel, and counter to what orthodox theology had gotten me to believe since boyhood, that it took a bit of time for adjustment."

"How did it end?" I asked Dr. Dawley. He cast a mischievous glance at his wife. "I'll bet you'll never believe me," he said, "but as I went on talking to this strangely materialized young woman, it seemed to me that she was not quite as big as she had been ten minutes before. In fact, she seemed to be shrinking in size, right before my eyes.

I remember that I glanced down at her feet. They failed to touch the floor. Really, she was like the fantasy in Alice in Wonderland when Alice ate the Wonderful Cake that reduced her to a size to go through the gate into the magical garden. The girl was growing smaller as I watched---and as we talked.

"By the end of a second ten minutes, she was obliged to jump down off the seat of the kitchen chair or she might have hurt herself getting off it at all. She finally walked out into the center of the circle, a doll-like creature some twenty inches high. And yet she still kept getting smaller.

"When I last could distinguish her voice, she was standing out in the middle of the group, a little figure, still perfectly formed, some fourteen inches high. Then she seemed to pivot on her heel. With a little wave of her hand to me, she was gone. Yes, sir, gone! She had shrunk and evaporated into the atmosphere of that room not unlike the disappearance of smoke that dissolves into the atmosphere after coming from the stack of a locomotive."

IT WAS a bizarre recital.

"So, after that," I said, "I take it you continued an interest in psychical research?"

"I certainly did," he answered. "I've never been able to get enough of it. Ada and I went regularly to the seances on Huntington Avenue every Thursday evening after that. I saw many strange types of materialization but nothing to equal that girl who 'created herself' from a ball of effluvia under Ada's chair and then shrank to the proportions of a doll before my eyes. "

"It was remarkable," I contended, "that she could make herself so solid. The medium must have been able to part with a lot of ectoplasm."

"I have often wished," Dawley told me, "that I could have had a set of scales at hand to weigh her, during that physical examination."

"You would doubtless have discovered," I said, "that she by no means was as heavy as a normal mortal woman of the same proportions. We find uniformly in these materializations that if the medium weighs, say, a hundred sixty pounds at the commencement of the seance, and the materialized entity tips the scales at, say, eighty pounds, then the medium during the phenomena will reduce in weight to eighty pounds."

"In other words, it's a weighable physical substance that departs the medium's body and is used by the Light Body of the visiting spirit-soul to make itself opaque and substantial?"

"That's it," I answered. "And I understand that such ectoplasmic 'material' has in several celebrated cases been severed in a chunk from the materialized body, taken into a laboratory and analyzed. The great medium, Valentine, permitted this to be done on one occasion during an American visit. The ectoplasm was found to contain exactly the chemical components and in much the same ratios, as exist in the ordinary physical vehicle. . . ."

Chapter XI

WE LAY A GHOST



INTRODUCE the subject of discarnate existence in any mixed company and you are certain to find one individual present who responds positively and not a little pityingly, "I don't believe in ghosts!" They say it as though it settled the controversy as to whether ghosts had actuality or not. Usually the tone of voice implies, "--- and I do not wish to hear any more about them either." Such people are saying, "I have never had any authenticated experiences with souls in a non-mortal condition and had just as soon not have. I would not only be frightened if I did, I'd be plain scared out of my senses." All of which are assertions based on purest ignorance. Undoubtedly we have people somewhere in the United States who do not believe in radio, and I ran across an old mountain woman down in the State of North Carolina a few years ago who did not believe in the moving pictures. "Come up to Asheville," I invited, "and I'll take you to a movie show. You can see that pictures do move, for yourself."

"No," she repeated, "I said that I didn't believe in them."

I have long since suppressed any feeling of obligation to convince the "I don't believe in ghosts" people that they should change their views. Mature people, I note, rarely quarrel with ignorance. Besides, most of those nonbelievers are probably afflicted with a prenatal fixation. It is not so much discarnation that they fear as the recognitions and admittances that discarnation carries with it. They have plunged into physical materiality as a sort of spiritual anesthesia, to forget the terrible obligations of karmic adjustments, consciously. They want to live one day at a time on this plane and persuade themselves that things are what they seem, or at least what mankind commonly names them. To admit the facts of discarnation, to witness phenomena attesting to the actuality of life in more tenuous octaves, would make a perpetual controversy as to the value or reliability of this one. They like to think they are practical-minded, meaning that those who are wiser in such matters are featherheads. What they truly mean is, that their standards will become upset whereby they measure the marvel known as Existence and lest it happen, they will have more peace of mind if you will change the subject. Then again, there is always the terror of confronting a situation with which the beholder has no weapons to cope.

It is the old, old panic of meeting the dinosaur without the knotted club.

THROUGHOUT my childhood, I recalled the atmosphere of the weird, with which I heard father tell of phenomena in a house into which he and mother moved when first married, though not the house where I was born. Those were the days

when young couples spent most of their engagement period getting their forthcoming home ready and matrimony was the final act enabling them to move in together and inhabit it.

Father at the time was foreman of a shoe factory in Lynn, Mass., attending divinity school nights. He had proposed to mother and been accepted. They rented a modest cottage and proceeded to get it ready for occupancy. Movable rugs were unknown back there in the Eighties; each room was measured and carpets bought, cut and sewed to fit. Newspapers were laid down against the flooring and then the finished carpets tacked along the edges.

The only time father had for such work was very early morning, his evenings as aforesaid being taken up with his studies in Boston Seminary. He would arise at four-thirty or five o' clock as the world was just getting light, go out to the new home and work on the carpets till seven.

One morning he had let himself into the house and was sitting cross-legged on the floor, sewing carpets in an upper front room, when he distinctly heard footsteps in the empty rooms below. Thinking that perhaps the landlord had come in, he went to the edge of the banisters and called down, "Hello! Who's there?"

He received no response to his summons. But he heard the footsteps retreating across naked floors, out toward the kitchen.

Going downstairs he passed from room to room, looking in each. No one seemed to be anywhere in the house. He called again. No one could have retired through the back door because he declared that he found it securely locked. He was about to explore the cellar when he gave a start of fright. He was hearing

the same foot treads in the rooms above his head. Whoever had gotten into the house must have managed to get above stairs.

If there was one thing that my dad possessed, it was plenty of moral courage. I can believe that he did what he says he did: moved cautiously up the flight to ascertain without giving his own presence away, in which room the steps were being made.

Outside the sun was coming up. Street vistas were still filled with mist, with an occasional early laborer going to work afoot, carrying his dinner pail. No noises were perceptible anywhere but those footfalls right there in his "new" house.

In a moment more, father says he heard the footsteps coming from a small bedroom at the back end of the upper hallway. Creeping forward, he threw open its door.

The room was as barren of either furniture or intruders as it was the day the structure was built.

Father at that time was one of those who "didn't believe in ghosts." He entered the room and looked all around him. He even pulled open the door of the room's one closet. Still he found no one.

And while he was debating the origin of the noises, the same uncanny footfalls sounded in the bigger room on the other side of the corridor. And the only way that an intruder could have gotten into that opposite room would have been to pass through the walls. Right there my parent began to get scared. . . .

Nevertheless he pussyfooted across the corridor and threw open the larger bedroom's door. That room too was blank. Shutting the corridor doors to both rooms, he debated whether he should bolt. But waiting with his hands on both door knobs to

see in which room the footsteps sounded next, he suddenly heard them distinctly in the smaller bedroom. He pushed its door open.

Again he could see nothing, and with the morning sun well risen, the compartment was well lighted.

His terrors got the better of him then, and he departed that house with alacrity. Next morning when he returned, he had a companion. But as the next morning, and several mornings after that, the phenomena were not repeated, he began to take courage. Maybe it had only been a freak of the house's acoustics. Saying nothing to mother, in order not to frighten her and spoil her happiness in their new nest, he finally got the carpets laid and the furniture in. They were duly married and began their housekeeping.

They heard no more footfalls on the premises, but mother had not been domiciled in the rooms a week before father saw that some strain was beginning to tell upon her. She was restless and worried. Finally he asked her what was troubling her.

"Perhaps you'll think I'm silly," she answered him, "but something's decidedly wrong with this tenement."

"How do you mean, wrong?" father wanted to know.

"It only happens at night, after you've gone to your classes, when I'm washing supper dishes at the sink in the downstairs pantry."

"What happens?"

"That's just what I can't say. I only wish I could. I hope you won't laugh at me when I tell you that on several occasions I've had the direct and positive sensation of a strange man's entering and taking his position behind me while I'm finishing up my pantry work."

"A man! Have you seen him?"

"No, but I've 'felt' him."

Father then 'fessed up what had happened to him while laying the carpets.

"Let's move out of this place," mother said firmly.

They did move out of the place---into the house where later I was born. But the mystery continued. Another young married couple with whom they were acquainted, took the place and lived there subsequently. "I hear you've moved," mother said to this young woman, meeting her of an afternoon.

"We certainly did," the other replied. "I can tell you that Henry Avenue house has a haunt!"

"Then you discovered him too!"

"I wouldn't keep on living in the place for a million dollars a week. Why, every evening when I'd go to wash the dishes at the pantry sink, someone would come in and stand behind me. I'd swear I could hear him breathing! . . ."

THIS sort of phenomena would seem to postulate that discarnate bodies possess enough weight to cause floor boards to creak, or to give off sounds of their literal footfalls, even though not opaque enough to be seen by the eye. Flammarion the great astronomer, in his studies into the phenomena in three hundred and seventy-six such "thaunted" houses in France and Belgium, came to such conclusion. How it is done is beyond determination by present day physics. In his celebrated report on the mysterious happenings in Calvados Castle he relates how the discarnate, operating on the premises, delighted among other spookish pranks to clump through the great rooms of the

place with what seemed to be small boards attached to its feet---boards twenty inches long and eight to ten inches wide. It seemed to be able to pass through the walls with these freakish appendages, moving from one room to another.

One night the Abbe of Calvados, having undertaken to sleep in one of the bedrooms in aid of Flammarion's investigations, heard these prankish footsteps coming across the room next his own. The abbe was undertaking to sleep in a fat French featherbed. They made affidavits that the board footfalls not only approached through the wall across from the foot of the bed, but traversed the width of the room and mounted the said bed over the foot-rail. Across the bed they "walked" within an arm's length of the abbe's quaking body. Moreover, the obese feather bolster showed the imprint of the oblong "feet" as they made their final imprint on the pillow and then passed out through the wall against which the head of the bed was shoved. We can conjecture that the abbe got to the devil out of there as fast as his holy legs permitted him.

What we are trying to do, groping about as to why these noises and imprints are perceptible, is to reconcile the physics of this octave with the physics of octaves transcendent to our own. The time may come when we will do it. At present we are only scratching the surface of facts about the physics of our own octave. But as partial explanation of why such phenomena should occur at all, I can fall back on my own strange experience in 1929 in "laying" one of these locality-bound discarnates.

I WAS typing in my flat on West 53rd Street in New York one August morning when the doorbell rang and I pushed the gadget to admit a lady member of our Manhattan psychical group who had lately taken a job as caretaker of an old mansion up on the Albany Post Road above Ossining. She had taken the job not so much for the money involved as for the seclusion it gave her to finish a book on which she was working.

"I want you to come up to that old house and stay there throughout one night," she begged.

"Well, what do you think is wrong with it?" I asked.

"The place has got a haunt that's a honey," she responded in her usual practical manner of expression. "Around midnight some nights, the worst sort of mischief breaks loose up in the third floor, and it's now getting so bad that even I can't stand it."

My caller was well-versed in most phases of psychical research, so if she maintained that things were bad, they must be very bad indeed.

"I might as well tell you," she went on, "that the old place is going to wrack and ruin because of the high jinks that go on inside it. The family that formerly occupied it is now living in Europe. When they gave it up and moved abroad, they took all their furniture out and stored it excepting some wicker chairs and a bed that I put on the screened porch overlooking the stretch of lawn to the south. There isn't a stick of furniture anywhere else in the place. There aren't even electric lights on in the house; I use an oil study-lamp myself, when I want to work evenings. They knew of my interest in psychical phenomena and offered me a free home there for the summer if I wished to stay and keep the

neighborhood boys from breaking the windows. But I'm telling you again, the fumadiddles are too much. They're getting on my nerves."

"Well," I persisted, "specifically what happens?"

"Racket!" Hazel answered. "Racket and strange greenish lights! You'd think some midnights that a whole family was kicking wash-boilers over the third floor and down most of the stairs. And then there's a phantom white dog that nearly cost my sister her life last night. . ."

"Your sister!" I cried. "What's she got to do with it?"

"My married sister came on from Ohio last week to spend her vacation with me. She's going to become a mother toward the last of November. Last night, just before we retired on the bed on the screened south porch, she came to me wanting to know who owned the white setter dog that seemed to be racing around the house as though getting evening exercise. I said that I hadn't heard of, or seen, any such creature."

"Is your sister psychic?" I asked.

"No," said Hazel, "and fairly scared to death by anything abnormal. Of course, when she showed up to spend her vacation with me, I didn't want to tell her what went on some nights in that house. So I didn't make much comment about the mysterious white dog. Anyhow, we went to bed after carefully locking all the screen doors. I always do that, anyhow, being afraid of tramps so near the railroad and the river. Suddenly about two o'clock this morning, Mabel awakened me with the most ungodly shriek. She was sitting up, leaning on an elbow, the bedclothes pulled to her chin and indicating something at the foot of the bed."

"The dog?" I suggested.

"Yes---the dog! The creature was right there inside our solarium sleeping-porch, standing on its hind legs, with its front paws on our bed."

"What became of it?"

"That's what caused Mabel almost to lose her baby. The fool beast sprang down and went with one long graceful leap straight through the screen door, that was shut tight and locked. Mabel has gone back to Ohio. I've just seen her off at Grand Central. Will you be one of a party from our psychical group to go up there tonight and see what can be made of all the fiddle-faddle? I know it sounds crazy and against all laws of reason. But that's what I'm up against, and the thing is getting on my nerves."

WELL, the long and short of it is, that we made up a party with two more persons, one a famous New York magazine editor, got together the food for a basket picnic, and drove up beyond Ossining in the late afternoon.

The old place, built back in the time of mid-Victorian architecture, overlooking a lovely expanse of the Hudson, was entirely surrounded by a grove of elms and maples. It was reached by a private driveway back from the Post Road.

The house itself, three stories in height, with a campanile, ran north and south, the lawn stretching from the south wing being entirely banked with frowsy shrubbery which had known no gardener's care for years.

Before it got dark, we inspected all the great cavernous rooms and bedchambers. They were, as Hazel had reported, barren of furnishings of any sort. Not even shades hung before the windows and most of the weather-beaten blinds were shut.

In sunset we spread our basket's contents on the lawn and had our picnic meal. After the sun had vanished, the mosquitoes began to bite, so we withdrew into Hazel's sleeping porch and lit the studio lamp. We assumed, of course, that we had five or six hours to wait for the nocturnal phenomena to start.

I had lighted my pipe and was tilted back in a hard-bottomed chair against the middle post of one of the window-casings that held screens in summer and sashes in winter. Outside, close against the screens themselves, grew a bank of ragged lilacs. Suddenly during a lull in our conversation, it seemed that I heard a strained whispering voice. I could have sworn that it came from amidst the lilacs banked against the screen ten inches from my head.

"I'm Scott Hillstone," it addressed me. Scott Hillstone isn't the name that was spoken, but it was a sufficiently unusual name so that I couldn't have called it up at the moment for the sake of deceiving myself.

I held up my hand in a warning to my companions to keep silent. "Yes?" I said aloud.

"I was murdered down here at the foot of the embankment," the labored whispering said next. "If I'd been able to go on living in my body, I think I'd be eighty-eight years old."

"Get a pencil!" I said quickly to Hazel. "Take this detail down. We're going to get something!" Then I pressed my head against the screen and lilacs. "Go ahead," I coaxed. "What about it?"

"It's a long story. Thank God I've found someone who can hear me while I tell it. . . . Back before the turn of the century I was in the stock investment business down in New York. I had a crooked partner. He stole one of our client's trust funds and contrived to put the blame on me. . . . Can you still hear me?"

"Yes, I can still hear you. What was your partner's name?"

"I . . . don't want. . . to tell you that. After all, I've forgiven him. . . . But I went to Sing Sing for two years, being unable to show I wasn't guilty. For two long years I was a convict for something I hadn't done. . . and every day of those two years, I schemed and planned how I was going to get even after I got out. . . ."

Hazel was writing rapidly. I asked, "But how were you murdered?"

"Finally the time came for my discharge. They let me out one afternoon about six o'clock. When I finally came through the gate, two men who looked like Italian thugs seemed to be awaiting me. . . . They asked if my name was Hillstone. . . . I said that it was. . . . They asked me if I had known that I was framed on that theft charge and that my partner had done it deliberately. I said that I did and was going to have my vengeance. Then one of them said, 'We've got plenty grudge against that partner of yours, too. The three of us should put our heads together and find a way to 'get' him that's sure-fire. Suppose we stroll up the railroad tracks and talk it over.' These men seemed to be in earnest and I fell into step beside them. We walked northward along the New York Central tracks till we came to a spot just below the embankment on which this house is built." The story was going better now, or I was tuning my ear the better to get the details. Hillstone, if there was indeed such a person, went on---

"Suddenly a fast freight train hove in sight, speeding down the river toward New York. We saw its headlight and

stepped aside out of the tracks to let it pass. It was fairly dark by this time. Just as it was about to get abreast of us, I felt a violent push and a frightful shock and somehow I was free of my body. What was left of my body, when the red lamp of the caboose had vanished around the southern curve, was being kicked into the bushes by those scoundrels, who presently darted into the rows of freight cars standing idle on the sidetracks, and were gone. . ."

"In other words," said I, to encourage the narrator, "those two men must have been in league with your partner."

"They were," the weak and ragged "whispering" continued. "He knew I was getting out that night and would probably expose him, and he had hired them to make an end to me. So . . . I never showed up at home. . . my wife and family took that for confirmation that I had been guilty, and had no defense to make, and had gone back to a life of crime."

"Have you got folks living now who might identify you and your report?"

"Yes, my wife is living. . . she was much younger than I was. . . and one of my girls is living. . . but my wife divorced me after a time and married again, and I wouldn't want to disturb her present peace of mind. . . I've had a long time to think. . . It's my sister to whom I want to get a message about what actually happened. Would you somehow manage to get a message to my sister?"

"What sort of message?"

"She's an old lady now, living in Tucson, Arizona. But in October she'll be up in New England---at Winchester, Mass.---for the winter. I wish that you'd write her at Winchester, the address I'll tell you, and describe to her just what I've

said to you. I don't want you to write her in Tucson. The people she's living with aren't sympathetic and might put her in an institution thinking her crazy, if she began talking suddenly about hearing from her brother. She's the only one I want to have know that I never did go back to any life of crime. Write her in Winchester after October first. Will you do that? I've remained around here, around the spot where it happened, an awful long time, just to have someone come along to whom I could talk."

I said: "Are you, then, the party who's been making all the racket on these premises of late? Are you the 'haunt' that's made people abandon this house because what goes on here has gotten them so frightened?"

"I don't make any trouble that I know of," the sad voice responded.

"What about this white setter that races around the place in deep twilight or moonlight?"

"Oh! Now I know what you mean. I guess if there's any upset about the premises, it's Mrs. Makarian making it."

"And who's Mrs. Makarian?"

"She's some sort of foreign lady whose husband used to be in the oriental rug business down in New York. He and she built the house, I understand. And she flies into a terrible rage sometimes, at the way the present owners are letting it go to wrack and ruin. She's got such a dog."

"And small wonder," I returned---Hazel still writing frantically and throwing her rapidly-filling sheets on the floor---"when you people who've made the Passing are allowing yourselves to become discernible to those still in their bodies and continually scare them to death. Can you connect with Mrs. Makarian and talk to her?"

"Yes, I think so."

"All right, we'll make a bargain with you. This young woman wants to remain here for the rest of the summer and finish her novel without being bothered by Mrs. Makarian, her poodle, or any other signs of discarnate activity around the premises. You see Mrs. Makarian and make her understand that the reason present owners are letting this fine old mansion go to ruin is because of her annoying rages which they hear at times with their physical ears. Tell her to stop the whole of it and tie up her dog. She'll see then, quickly enough, that the property will 'come back.' You do that, and we'll promise to write your sister about this communication."

"But after October first!"

"Yes, after October first. Now where should we address such letter."

He gave us the name and Hazel recorded it. With a weak "Thank you!" then, and a promise to be on about better spiritual business, his whispering died away. . . .

WE WAITED for ghostly phenomena at midnight. But none came. At two o'clock I stretched a hammock out between two of the trees on the side lawn, while the women made themselves comfortable as they could in the solarium. Next day we drove back to Manhattan. . . .

By the end of the fortnight I saw Hazel again. She reported that never the slightest sign of any ghost phenomena had showed or been heard since that night's talk with the murdered stockbroker. Nor had she heard any more whisperings herself.

Quite recently I rode up the Hudson River on the Empire State Express and chanced to glance upward at the old mansion from the window of the Pullman. It was renovated, painted, landscape gardened, and very much occupied.

Apparently the ghostly phenomena had stopped with that night.

Now comes the strangest part of the episode.

After October first, Hazel wrote the letter to the sister and directed it to Winchester.

After ten days it was returned to her by the postmaster in that place. Across its face was scribbled a notation in pencil-- "This addressee deceased in Tucson, Ariz., around Sept. 1st last!"

Scott Hillstone apparently hadn't been aware that his sister was going to make her own Passing in a mere matter of days.

Chapter XII

THINKING BEYOND THE BRAIN



WHAT do we want as proof that the so-called "dead" are existing in higher forms of Consciousness? Do we want them to walk around in mortal bodies in this form of Consciousness, to open doors and hoist windows, to eat with knives, forks and spoons, to drive motorcars and punch typewriters? If they did all these things, how would their form of existence differ from ours? Why would there be any reason for graduation out of one octave and into the other?

What we are chiefly interested in finding---or determining to a certainty---is, that their personalities remain intact, that they are living, thinking, and operating as individuals, that it is their habitat or arena of performance that has been altered, not the essential personalities of human souls as souls.

The complaint is frequently heard on this plane: "If there be actual survival beyond physical discarnation, then why is not the contact with those of us still in mortality more common than it is? Why must we rely on seance rooms and mediums, on the chance episode of materialization, on the all-too-frequent

incident of discarnates evidencing themselves in times of great stress in the mundane world?" We forget our unwitting bombast in thus stipulating circumstances.

Who are we, in this mundane octave, to demand that the "dead" shall do all the "work," that they alone shall take the initiative in achieving materializations, that all we must do is to sit back and wait impatiently for them to perform? Have they not as much right to say to us, "If you want to prove the reality of our existence, how about you mortal folks making a few efforts to come up onto this plane, and contact us, as you expect that we should contact you?"

Only one individual in ten thousand deliberately sets about the effort to elevate his consciousness above this mortal octave. Why should we look for those who have graduated into the higher octaves to make manifestations of themselves to us in any greater ratio?

THE FACTS of the matter seem to be, that when a soul has shuffled off his mortal coil, he finds conditions in the more tenuous realms so agreeable and opposite to everything he has known in physicality that only under special circumstances can he be persuaded to take any interest in the form of worldly performance which he has left.

Why in the name of all that is logical and reasonable, should any spirit-soul that has gotten done with the trials and tribulations of mortality, with its plots and counterplots, its greeds and its graspings, its wars and competitions, bethink that it devolves on him to make deliberate effort to come back into it, merely to convince a lot of dunderheads---who will fight the demonstration, anyhow---that survival of personality is a fact,

that is a problem causing us to wonder why we even have the demonstrations that we do.

The more I delve into the subject, however, and the more evidence that I have brought to my attention concerning the certain survival of the "dead," the more I am persuaded that such exhibitions of discarnation as we do have, are prompted by complexes in the minds of so-called "dead" people, more than they are prompted by any desire on those discarnate persons' part to convince those left behind in flesh that life has its continuity and there is no such thing as perishing to extinction. . .

In other words, the "dead" have purposes of their own to serve in entering back into the physical octave, and they are usually serving those purposes---unmindful of us---when we catch glimpses of them in light-body manifestations.

The more I probe into this entrancing subject, the more I am convinced that everything resolves itself into a matter of what "frequency" the mind may be operating on.

The attitude that some people disclose, that because spirit-souls have shuffled out of their physical mechanisms and begun to employ themselves in an unobstructed universe, they are spooks, wraiths, shades, abstract ideas, "the stuff that dreams are made of," unwittingly puts the only premium of importance on materiality. If, in other words, you are not clothed with substance, you really amount to no more than last year's crow's nest---so we might gather from the people who consider discarnation as becoming comparable to the summer's zephyr.

It is very like a fish on the bottom of the sea expressing an opinion on the gull winging above the rolling billow and saying, "Because they are not down here at my ocean-depth and

knowing its stresses and strains, I consider that they amount to no more than the off-shore wind on which they glide. Life down here at my depth is black and thick and fraught with ever-present menace. Therefore it is the only life that can truly be called such. These sea gulls high over the ocean's surface may think they're alive, but inasmuch as their existence knows little or no obstruction, of what earthly use are they, to themselves or anybody?"

The gull could tell the sluggish, provincial and menaced fish much about freedom of action that the fish never dreams about.

And yet, granting all that, the average person does seem to think that it should be easier for the "dead" to contact them, than for them to contact the "dead." They exclaim---

"We are told that upon making the Passing, souls don't 'go' anywhere---in the sense of departing for some distant planet or celestial elevation---so if this be true, and they're somewhere in our vicinity, and are more conscious of being in our world, though in an unobstructed state, than we are conscious of being in theirs, why don't they give more evidences of themselves than they do and leave no question or doubt about survival?" If I were to answer that question in the light of a thousand attestments or communications that have come to my notice since I began my examinations of psychics as a study, I would say it is because it gets them nowhere to do it as a practice. In other words, they make the discovery of the futility of doing so. Either friends or the public will not accredit the identity or manifestation, or the human race behaves generally as though life in the mortal vehicle were the only life that counted and any type of consciousness outside of it must be ephemeral and capricious.

TO ILLUSTRATE what I mean, a few years ago there was photographed in the talkie news weeklies an interview with a seventeen-year-old boy who had been the victim of a near-drowning accident in a lake in central Pennsylvania. At a picnic one afternoon his canoe had tipped over, he had been unable to do much swimming on account of sudden cramps, and before rescue could be summoned his lungs had filled with water. State troopers ultimately recovered the body and laid it out on the shore. Both pulse and respiration had stopped, insofar as any physician could discover.

Recalling the details from memory now, I think it was a Boy Scout leader who begged permission to work upon the corpse and see what could be done by applying artificial respiration. The troopers and physicians permitted it while waiting for the mortician's wagon to arrive. At the end of twenty minutes to half an hour, officials and spectators were stupefied to see the physical mechanism responding. The heart began to galvanize, and to make a weird tale short, eventually the drowned boy regained consciousness. Rushed to a hospital, he gradually recuperated.

Of course, everybody wanted to know what his sensations had been, where he had "been" himself as a spirit-soul after the water strangled him and before the Scout leader got his heart and lungs functioning.

"It seemed as if I came up out of the water and took to the air like a bird," he attested haltingly before the talkie microphone in bucolic English. Of course, everybody in the theater tittered. . . .

"Were you at all conscious?" asked the interviewer.

"Sure I was conscious. I just drifted back and forth over the water and the shore, and when the Scouts brought me in and

the Scouts went to work on me, I was outside my body, watching 'most everything that was being done."

"But floating around in the atmosphere, eh?" his questioner emphasized.

"Yep---that's sort of like it. I saw everything being done to bring me back, all the same. Then I felt a sort of 'pull' that I had to come back into my body, and so I come."

The audience laughed out loud. It was all so very ridiculous. When people actually died, they went immediately to heaven, of course, and were judged for their sins; they didn't float around over Pennsylvania lakes and watch resuscitation efforts in progress. The boy had not truly been dead---according to the acceptance of that jocular audience---the spark of life had still been in him and he had dreamed a dream of being out of his body. After which assumption, that audience settled down to enjoy the near-seduction of the screen heroine by the Hollywood villain and his ultimate beating-up by the hero in consequence. That audience, in other words, didn't have the psychical acumen to realize that what the lad was recounting to them was the sternest phase of truth.

The point I would make, however, is: If that lad, returned to flesh by artificial respiration, couldn't convince that movie crowd of his manifested consciousness when out of the body, how could he---or anybody in similar predicament---hope to do it with the rank and file, when such discarnation became permanent?

For that discarnation, in that particular youth's case, might have been made permanent, had the Scoutmaster not decided to go to work on him. The mortician's wagon might have

come for the remains, taken them to his shop, and embalmed them. Two or three days later the funeral would have been held. Would the boy's consciousness not have continued to function just the same, exactly as it functioned while watching the resuscitation efforts being made?

This lad came back to tell of it, however, and because he did come back and did tell of it---even to the extent of an interview in the news weeklies---his hearers said that of course he had never been dead, that in his strangled condition he had merely dreamed a dream.

Countless are the numbers of people who have undergone a similar experience of discarnation, and detached observation, while under the influence of surgical gas or ether. We had one laughable case of it in North Carolina shortly after the Galahad summer school of 1932 came to a close.

Dr. Henry Hardwicke, the same man who had related the story of the materialized sparrow hawk in Niagara Falls, suffered from a serious glandular malady in the throat. He was finally prevailed upon to go to the local hospital for a fortnight and have the gland operated upon.

He jokingly told later of getting his consciousness out of his body during the actual surgery and wandering around through the corridors and rooms of the hospital and inspecting the cases and condition of other patients the while. Being a practicing physician himself, these held more interest for him than because he wanted to satisfy an idle curiosity.

When he ultimately came back into his body after the surgery had been dressed---"after he came from the ether" as the attendants and nurses phrased it---he quickly threw that hospital into a stupefied turmoil by commenting upon, or

discussing, outstanding cases in the rooms on the floors above, "That woman in five-thirteen needs to have better attention," he advised the doctor who visited him a half-hour later. "Blood-poisoning seems to be setting in, and you'd better begin applying serums immediately."

"How do you know anything about any woman in five-thirteen?" the astonished physician demanded.

"Because I got out of my body and went through most of the rooms and wards," returned Dr. Hardwicke, "while you were down here cutting my throat."

His further narrations well-nigh got the nurses of the hospital into a dither. Physically he had not been anywhere in that institution but the one room into which he was admitted for treatment when he first arrived. Challenge: Suppose Dr. Hardwicke had elected not to go back into his body, after his throat had been treated and dressed? The report would have come forth, of course, that he had failed to survive the operation. But why should not his consciousness have gone on functioning? Why should he not have left the inspection of the hospital's cases and gone out into the town, gone where he pleased in the whole unobstructed universe, for that matter? . . .

Incidentally, Dr. Hardwicke did make such Passing in New York City a couple of years ago and is at this moment enjoying life and consciousness in such unobstructed arena of existence.

OF MY own similar discarnation in "Seven Minutes in Eternity" I have told at too much length in my autobiography, "The Door to Revelation," to take time or space to add any more here. Except this---

When I published the narrative of that experience in the American Magazine for March, 1929, I got thousands of letters from all over America, from persons who at some time or another in their lives had encountered allied or duplicate adventures in those higher octaves. But I also got an occasional letter from some skeptic who advised me that from the psychopathic angle, what had actually happened to me was the dreaming of a grandiose or supernal dream. Particularly, the orthodox psychiatrists took such position. Some of them were openly insulting about it. But how explain this---

One letter I got from a psychical group up in Salem, Mass., where the member commissioned to write the attestment to me, said that during a seance the previous week a certain discarnate physician who had been working with it from the Other Side had been queried as to whether or not my experience had been bona fide.

"Absolutely!" this person had responded. "I was one of those who witnessed the author's discarnation that night, and saw him in most of his reactions. If you want a check-up on this, write to him and ask him if in that hyperdimensional adventure he didn't do the following---" and forthwith the Salem letter contained a series of paragraph-descriptions of some phases of my conduct and behavior, not to mention my contacts and addresses, that I had not imparted to a living soul up to that moment. In fact, in one or two instances, this Salem discarnate recalled episodes to me which I had well-nigh forgotten, myself. How could such a psychical go-between, working with an unknown group in Massachusetts, have been in any position to describe such items if all that happened to me that night in Altadena had been only an epochal dream? Of course I realize

that such "evidence" is evidence to me alone, but it has been just another bit of confirmation of my gradually built up conviction that consciousness need not depend for its self-awareness on the housing of the physical brain, that the same consciousness and sense of awareness that I took with me into that Seven Minute octave could have gone on operating. They might have found my discarded remains in that Altadena bungalow and interred them ultimately, but I would have gone straight along "being myself to myself" . . .

In these pages I am merely setting down in book form what my experiences have been as an individual, convincing me that the "dead" are alive. They may not have been your experiences, and you may not be convinced as yet, as I am convinced. I am simply telling you how it has been with me.

Still I haven't finished what I started to say about the "dead" not commonly manifesting themselves to friends or intimates still confined in mortality. . .

MY PERSONAL conclusions are, that if any particular soul makes the Passing with life business undone, or is obsessed with any notion that involves an earthly spot, act, or relationship, such mental concentrations may produce the effect of making his Light Body visible to earthly eyes upon special occasions. Finding after a time, however, that they are not commonly accredited in the mundane and that they cannot get the common contacts with men and things that they got while operating their former vehicles, spirit-souls simply lose interest in things mundane as fecundities of their new and higher octave begin to entice them.

To be slightly facetious for a moment, if you had been a poor fish for fifty or sixty years, and all of a sudden you found yourself a bird---with real wings, able to soar anywhere---you would scarcely over-exert yourself to make your way down to the sea-bottom and hunt up your former brethren-fish just to prove to them that you had abruptly changed into a bird. After all, suppose you contrived it, what of it? You know that you're a bird, and that's that. Convincing a lot of fish that you're a bird would butter no parsnips either for you or for them in the long run. After you'd sincerely tried to do it for a time and gotten what might be called a first class fish-laugh, you'd rather lose interest. You'd exclaim to yourself: "I'm going to fly and enjoy my wings. Let those priggish creatures who get their motion with fins, go ahead and imagine they're the only form of life in the universe that counts." And you would do so, regardless of the circumstance that many of your former fish-relatives would cry, "Poor Whoozis! He once tried to convince us that there was consciousness above the fish-octave. If there is, why doesn't he come back and be a fish again for a time, to save us from recalling him as a fanatic or a liar?"

And yet it does happen constantly that there are many fish-persons who have existed as fishes for so long, and gotten the fish complex so firmly fastened into their consciousness, that being birds does not appeal to them in the slightest. And some of them have a strange sense of humor and often exercise it to prove their continuity. In life they may have been practical jokers. When they become discarnate, they get a great "bang," as we say in the vernacular, from doing things that mystify or upset people still in bodies of substance.

When such a one "learns the ropes" in the matter of getting physical results though discarnately motivated, he is termed in psychical lexicography a "poltergeist."

The word is German and means "mischievous spirit." In nine out of ten cases, running down the identities or personalities of such poltergeists, we discover them to be children or youths---or sometimes lunatics still carrying their idiotic reflexes into discarnation---who have simply learned the technique of moving material objects in this octave from the dimension in which they have found themselves thinking deliberately.

Uniformly these entities stick to one particular locality, or one particular house, because if either gets the reputation of being haunted, it will draw maximum attention and thus the poltergeist will get itself and its conduct recognized.

Flammarion tells about one of these that became associated with a peasant's farm in Brittany and found delight in throwing apples out of its fourth dimensional state, into this third dimensional state. .

Evangelical Pastor Laval wrote him from Saint-Michel-de-Chabrillanoux, on December 15, 1922 as follows---Dear Master: The incomprehensible facts which I related to you last year, begging you for an explanation, and which you asked me to verify as far as possible, are unexceptionable. I am sending you an exact plan of the house and its surroundings as well as the names of these good people, who are much impressed by what has happened to them, and you can locate the spot geographically. I do not see any objection to your publishing my name and address, if you consider it useful for your scientific documentary evidence.

Poor M. R. has suffered a great deal mentally from the stupidity and credulity of the people, who look on him as one sold to the "evil spirits." Perhaps it would be better not to give his name, which I communicate to you personally, as I do not wish to take away from the scientific value of the document.

This M. R. is a farmer in our local parish and possesses property comprising an old house, not far from which there is another belonging to M. E. He goes to his farm in the busy agricultural season. The nearest houses to these two are 440 yards away. You have before you a plan of the two houses, with their barns, the streams, roads, and neighboring meadows, the lower fields, vineyards, tobacco patches and woods on these rural properties. I have marked the rooms into which the stones and apples were thrown from no one knows where; also the place, at the crossing of two roads, where I myself was hit by a stone which grazed me vertically from head to foot.

The stones first began to be thrown in the early days of September, 1921 and continued---with some interruptions---till the end of December. The maximum phase can be assigned to the first ten days of October.

They fell at all hours of the day, and even followed M. R. in the fields, 220 yards away from the house. The front door was hit, window No.1 was broken, window No.2, which gives onto an open space of ground 440 yards long, was the one that received most of the hits. The stones arrived without anyone being able to tell how; they were not seen until they touched an object. Some fell vertically.

M. R. has three children---Heli, twelve years old; Andre, aged seventeen; Henri, aged twenty-two-who were very naturally accused. Consequently they were watched and spied upon as

much as possible, but they were not caught in a single suspicious action.

One Sunday M. R. begged me to write out for him a complaint to the Public Prosecutor. I was anxious, first of all, to satisfy myself as to the facts. The next day, at five o' clock in the evening, I was in the farmyard, having two children with me and facing me, when the stone the size of a hen's egg came down vertically, grazing one of the children. A little later another stone grazed me in the same way, about 52 yards from the house. The children were in sight close by me and they could not have been the cause. The stones fell slowly, and gave one the impression of falling from a height of about six feet only. This was often remarked. It was incomprehensible.

I decided to go to bed. Nothing happened in the night. The next morning, about seven o'clock, in full daylight, while M. R. with a friend worked in a room adjoining the kitchen, two apples hit the closed shutter of a window and touched the father. The first apple knocked out an old board in the shutter which was very loose, the others coming in through the space thus created. The friend, believing that I was the perpetrator of the deed, said, "Is that you, M. Laval, who are throwing apples at us?" Imagine my surprise! It is true that just at the moment when the apples were thrown, I happened to be outside facing the window aimed at. An extraordinary thing was, that I heard something strike the shutter but saw nothing. Convinced that I had not thrown anything, this friend, a neighboring farmer, joined me quickly to see what was happening.

Some seconds later, two other apples arrived through the same opening into the room and rolled to M. R.'s feet. As in

the first case, we heard the shock but could see nothing. The apples really came from the outside. They arrived in a horizontal direction with considerable speed. It would have been humanly impossible for anyone to hide in broad daylight in front of the window, which opens onto an empty field 440 yards long. The most able man, unless he were quite near the window, would never have succeeded in throwing an apple through a hole of an inch or so, however well he might have aimed. While we were outside, we heard a blow on the window, but saw nothing entering from outside.

M. R. called the gendarmery of Gourdon which arrived on the spot. During the four months of these happenings there would surely have been ample time to surprise tricks of children.

M. R. suspected his only neighbor, whom I designate as M. E., who has two sons, aged seventeen and twenty-two respectively. I conveyed a remonstrance to the E. family but they replied, "Yes, we are accused, but we are innocent.

"Having lived for a long time on a good footing with M. R., and having up to now considered him a good neighbor, we declare before our conscience that we had no part in the inexplicable occurrences at his house."

"How can we explain these things?" writes Pastor Laval to the great astronomer. "Are we, without knowing it, plunged into an unknown psychic environment? Do electropsychic forces exist which thus show themselves?"

PARALLEL to this case is the episode of the Haunted House of La Constantinie, described in a lengthy monograph by Colonel Albert de Rochas, administrator of the Ecole Poly technique,

published in Paris, in 1896. M. Maxwell, Procurator-General, conducted his own private investigations into the phenomena and aided in the compilation of the details. The most significant excerpts follow-

"La Constantinie is quite a considerable property. The dwelling house, built on the side of a hillock in Correze, is composed of structures in the form of a square. That portion of the house that contains the front doors is on a ground floor, raised some steps above the ground. It contains a large kitchen running the length of the building. To the right of the kitchen are a drawing room and bedroom. . . .

"The personnel of La Constantinie comprised a certain number of farm servants, Mme. Faure, her mother-in-law, aged eighty-five, and a young servant of seventeen, Marie Pascarel. Mme. Faure is a well-educated woman of culture. She comes of honorable family. Her aged mother-in-law appears to have preserved all her faculties though heavily burdened by her age.

"The numerous servants of La Constantinie take their meals in the kitchen, on a solid wooden table three feet wide and nine feet long. The kitchen contains an oven, an immense fireplace with a little bench on the left and two chairs on the right, and some cupboards and shelves.

"The phenomena started in the second fortnight of May, 1895, with knocks apparently made on the wall separating the dining room from the bedroom of the elder Mme. Faure. On May 21, at about 9 a. m., Mme. Faure told her daughter-in-law that her bed seemed to move and strike the partition. The younger Mme. Faure did not attach much importance to this remark, which she put down to a mistake. Next day, at exactly the same hour, the sound came again in the same place. This time the

younger Mme. Faure heard it distinctly. On Friday morning, the 24th, the noise started afresh in the same room with greater force. The noise was as if the bed had hit the partition.

"An hour afterwards, the younger Mme. Faure entered her own bedroom and found the quilt, the blankets, the sheets, and the pillows thrown on the floor. Other disorders occurred in the house. Three empty casks were displaced in the cellar. In another room the bed was disturbed, a statuette of the Virgin and a coffeepot filled to the brim had been transported from the cupboard to the middle of the room. They were on the floor beside a crucifix which had been taken down from the wall.

"These things appeared inexplicable to the two women and they became frightened. Mme. Faure the younger asked her mother-in-law to sleep with her through the nights Friday and Saturday. Marie the maid slept in the same room.

"On Saturday morning three great blows were struck on the door of the attic. The stairs leading up to it were closed by a door opening from the upper hall.

"When the Faure ladies came to pass through their bedroom, the beds were in wildest disorder and coverings again off upon the floor. This time the coffeepot was broken. Leaving this room they went into the kitchen, but they had scarcely gotten there before they heard a frightful commotion. They found three sugar bowls, a dozen cups, photograph frames and engravings broken on the floor.

"The three women were now very much frightened, for at the moment when all this damage was being done the farm servants were in the fields and nobody was in the house excepting themselves.

"A MELE BAYLE, an intelligent and reasonable woman of thirty, went to the Faures' at 7:30 to see the damage. In her presence the cover of a soup dish standing in front of the fire was thrown violently into the center of the kitchen. Amelie was at that moment sitting in front of the fireplace, with her back to the fire. This phenomenon scared her. She at once left the house with the two young servants. At 11:30, however, they returned. Marie, the maid, was busy in the kitchen picking up the broken crockery which littered the floor. For, according to the witnesses, pots, plates, glasses, and dishes were taken down from the shelves by invisible hands while they watched, and thrown upon the floor where they broke. Mme. Bayle saw a wooden bottle jump from a shelf and crash at her feet.

"More disorders were found in the room where the Faure ladies slept. The bed was upset. A mirror was taken down. Papers from a shelf were strewn on the floor. Later one of the papers was opened and two drops of blood, still moist, were found upon it. Five minutes later when Marie, the maid, went again into the bedroom, six drops of fresh blood had been added upon the paper. Nobody in the house had any wounds or could have done the bleeding.

"From Sunday, May 26, to Wednesday, May 29, inclusive, no phenomena took place. But on Thursday the 30th, they started afresh with increasing force. Saucepans hanging from hooks in the kitchen chimney were violently thrown to the ground. At six o'clock that night, old Mme. Faure saw her bed move along by itself in her room. The chair on which she was sitting was drawn back. She got up at once and the chair was upset. Between 7 and 8 o'clock, at suppertime, pieces of wood in the kitchen fell of themselves on the women. Everybody was so

much frightened that they went to spend that night with neighbors.

"On Friday, May 31, they sent for the Mayor of Objat, a nearby town, and syndic of bailiffs of the arrondissement of Brive, a ministerial office of high respectability. M. Delmas wanted to make sure of what was happening as well as to find out the cause of such occurrences. He went into the kitchen and placed some plates on the table, where there was already a stove-brush. He then sat down in front of the fireplace with Mme. Faure on his left. The young servant worked at her duties.

"Under the eyes of M. Delmas, the brush was violently picked up and thrown with circular motion into the fireplace. The servant was at some distance from the table where the brush had been lying. His surprise gave way to uneasiness when he saw a pair of kitchen bellows which lay on the bench in the fireplace, slide along the bench, and throw itself with a loud clatter into the middle of the floor.

"The Mayor immediately had the house cleared. Just as she was leaving with the Faure ladies, the young Marie Pascarel was hit on the back with a stick 16 inches long thrown with considerable force. They did not see where the stick came from.

"Hardly had the Mayor returned to Objat than he was summoned back. Fire had broken out at La Constantine. Marie had observed that a thick smoke issued from Mme. Faure's room. On entering the room it was found that it came from the bed of the younger Mme. Faure. There were no flames and no brazier. Mme. Faure even used this singular expression in her account of the episode, '---the fire went back into the bed.'

"A phenomenon of this kind had already been observed. Marie Pascarel and the elder of the two ladies had sometimes noticed a thick smoke which seemed to issue from the old lady's skirts.

"Two days later, Marie Pascarel left the service of the Faure ladies without giving notice. They went home and since then the peace of their house has not been troubled. . . ."

ANYONE who has ever been to a true materialization seance and seen or heard a North American Indian "cut up" or "whoop it up" with maximum bombast and clatter in order to give firm evidence of his presence, will note in the foregoing phenomena a recognizable similarity.

What we conclude from observing the acts of these somewhat elemental personalities, is, that so long as they have someone in the vicinity from whom to draw the materialistic force, they can exert strength on inanimate objects precisely as though they were operating in normal mortal bodies. The person from whom the force is drawn may not be cognizant of it at the time. Usually a young and extremely robust person is drawn upon.

The account of the phenomena in the Faure household ends with the simple statement that when Marie left the premises without notice the upset stopped abruptly. Naturally it would be the logical thing for the novice to conclude that by some hocus-pocus the maid was making the disturbance---although how she could whack herself on the back with a 16-inch stick out of nowhere, would require some explaining. The more expert investigator would rationalize it from his wider observations, that whatever "wild Indian" had seen fit to attack the Faure premises

and scare three women witless, had obtained the electro-psychical energy from the maid's body and when she removed herself from the premises, the "Indian" no longer had it available.

Not all persons are possessed of this electro-psychical energy in sufficient quantities so that it can be used extraneously to their own conscious wills, which is probably why such phenomena are not more widespread.

When, therefore, there is a room, a house, or a locality where material objects are shunted about seemingly without hands to shunt them---manifestations of what the unlearned call "spooks" or the supernatural---where pictures sway or crash, clocks stop, pots and pans bang around, and thumps are heard in floors, walls or ceilings, the psychical adept is coming to believe that nothing more is at work than a spirit-soul who has graduated out of his former physical body but not out of his mundane psychology, that such spirit-soul is undoubtedly that of a child, youth, or practical joker who has discovered the technique of "borrowing" energy from some handy person in flesh and is using it for the bombastic pleasure he derives from mystifying people or scaring them.

The latter wouldn't be particularly "afraid" of such child, youth or practical joker if he retained his own physical body and did the same things. Why should they necessarily be terrified because the same effects are gotten vicariously, or with a body of too delicate a substance to be seized hold of, or bundled out, or chastised? Of course, it's all in the point of view. Knowing, however, that there probably is such a thing as an exertion of physical energy on inanimate objects that can be made from another octave or dimension, should be a trifle of consolation at least.

Sometimes such demonstrations can be poignant.

A FEW years ago I had a pastor friend who took over an Episcopal parish in a little town in eastern Massachusetts. The rectory he was called to occupy dated back over a hundred years. This pastor friend, incidentally, was something of a musician and a particularly good performer on the harp for his own amusement and relaxation.

He told me that he had no more than gotten his family settled in the old rectory, his study being located in the big front room on the second floor, when he uncovered and tuned his harp just before dinner one evening, leaving the instrument uncovered while he ate his meal on the floor below.

During the dinner's progress, the doors and stairs being open and unobstructed to the second floor, he and his whole family were suddenly transfixed by the sounds of exquisite harp music drifting down from the floor above.

Mounting the stairs in perplexity and no little awe, they could look into the study and see the harp apparently "playing of itself." The instant they moved into the room, however, and approached the self-playing instrument, the music came to an end as though "smothered." This happened on several occasions.

My friend's foster-sister, a woman of forty years, undertook to solve the mystery of her half-brother's self-playing harp. Finally she located a very old lady of the parish who remembered that forty to fifty years before, one of the rectors who had lived in the house a decade or more, had possessed a crippled son---a boy of fifteen years---who had spent most of his life in that second-floor front room. To relieve his tedium, this lad had learned to play the harp.

Question: Was this lad's spirit-soul still bound in some inexplicable fashion to that apartment and when my friend's instrument had suddenly been made available, had the cripple seized upon it? What else may we conclude?

Why should the boy's spirit-soul have "stayed there" in the old rectory long afterwards? There we meet with enigma.

Nevertheless, my pastor friend was hardly the type to fabricate the episode, and his sister corroborated this account in every particular. The harp when thus uncovered, continued so to play at intervals till my friend gave up the parish to become a chaplain in the first World War. . . .

Chapter XIII

DYING WITHOUT WISDOM



THE CATHOLIC, being brought up theologically to the idea of Purgatory, of masses being necessary for the souls of the dead or for the "peace" of such souls---has difficulty in either accrediting or accepting what modern psychics are turning up as to the facts of survival. Suppose we take a moment to examine this ancient tenet of the Roman Catholic Church and find out, if we may, where it originated. Let us see if there be any substantial basis for the ritual of the requiem mass for the "repose of the souls" of fathers, mothers, aunts, or uncles, who may have died in that faith.

The doctrine of Purgatory is based upon the assumption of "purging" the soul from sin, so that it may ascend into realms of supposed heavenly bliss. According to Roman Catholic faith, it is a state of suffering in which the souls of those who die in venial sin, or of those who still owe some debt of temporal punishment for mortal transgression, are rendered fit for the higher octaves of eternal consciousness. It is believed that such souls continue to be members of the Church of Christ; that they are helped by the suffrages of the living---that is, by prayers,

alms, and other good works, and more especially by the sacrifice of the Mass---and that, although delayed until "the last farthing is paid," their salvation is assured.

Catholics support this doctrine chiefly by reference to the Mosaic belief in the efficacy of prayer for the dead, the tradition of the early Christians, and the authority of the Church.

Many points about Purgatory, on which the Church has no definition, have been subjects of much speculation among Catholics. Purgatory, for example, is usually thought of as having some position in space, and as being distinct from the theological heaven and hell; but any theory as to its exact location, latitude and longitude, such as underlies Dante's description, must be regarded as imaginative.

Nevertheless, the whole concept of Purgatory could not have sprung from human whimsy. Something that is basic in discarnate conditions must have first given rise to the original concept. The adept in posthumous research therefore comes upon some interesting fundamentals of spiritual evolution. . . .

IT SEEMS to be a fact, from all that we can learn by communication with those in the discarnate state, that any soul goes forth from its bodily mechanism with just about the same concepts of consciousness that it has evolved upon earth---that is, in mortality. It is not yet adjusted to its bodiless status. It discovers itself "living in pure thought," to use a somewhat conventional phrase. In such state, it exists "in its own evolved complexes." Life to it, in other words, is the sum-total of what it has come to accept and believe sentimentally and ethically.

It finds that Thought is more or less a creative power unto itself, just as Mrs. Hardwicke "thought" the idea of the living sparrow hawk on Dr. Hardwicke's mantel. If such thought-world be provincial, petty and evil, because of the ignorance or circumscriptions of a given person in his current mentality, he is going to find himself living in a sort of hell indeed. How to get out of it?

That is probably where the primitive church hatched its idea of Purgatory, or that mental condition immediately after discarnation when the spirit-soul is in turmoil because its own thought-universe is disclosed to be in such a mess.

Suppose, for instance, that a person were suddenly withdrawn from active life and confined, while still in the physical body, in a cell or dungeon in inky blackness where even the sense of touch encountered naught but smooth walls and no means of egress. After the first hours of utter despair wore off, all the thinking of such a person would perforce be turned inward on himself, if his environment offered no distractions or diversions to his senses. He would suddenly find himself alive "with" his own mind quite as much as alive "in" his own mind. If such minds are a mad turmoil and tumult of rages, vengeance, petty notions and sterile concepts, even resultant madness will be no relief. They must face the fact of their own limitations and either "sort themselves out" or get help from somewhere to acquire new and better ideas about consciousness and factual existence. The adept psychical researcher seems to learn through various types of communication, that external help from relatives and intimates whom the spirit-soul has left behind, actually begins to profit and elevate the unfortunate from his handicapped and purblind

condition. The mass of good will thought-force that comes from a great group of survivors, gathered in a room for a prayer meeting or a mass, seems to be some sort of literal essence that the discarnate and confused one can utilize to obtain light and explanation of his condition

THERE seem to be seven octaves, or "planes," to which the spirit-souls of our discarnate intimates go gradually after quitting their bodies---seven planes at least with which we of the mortal octave appear to have deliberate contact. The top one is apparently the "Seventh Heaven" referred to in the Bible. The lowest or first octave or plane would seem to be the black, earth-bound condition, that is simply mortality without the body. In between are the various gradations that the spirit-soul finally "makes" according to his moral or ethical evolution at the time of his latest demise.

Incidentally, the observation is thrown in here for what it may be worth to some, that the great rank and file of humanity, on demise usually gravitate to the third or fourth plane, according to their self-awareness and spiritual development, and reside in it till the time comes for further evolvment, unto complete discarnation, and, in due course, further trips around the reincarnational cycle. . . .

But the person who "goes out" of the body, professing not to believe in existence after mortal demise, seems to exist in a sort of self-induced coma, a deliberate and willful refusal to accredit that survival is a fact and available if the spirit will only take advantage of it.

For instance, the great rank and file of the Mosaic race,

not accrediting the wonders of immortality and discarnation, usually discover themselves in this tumultuous "blackness" from which getting out is long and tortuous. I call to mind some experiments being made just now in some of our penal institutions with methylene blue and its results on human consciousness.

Out in California recently, the legislature changed the penal law. It declared that men legally condemned to death should no longer be electrocuted but executed by being confined in an air-tight chamber and breathing the fumes of sodium-cyanide eggs, dropped into acid. Lethal vapor rises from such mixture in thin ribbons of fog. Taking it into the lungs, the condemned man immediately feels consciousness slipping. Insofar as his own sensations are concerned, he simply falls asleep. And he never wakes up! How does anyone know? Because persons who have accidentally inhaled sodium-cyanide fumes and experienced the same physical sensations as these men not allowed to awaken, have been revived to tell the tale.

But here is the uncanny thing making death by these fumes of interest to psychical students generally---

The first two men to be put to death by the State of California in its new gas chamber were Albert Kissel and Robert Cannon. The report of the executions had it that Cannon was so anxious to get the ordeal over with, that he leaned as close as possible to the acid bucket and inhaled deeply. He gasped, and the shock jerked back his head---as the head reacts when the nostrils accidentally get too strong a whiff of ammonia or smelling-salts. His eyes closed, he coughed, and thereafter was quiet. Five minutes later, the physicians pronounced him dead. But according to medical science-and whether we choose to

believe it or not---had a belated reprieve come for Kissel or Cannon within five to fifteen minutes after their being pronounced dead, both could have been brought back to life.

For among the official witnesses of these first executions by gas in San Quentin Prison was San Francisco's Director of Public Health, Dr. J. C. Greiger. And upon Dr. Greiger's person was a phial of liquid that could have made these two condemned felons living men again.

The substance which could have worked the seeming miracle-and which Dr. Grieger had succeeded in developing and using on human beings who had been victims of cyanide fumes---was, and is, a dye known as Methylene Blue. It is an antidote for both cyanide and carbon-monoxide poisoning. A young man by the name of Charles Riley was a medical student who swallowed a large dose of cyanide because his fiancée had jilted him for another man. He was rushed to San Francisco's Emergency Hospital, and upon arrival his body showed no signs of life. He was, to all tests and appearance, as dead as he ever would be. Without the antidote handy, he would have been so pronounced and his body turned over to the nearest undertaker for embalming.

Dr. Greiger injected a solution of a new preparation, Methylene Blue, and within fifteen minutes the would be suicide was breathing almost normally.

"This case was unique for two reasons," Dr. Greiger said later. "It was the first of its type in medical annals. Likewise, and even more startling, is the fact that apparently young Riley seemed to remember his experience."

Charles Riley said, fully recovered: "I took about fifteen grains of potassium cyanide in forty ounces of water. I had no

sensation except a numbness which started at the bodily extremities, and spread slowly throughout my physical system. There was no muscular rigidity in going under. . . .

"Even while supposedly dead, I had a distinct sensation of floating. There was none of the common blackness recognized as death. I felt as if I were coming out into the light--into a vast, glowing place of cool sunshine---like entering a new and mysterious world. It was, I believe, simply another state of consciousness, different from anything that I had ever experienced before. My excursion into this strange realm was brief. I didn't feel tragic about it, only tremendously surprised and happy to find myself still conscious. I don't call it a psychical or mystical experience. There was nothing obscure about it. I don't remember details, there wasn't time enough, but I do remember a definite feeling of release, something like emerging from a dim room into sudden brightness."

The incident is noteworthy, not so much for the physical miracle accomplished by the antidote drug, but from the reactions mentally and spiritually on the consciousness of men thus released from their physical encasements and--brought back!

Significant in regard to the whole of it, however, is the account advanced by two Hebrew persons who had taken to suicide by the monoxide route. Their names are withheld for obvious reasons.

Each of these persons reported, when the Methylene Blue antidote had been applied and it had brought him back to life, that he had not been conscious of any higher-octave environment. He had simply been in a great blackness till the antidote restored him to physical normality.

Accepting this fact, he goes out into "the unobstructed universe" with this fixation inhibiting him, and in consequence, finds himself in thick, unreasoning darkness. It takes him a long, long time to fight through that darkness to the light of personal self-awareness. He has, in a manner of speaking, "hypnotized himself" into accepting that there is no life beyond the grave, and when he sheds his physical self, being introduced to the world of Thought, he lets his self-hypnosis have full sway.

He is "dead" and there is "no device nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest," so therefore he finds himself without such device or wisdom.

He has bogged himself in his own Luciferian inhibitions, and in that dilemma he stays.

The average Christian, on the other hand, fully and joyously believing in "eternal life", finds himself introduced at once into it. It truly is a matter of his own aggressive expectations. That which one thinks, *is!* You can think yourself into conscious existence on the Other Side, just as the Israelite thinks himself into inky blackness or nihility on the Other Side.

Believe in survival and you enjoy survival. Let ignorant or malicious prelates convince you that you are going to roam about in coma till the crack o' doom, and the chances are that you are going to roam about in such coma.

Death, as the modern American regards it, seems to be naught else than an hypnosis!

Refuse to believe in it, and it doesn't afflict you. Believe in it and dread it, and you know it in all its nightmare sterilities . . . until you work yourself out of your self-imposed darkness. . . .

Chapter XIV

THE DEPARTED DO RETURN



HERE has been, of course, more deception, charlatanry, and downright humbuggery practiced in the name of Spiritism in seeking to convince grieving people that their loved ones are alive and under certain conditions can be restored to them for a bit, than any other form of flim-flam that human rascality can devise. People who are attracted by Spiritism at all, seem to be sharply divided into two classes: the utterly credulous and gullible who are poignantly over-ready to rationalize the faintest forms of supernaturality---and mind you, I said "forms" of supernaturality and not substance---and the die-hard skeptics who start out on the premise that every mediumistic person is a fraud, that there are no such things as communicating or manifesting spirits.

Very, very finely drawn and qualified is the group of persons between these two whose members have become convinced without emotionalism either way that both communication and manifestation are facts and who pursue their unique avocation on the theory that while there are probably

more fraudulent mediums than honest ones, people with the true mediumistic attribute should by no means be made to pay for the wiles of the renegades. Because anyone who would try to hoax a grieving mortal soul on this side, for gain of any sort, is just that---a renegade---and nothing less.

The field of the explorers into Spiritsim presents the picture of the proverbial sandwich, with the austere and unconvincible skeptics on the top, the credulous on the bottom, and in between, the meat of the balanced, restrained, discriminating investigators who approach each new seance from the standpoint of, "Let's find out what this new medium can do that adds to our store of wisdom in these matters. If the person is fraudulent, sooner or later his hocus-pocus will find him out. "

Condemning the medium in advance, however, is entering the seance room with a closed mind and merely inhibits our own education and enlightenment.

Besides, after exploring in the psychical field over a matter of years, the rational and unbiased investigator develops a sort of instinct as to the presence of fraud. Truly great mediums, worthy to be termed such, do not fiddle around with self-banging tambourines, mysterious raps coming from the wainscoting or the levitation of tables that hang themselves upon the chandeliers.

What value would such childish antics have to a group of scientific men who may have reason to concede that the so-called "dead" do return to life but who are far more interested in finding out what truly motivates the phenomena at the sitting of a capable, sincere and utterly bona fide medium ?

Mind you, I don't say that the mediums whose work is confined to such phenomena are thereby frauds. Far from it. I mean that the dispassionate investigator is mainly interested in those mediums whose capabilities extend to the tangible materializing of those who have made the Passing out of flesh, in such manner that the latter can be identified.

The confirmed skeptic screeches at once: "There has never been such an identification made, and whosoever says there has been, is a fraud himself."

However, to close this volume of my own supernatural experiences, I want to embark on the series of great adventures I have had since 1939 with one medium of outstanding and bona fide talents, who has become an institution in the national Soulcraft work.

To write promiscuously of my contact with this or that medium's work over ten years of psychical observation, and chart what results were gotten here or not gotten there, would be unfair to my mediumistic friends in general. It would make it appear that I was disparaging certain mediums and ballyhooing others. And I am neither disparaging nor ballyhooing in this volume. I am setting down the highlights of the altogether weird experiences that have come to me since 1928, convincing me that not only is death a misnomer but that there is just as much radiant activity---although in a higher frequency of matter---among our so-called "departed" friends, as there ever is in this frequency we call the physical.

I am telling you how it has been with me. Like my Seven Minutes in Eternity experience, I don't ask you to accredit it if you choose not to do so.

I believe the "dead" are alive and functioning, and under certain conditions may function again on this plane, because of such phenomena as I first saw, heard, and touched in a Manhattan seance room of a Sunday night of the year in question.

First, to paint in a bit of background. . . .

I HAD a close friend, executive in a New York publishing house, who from time to time had donated sizable sums of money that my metaphysical writings might be distributed and help others as he had been helped by them. This man, incidentally, was not a Spiritualist.

In the early part of the 1939 winter he had gone to visit relatives in Toronto, Ontario. Meeting there an elderly gentleman of recognized clairaudient powers, he was disconcerted to be advised---

"Both your father and mother are anxious to get in audible touch with you. They want you to go to an address in a city in southern Florida and inform whomsoever answers the doorbell that you have come to make contact with your mother. They will understand and take charge of you."

It was my publisher-friend's confidence in the integrity of his informant that started him off on the odd adventure. He motored down to Miami, not informing me of his trip and determined to discover how he could receive word in Miami from a maternal parent who had died in Canada in 1923.

It was to be the beginning of the greatest psychical experience of his life, incidentally my own as well. He found the address given him in Toronto, without difficulty, and performed as directed.

THREE days later I got a lengthy letter from my friend. He was utterly stupefied with what had happened to him. At an afternoon private seance he had every reason to believe that he had talked long and audibly with his deceased father and a brother, discussing matters that had only been known to him and to them when they had been alive.

Among the things which his father had referred to in the direct voice were my friend's contributions to my own work and how happy it had made all his relatives in the Higher Octaves.

References had been constant throughout to family incidents, episodes and vicissitudes which none but the bona fide spirit of his dad could have known---and the same thing went for the mother.

The ensuing Sunday night, my friend had attended a seance in the medium's small "church" where she had gone into a complete trance.

Suddenly out from the cabinet had walked his mother---a portly woman of some seventy---odd years when he had last seen her in life. She was dressed in a quaint beaded blouse waist and skirt that he recalled having purchased for her in Manhattan the last time she had gone there on a visit before her Passing. My friend---and henceforth in what is described I shall call him George---had once been a pattern-maker and designer of women's wear, so he had more than the usual male eye for a peculiar blouse when he saw it again. With his mother standing before him in the outfit exactly as he had known her in life, he exclaimed at the dress.

"Yes, my son," said his mother whimsically, "I put it on--- or so you might call it---purposely so you'd have no difficulty in recognizing me."

IF IT could be said the medium was tricking all this, then it has to be admitted that she was a particularly clever trickster, with a knowledge of George's family life and affairs that paralleled his own. . . .

For ten minutes his fully materialized mother had talked with him, especially about the settlement of her estate among a brood of a dozen children, and how each one had taken his share of her bequest, what he had done with the money and how he should be helped at the current moment. Not a name was miscalled. There was no fumbling for cues by the mother.

Next his sister emerged from the same cabinet. She even wore the same style spectacles that had helped her vision in life. My friend asked her if she still had need of glasses in her higher-octave existence. "Oh no," she answered, "I just wore a pair of these things because you mightn't recognize me without." She then discussed likewise the most intimate details of the family life in Toronto when they had been boys and girls. The thing that impressed George most about his sister's identity was a characteristic little motion made with her right hand when talking, impressing a point or gaining attention. Every little trick of speech which had distinguished her in the body was evidenced as she gave him counsel in regard to helping another sister and her husband who were in business difficulties of some sort up in Canada because of the war.

GEORGE was so flabbergasted at such a demonstration that he wrote he was coming north to get me at Indianapolis and motor me through to New York, where the same medium was due to visit in a couple of weeks.

"I want you to witness this medium's work and tell me what you think of it," he wrote. "I found out after the seances that she scarcely knows who you are. I think I can arrange to slip you into her Sunday night sitting without any publicity, and let's see what happens. If any of your relatives 'come through' who know as much about your affairs as my 'relatives' knew about mine, then we've just got to accept that the claim of nobody's ever having returned to earth from beyond the grave is purest tommyrot."

Well, more of my political persecution in Carolina was afoot and I was required to go down to Buncombe County that next week for a court hearing. So George came to Indianapolis and got me, drove me to Asheville, and when the ordeal there was over, took me up to New York through Virginia.

THE MEDIUM was Bertie Lilly Candler.

She was a handsome woman of some forty years, with a head of lovely auburn hair and sincere blue eyes. Later I was to learn that she had been raised in the Methodist denomination in Atlanta, Ga., and had begun to exercise her phenomenal powers following the death of her brother Howard, after she had married and started living in Cincinnati, Ohio. She was accompanied in this New York visit by her husband Edward, who superintended her seance work. My friend George had cleverly arranged the day before I saw the phenomena I am about to describe, that he was to arrive "with a friend" at the borrowed studio where Miss Candler---as she is professionally known---was to go into her trance, and that we were to be slipped into reserved chairs after the other spectators had assembled and just before the lights

were dimmed, that any possible notoriety attendant upon myself might in nowise embarrass either medium or hostess.

Twenty persons were gathered at 8:15 when George and I pushed the bell of an apartment on the twelfth floor of a residence skyscraper overlooking the Hudson River. We were admitted just as the hostess was requesting a group of women present to accompany the medium into an adjacent room while she divested herself of her usual clothes and donned her seance robe---a plain gown of olive satin. This to forestall any later charge of fraud, or of taking into the cabinet with her anything that might be extraneous to unassisted phenomena.

The room in which the sitting was being held was about twelve feet wide by twenty feet long. The length of it ran east and west in the building. At the western end was a small angular platform, containing a rostrum and a studio piano, raised fifteen inches from the main flooring. This flooring was carpeted with what appeared to be a heavy dark green Brussels rug.

We entered from the public corridor through the main door in the room's southeastern corner. The room had only one other door, farther west in the southern wall, opening into a little hallway off which were chamber, bathroom, and kitchenette. These details are important in what followed. The cabinet consisted of a collapsible wooden framework with heavy red velours drapes on brass hooks. It made a little compartment about five feet square and seven feet high, inside which was nothing but a plain wooden chair turned sideways to the audience. Several people examined this cabinet beforehand, finding it absolutely empty of anything but the chair. At the right of the cabinet outside was a chair where the medium's husband

usually sat throughout his wife's seances. He personally greeted and interrogated the materialized people as they emerged, and made certain that no sitter who was called close to the cabinet, crossed between the materialization and the medium, thus interfering with, or cutting off, the ectoplasmic cord. To the left of the cabinet outside was a small table holding a portable victrola with a pile of sacred records, subsequently played between manifestations. At the northern corner of the platform opposite the cabinet was a small spotlight with a ruby lens, focused on the front curtains. This illumination, after the eyes became accustomed to it, was sufficient to reflect throughout the whole room and show all the sitters in silhouette. At least nobody could move in the room without its being discernible.

After a time Miss Candler came from the chamber in the satin robe, nodded to acquaintances in the room who had been at some of her sittings before, and went into the cabinet. Before the floor lamps were switched off and the ruby spotlight turned on, she sat herself on the chair, gathered the robe about her feet, lifted a corner of the front drape and called out naively to everyone, "Good night!"

Unique to add, Miss Candler's little Pomeranian trotted after her into the cabinet and stretched near her feet. I had it whispered to me that the pet always did that, and slept soundly throughout the whole proceeding.

It certainly was there asleep, and had to be awakened, after the floor lamps were snapped on at the end of the seance. Inasmuch as some twenty-five entities were to materialize in the ensuing three hours, of all ages and both sexes, it hardly seems possible that a dumb animal---especially a dog---would have

slept soundly while they passed in and out of that cabinet, had they been mortal actors putting over any hoax. . . . One of them, at least, would have stepped on it!

WITH the floor lamps snapped off and the red light turned on, the woman who owned the apartment and acted as hostess---and who was herself one of New York's most famous trumpet mediums---requested that we open the proceedings by reciting the Lord's Prayer in unison. That finished, our hostess put on the first record. It was, "Nearer, My God to Thee." The record contained three verses. When it was finished, we waited. Nothing happened.

Our hostess put on another hymn, "Abide With Me." When its three verses had finished in turn, a period of electric silence followed. Suddenly it was cut by a voice. It was a girl's voice, possibly fourteen to sixteen years old. It came from behind the drapes.

"Hello, everybody!" it rang out, clear as a bell. "I'm Silverleaf! "

Now I had heard about Silverleaf from George. She was not so much Miss Candler's "control," as her mediumistic companion. Usually Miss Candler's brother, Howard---at whose decease, as aforesaid, she had truly begun her mediumistic work---acted as her control. But Howard did not seem to be with her this night. Silverleaf took charge of the sitting.

She had not only talked with George in Florida but had materialized at all of Miss Candler's seances which George had attended. He had come to know her rather intimately during the fortnight spent in the South.

He had described her to me as an attractive young Indian girl, who usually appeared with a band of jewels around her head, two heavy braids down her breast over an Indian jacket, and a skirt of a billowy white material resembling poplin.

On one occasion George had playfully challenged her as to whether her braids were real. She had taken one of them and brushed it across his nose and face. She called him Uncle Jo-Jo. Many of those present had been at Miss Candler's sittings before and met Silverleaf. They responded to her greeting. "I'm coming out in a minute," Silverleaf went on. "Medie," meaning the medium, wasn't quite asleep yet. Hello, Uncle Jo-Jo!"

"Hello, Silverleaf," called back George. "Do you know who I've got with me?"

"Sure I know who you've got with you," she said with a rippling laugh. "You've got Uncle Billy with you. Hello, Uncle Billy!"

"Hello, Silverleaf," I returned, having been at trumpet sittings before and not feeling inhibited at carrying on my end of such conversations.

Thereupon Silverleaf began to callout and greet other sitters personally. She never missed the correct name. Finally she called to our hostess, "put on another hymn, Nora, then I guess we'll be about ready."

The hostess put on "Lead Kindly Light."

Now understand me, what I am about to relate I saw with my own eyes, I heard with my own ears, and I touched with my own hands. There is no second-hand information to any of it. And I had my friend George for witness as to the accuracy of what I am reporting. When the final verse of "Lead, Kindly Light" had died away, the

front of the drapes moved in the ruby lamp's focused illumination. Out of the cabinet stepped an Indian girl of about sixteen years, with long braids down each side of a dark pretty face, her shoulders covered by a beaded jacket, and a flowing white skirt billowing down from her belt. She came out without the slightest hesitancy and with a child's delighted cry of, "Well, here I am!"

A chorus of greetings met her. Somehow it seemed, despite my clandestine presence there, that I had to be singled out for attention, though my last name never was spoken in the three hours that followed.

The room was then deathly silent. You could have heard the proverbial pin drop.

Silverleaf came tripping over to where George and I sat, about midway between the two doors along the southern wall. She stood before us. Just what was expected of me, I wasn't sure. George said, 'I wanted Uncle Billy to meet you in person, Silverleaf.'

"I told you I knew all about Uncle Billy," repeated Silverleaf. "See, I've got on the same dress tonight that I had on down in Florida, Uncle Jo-Jo."

The voice of Mrs. Candler's husband interrupted us from across the room. "Get up, William," he suggested. "Come back nearer to the cabinet here."

I arose. To my astonishment, Silverleaf put her hand on my forearm and held me as she backed before me toward the cabinet. It felt as the hand of any 16-year-old girl would feel. There was nothing waxen or ethereal about it. It was no paper-mache hand.

What on earth we talked about when I got in correct position facing her in front of the cabinet, where I did not obstruct

the beam from the ruby lamp, I don't for the life of me recall. If I did I would set it down. But I remember George calling out to the girl, "Smoosh Uncle Billy's face with one of your braids, Silverleaf, just to show him they're real, the same as you did mine down in Florida."

With a naive little chuckle, Silverleaf caught up her right-hand braid and brushed it playfully across my features. I had expected to feel coarse Indian hair. Instead it was soft as silk and delicately perfumed with lotus. I say that I smelled that beautiful scent and yet I couldn't have done it with nostrils alone, for unknown to many of my friends I lost my sense of smell during a siege of typhoid in Vermont in 1921. Later I had it explained to me that while the "smell buds" in my nostrils were destroyed, the nerves of smell back to the brain centers were not, and it had been these that caught the supernatural perfume. Then came another startling incident. I thought that Silverleaf had done with me and started back to my chair. To my astonishment, it seemed that she hadn't done with me, because I sensed her running after me, I felt her hand in the crook of my right elbow, and she playfully whirled me around to face her. I weigh 154 pounds. No ethereal "phantom" grabs hold of a 154-pound man and has strength enough to turn him completely about. As I recall, it was some trivial promise about listening at times for her voice in my clairaudient ear, so that having thus met her I could identify her, that caused the whirligig. Anyhow, I got back to my seat and Silver-leaf turned her attention to the rest of the sitters.

She stood in the center of the group, half-way down the room, and addressed practically every person there in turn, calling each one' by his or her first name and asking after personal affairs or suggesting times when they had met before.

She seemed to take particular delight in her costume and showed it off with the savoir faire of the professional manikin. Her poise was adorable. Finally she said that she had to go back into the cabinet and help "build up the ray" for others. I asked "What ray?" "The materializing ray," she answered. What she alluded to was, that to obtain such results in actuality, this was what took place: As the medium sank into deeper and deeper trance, her body began to release its ectoplasmic content, which poured out through its orifices into a sort of pool in the cabinet before her. This is one of the chief reasons for the cabinet at all, that such exhibition does not frighten or disgust the spectator. Into this flood of released ectoplasm, the more tenuous Light Body of the materializing entity steps and concentrates---with the help of "guides" like Silverleaf who are in the cabinet discarnate---on what his or her physical appearance was in mortality. This concentration acts as a sort of magnetic ray that begins to draw up the ectoplasm around the discarnate Light-Body like mercury filling up the glass stem of a thermometer. When the Light-Body, or pattern-self, is completely substantialized, the materialization is accomplished and the discarnate entity can leave the cabinet, to all intents a normal human being.

Don't say, "It can't be done!" It can be done, and is done in a thousand bona fide seance rooms on five continents year after year. It is the operating of a law just as natural as the growth of a blood clot in a woman's womb into a perfectly formed human being, within the first twenty-five days after conception, though too minute to be recognized for what it is. One is no more a mystery than the other.

WHEN Silverleaf had withdrawn into the cabinet, our hostess put on a fresh sacred record. As its final verse died away, the front drapes rippled and parted. Another young girl stepped through---a white girl. She was dressed in a pretty lace frock with a sort of bridal net falling from her hair. Edward got her identity and called out to her father and mother who were seated on George's left. They arose and hastened forward.

The mother gave a sharp cry, "It's really you, dear!" Recognition was instantaneous. Gertrude, it seemed, had caught a chill at her high school graduation dance, taken to bed, and Passed Over of quick pneumonia. This, apparently, was the first time that the parents had seen her in materialization. The reunion was poignant. I had noticed the careworn father and mother seated beyond George just before the lights went off. The father had something like a fold of cardboard in his hands and I had thought it a pad of paper for taking notes. Presently I was to find out what it was.

They talked swiftly, eagerly, of events that had taken place in the family since the girl's passing. She gave them what she could of her own experiences in the octave above the mortal. Then still in the ruby light, the father opened the cardboard folder.

"I brought this along just in case we actually saw you tonight," he explained. And he handed it to her. The whole thing was played out not four feet from me and I could hear plainly every word that passed.

The girl took the folder, opened it herself, and held it down against her skirt in order to get the ruby light-beam upon it.

"Why, it's me in my graduation dress!" she cried.

"Yes, dear," the mother said. "You remember it was taken the day you went to the dance, but you left us before the photographer delivered it."

"And there's another picture in here," Gertrude said. She looked at it closely. "Why, it's Tommy!" I gathered that Tommy was a younger brother.

Somehow that recognition of the picture hit me as being a more accurate proof of identity of a departed soul than even the things that subsequently happened to myself.

Gertrude handed back the photographs. Suddenly, with a surge of emotion, she threw both arms around her father and mother. The three of them embraced there---like the three normal persons which they were---loath to give each other up.

Could that father and mother ever conceive thereafter that their beloved daughter was dead, or that she had "perished?" What Mosaic numskull was it who had written back over the years, "The dead know not anything," and "There is no device nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest?" Rubbish!

Chapter XV

PROOF OVERWHELMING



HE BREAKAWAY had to come between Gertrude and her parents. Seeing her withdraw and go backward into the cabinet was not unlike having her die a second death to them, I suppose, in that she could not walk out of the meeting with them. When the drapes had fallen before her figure, we were brought back to realities by another bit of sacred music coming from the victrola. Who would emerge from the cabinet next? We had not long to wait.

The curtains parted, the form of an elderly lady stepped through. She paused a moment and then stepped back. The drapes fell before her figure.

A second time she opened the drapes. This time she stepped through and at least six feet out into the room. She cried with a husky Irish brogue: "Dennis!"

Mind you these voices were not spookish whispers, unless their possessors did not particularly want the whole roomful to hear what they were saying to their intimates.

An Irish traffic policeman who was present, but not in uniform, sprang up with an exclamation. Apparently this was his mother.

"Dennis, me son, me son!" she cried. What they said privately up close together I could not hear, for the woman dropped her voice a few moments. Then louder we heard her say, "Oh why do ye have to be all the time standing down under thim terrible elevated tracks with the trolley cars going past ye, and thim trucks nearly hitting ye? A dozen toimes a day, me bye, ye give your mither the conniption fits that they're going to take your toes off."

"Are you there with me, mother?" the copper asked incredulously.

"All the toime I'm with ye, to keep ye from harm. But ye scare the wits from ye mither a dozen toimes an hour. Why don't ye give up the job, Dennis, and git a dacent job at man's wages?"

"Somebody has to do that sort of thing, mother," Dennis argued.

"Yis, I suppose so. But do ye take care of yourself. And I know there's going to be a new wedding ring on your finger in the spring. May ye be happy, me son!"

"THAT'S pretty realistic," I whispered to George in the ruby dark, as a new hymn played sweetly.

"Look!" George cried presently. Out from the curtains had stepped a tall foreign-looking cleric in vestments that seemed to me to be of the Greek Catholic church as I had seen them in Siberian mosques in 1918. He wanted his sister Mischa.

A stocky Slav girl sprang up and came forward. After the usual emotional greetings, they began talking about family affairs, with references to papa and mama and other relatives and their troubles, which the brother contended he was daily

helping to iron out. We thought it was to be just another of those domestic visits which mean nothing to a stranger excepting the humanness of the problems. Suddenly, however, the Russian said, "Do you recall, Mischa, how we once played and sang together at the piano?"

Indeed, Mischa did.

"Would you play an accompaniment for me," the brother asked wistfully, "and let me sing with you again?"

Mischa acted embarrassed. She didn't enthuse. "Some other night, brother," she begged.

"Oh, all right---nichivo!" the man said, the tone of disappointment bitter in his voice.

The audience broke out in a storm of protestations. "Play, Mischa, play!" they insisted.

The brother, in retreat toward the cabinet, seemed to pause and wait.

"What do you want me to play?" she asked him.

"Would you play The Rosary?"

Mischa went to the piano on the dais. That she was an expert musician was evident the instant her fingers touched the keys. She sounded off on the proper chord. Then, to my stupefaction at least, the brother who had remortalized himself for this epochal evening by courtesy of the gracious Florida woman asleep inside that cabinet, cleared his throat and started in with the words. He sang the three verses without slip or falter, though sometimes not quite making the true tone on the high notes. There he was, within five feet of me, doing that thing, his voice having quite as much volume as any man's in that room. My eyes had grown quite accustomed to the red light by this time. His figure between me and the opposite wall was as

opaque as any figure within reach of my vision. It was perfectly made. I could see the man's chest rise and fall. His accent, not pure English, often flattened on the words. But singing the song seemed to mean a lot to him. When the solo was over, he thanked his sister like a grateful little boy. The approval of the audience, of course, was noisy.

"It's quite like old times," he murmured to Mischa as he finally backed toward the cabinet. A moment later, he had disappeared from our sight.

"What do you think of that?" asked George.

"If I hadn't heard it with my own ears, I wouldn't have believed it," I replied.

The victrola hymn had started up again.

A PORTLY German father stepped out from the drapes and called to his son and his family, sitting directly opposite the cabinet. The son brought up his new bride to be introduced, a girl who had never seen the old gentleman in flesh. The conversation began in German and finished in German---for a full ten minutes. Not knowing German, I could not follow it. But it seemed to be all about relatives, for I distinguished several Christian names, both men and women.

Suddenly, when the German had finished his visit, the voice of Silverleaf called to the hostess over the drapes, "Put on the Bells of St. Mary, Nora!"

It took a moment to find the record out of the pile by the aid of a tiny flashlight. Nora played it once and nothing happened. But just as it started up a second-time, the drapes parted and the figure that advanced out of the cabinet was that of a nun, muttering in what I took to be Latin. She was clad in

sharp blacks and whites in headdress and girdle. Her presence was so impelling that the audience forgot to welcome her audibly.

Strangely enough, the room happened to be so silent for an instant that as the Sister trod past me---within at least two feet of where I was leaning forward---I could hear the scuff of what seemed to be her naked feet on the nap of the heavy Brussels rug. That too was pretty convincing evidence in view of what happened when she later "went out." She moved toward one of the women at the back of the room and spoke. The woman started up. What relation she was to the nun I could not make out. But if I recall correctly, the woman was perplexed over whether or not she should give up her present work and take up nursing.

"No," the nun advised against it. "If I were you I would keep on where you are. You are doing more good to humanity.

On and on they talked about more family complications. The way in which these good people---striving against time to cram all their troubles and sorrows into a brief few minutes of contact---choking hectically over the questions and answers, was heart-rending.

But the nun kept her poise and terminated the interview. Back near the cabinet---I should say some three feet in front of it and yet standing slightly off-center toward the right--she suddenly raised both arms heavenward. She looked like one of those Angels of Mercy on the Red Cross posters. I heard a hoarse whisper: "She's blessing us. Listen!"

It was a Catholic blessing, uttered in Latin. The nun was talking swiftly, almost parroting her words.

And as she repeated the blessing, I beheld her start to sink through the floor with a curious twist of her uniformed figure.

I blinked my eyes. I did everything but pinch myself or jab a pin in my leg. What on earth was I seeing?

The nun's figure sank further. She went down to her knees, her waist, her shoulders. Finally her head went out of sight---through the rug! It was like watching a person sink beneath the surface of water.

Finally we watched the awesome sight of two upraised arms and hands, still heavy with vestments, thrusting upward from the carpet. Finally the left hand nearest me vanished. The right hand lingered as a pool of fluorescence on the rug for ten or fifteen seconds, and then that too disappeared. No part of her had gone back into the cabinet. She had dematerialized---sloughed off her clothing of substantiality---directly before our eyes! I was to have a second such demonstration before the night was over.

It was to be my own paternal grandfather!

Chapter XVI

"THE DOOR IS NOW UNLOCKED"



KNEW that I was witnessing a display of phenomena that might happen, even to expert researchers, but once in a lifetime---and yet might be repeated, if one were fortunate, no later than tomorrow night. Less than an hour had gone by, and I had already witnessed the equivalent of manifestations that might compose a whole evening's seance, and a most satisfying seance at that. The victrola played on at my right, and in between records, if a materialization had not appeared, I could hear the suppressed breathing of the score of persons around me, striving as I was striving to accredit that they were all seated in Mayor La Guardia's New York, with the long strings of automobiles flowing down the Drive below in the beautiful orchestration of Sunday night traffic, and the problems of the war-torn world to be faced in the morning. Most of the materializations, I noted, usually appeared in about the middle of the second playing of any given hymn on the machine, when Nora would instantly hush the music. . . .

Suddenly the curtains parted, the music was stopped, and a figure appeared that puzzled as it disquieted me---not that

I recognized it, for it was a stranger and yet a somewhat different type of entity than had materialized to the present. Edward, beyond the cabinet, rose to his feet.

"This," he announce solemnly, "is evidently a personage from a very high plane of eternity." And he bent toward it with instinctive solicitude.

The man standing sedately before the drapes was not tall---in a few moments I was to stand within a foot of him and find myself looking down slightly into his face. He was dressed in vestments such as I had never witnessed on any cleric of any church. A mitre of some sort seemed to be on his head. He looked eighty years old. A long silvery beard dropped halfway down his chest. There was a quiet restraint, a poise, a dignity to him that might be felt merely by surveying him.

"He gives the name of Ari," announced Edward, "and is here to speak to George."

The friend beside me started up. "It's my special protective guardian," he declared in a whisper. "He materialized twice for me down in Florida."

This then was the spirit whom George had reported to me as having done something that I considered truly remarkable in the way of phenomena. One night, in a Florida sitting, he had called George up and talked with him privately about his life and affairs. He had seemed so paternal, so kindly, so solicitous, that George had begun to have a sincere affection for the gentleman. When he had turned to depart, he had asked George, "Would you like to have something to remember me by?"

George, of course, had answered affirmatively.

"Have you a pair of scissors or a knife in your pocket?"

George had a pocket knife and produced it.

Ari had twisted up a lock of his beard and held it taut.
"Cut it off," he had directed.

George had told me that while striving to do this, he had seen the pull of the flesh where the hairs grew out and Ari's grasp of the lock had been faulty. But he had severed the strand and received it in his fingers.

"Put it in a locket," Ari had said. "It will be a constant connection between us."

George, of course, had wondered how that could be, for he rightly expected that his ethereal guardian would presently dematerialize. But when the latter had done so, to George's amazement *the lock of hair had not!* George had carried it from the seance and shown it to me in Indianapolis.

This then, was the dignitary who had done this wonder and I hoped I was going to be able to ask him how he had performed it.

George, up before the cabinet with Ari, called me to them. He introduced me. Ari laid his right hand with firm pressure on my wrist.

I could see him plainly then. I judged his race to be Persian.

"I'm so glad to be able to introduce my friend to you, Ari," George said, to make conversation.

The venerable one laughed pleasantly.

"My son," he returned, "we on This Side know William's work even better than you do. But it gives me great pleasure that we meet face to face."

I said, "George has shown me the keepsake you gave him in Florida. From the scientific angle, I've wondered how such a thing could be managed. How did the hair lock remain in

existence on this side when you returned to the higher octave ?"

Again that poised, easy laugh from the visitor. "It was meant to remain on your side of life," he responded. "I fixed it so that it would." He put emphasis on the "would."

What more could be said? Any discussion of the higher-life processes was impossible at the moment.

I went back to my seat and presently George followed. Ari had spoken a pleasant word to the guests and stepped backward behind the drapes.

AS THOUGH purposely to display a diversity of types a lad of some fifteen years stepped out of the cabinet a moment or two after the next record had been played. He was clad in ordinary boy's clothing of this period---trousers and blouse-shirt, with four-in-hand tie---but seemed to be afflicted with a slight curvature of the spine.

"Tony!" cried the medium's husband, springing up as though a bit surprised himself.

Tony greeted Edward. He seemed pleased with himself that he had contrived it. Edward explained.

"Tony," he said, standing in big-brotherly fashion beside the youthful visitor, "was formerly a newsboy in Chicago. He made the Passing a couple of years ago by being struck by a truck on Evanston Avenue. He drops in to see us at these meetings quite often. Sometimes he sings for us. Don't you, Tony?"

"Sure, I sing!" boasted Tony. "But I don't think I'll do it tonight."

The assembly at once pressed him to favor it. But Tony had all the embarrassment of a Chicago newshawk suddenly plunged into a gathering in a drawing-room. No, he wouldn't sing. He just wanted to say hello to Eddie and then get gone. "Loads of folks are waiting to get in," he declared.

It was a queer little episode. Tony hadn't come to meet anybody in the group. He just wanted to be neighborly and that was that. Having gotten a certain gratification from being thus noticed, he opened the drapes behind him and his personal appearance for the evening was over.

WE HAD to wait a long time now. I wondered if the ectoplasmic force was dwindling. But I presently understood.

A dignified gentleman who must have stood six feet tall, with a well-shaped bald head, and a gown resembling an Episcopalian rector's surplice, with stole, over sinewy shoulders and chest, presently walked out of the cabinet and stood for a moment regarding us all. The woman at my right cried, "Doctor Wainwright!"

"Yes," the personage responded gravely, "I am Doctor Wainwright. I wish to speak to you first, my dear, about your treatments. Will you please come up here for a short consultation?"

The lady needed no urging. She joined him, with a couple of women friends, in front of the cabinet. The assembly waited.

I gathered from what I overheard of the conversation that the woman was suffering from an internal trouble with which mortal physicians could scarcely cope.

At some previous seance this higher-octave physician had come through to her and promised to assist her doctor in flesh to bring about an amelioration of her condition, if not her cure. He made the clairaudient recommendations to her mortal doctors, I gathered, and they gave the treatments, whether aware of the source of their prescriptions or not. But the patient was not cooperating as she should. Hence this personal contact. He went on explaining something medical for at least five minutes. Finally he dismissed her, and noted the group. Edward asked him if he could not speak them all a word of comfort during the terrible times through which the earth was passing.

"We in the higher spheres of life," Dr. Wainwright responded after a moment's cogitation, "do not look upon what is happening now on your plane as 'war.' Neither should any of you privileged persons consider it as such. What the earth world is passing through at present is a stupendous renovation." Dr. Wainwright spoke measuredly, choosing his words most carefully.

"The time has come in modern history," he went on in substance, "for a gigantic housecleaning of all the dark, wicked, mischief-forces who so shamefully afflict man and his institutions---especially his political and economic institutions. They are due to expose themselves presently throughout all humanity for their blunderings, their greeds, their inability to inspire or direct man in his worldly predicaments and dilemmas. Before the present sequence is run they will be stripped of their influence because of their own inadequacies. Great wrongs that have afflicted the nations for generations are due to be righted. The earth and its society must come back into a moral balance."

Someone asked how far America would get into the war.

"There will be no such enemy destruction of life and property in the United States as there has been in countries abroad," he replied. "At least, those on the plane to which I have progressed seem not to be aware of it. But you must remember that we have no more access to the intentions of the Almighty than you have. We are simply living in a higher and more delicate world of Matter. We have ways of seeing things begin to occur in the astral that are presently to mature in event in the mortal, but it is for a limited time ahead only. This thing I do want you to remember and to count on, however: All of us in these higher states of life have positive knowledge of a great leader who is presently to rise here in North America and by his wise counsel and direction---gained from the same high sources from which we get our counsel and direction---straighten out most of the embroilments in which American humankind finds itself in these moments. You can plan on the coming of such a leader, though you must not question me specifically concerning his identity. He is not so well known now as he is to be shortly. Probably he will come in result of the terrible blunders and shortcomings of those who have had the conflict in charge in its opening phases. He will resuscitate the United States from the spiritual, more than from the political, angle. And when he comes, not the least among you will have much difficulty recognizing him."

The doctor started to back toward the cabinet as he concluded this message. Then with a grave bow to the thoughtful assembly, he stepped inside. . . .

NOW FOLLOWED at least an hour of entities of strictly private significance to other sitters present. The mothers of several persons, clad in most cases in ethereal flowing robes, made themselves substantial and discoursed with sons or daughters quite after the manner I have described. On one occasion the son of one of the women spectators visited her for several minutes, expressing his gratitude that he was out of mortality for the sequence now running on earth.

"I did my share in the first World War," he informed us. "I'm glad I don't have to go through another such experience under present conditions."

His mother explained, in introducing him to the group, that he had been badly wounded in the AEF in 1918, and had dragged out a miserable existence as a disabled veteran till death released him some five years bygone. A most poignant note was introduced on another occasion by the deceased fiancé of one of the young women present stepping suddenly from between the drapes, being instantly recognized, and the two of them embracing after she had left her seat impulsively and hurried to him.

"Oh, it's so hard to get along with you gone, Harry," the young woman sobbed. "It's all that I can do to live day after day. Life seems so bleak, so barren."

With his arms about his erstwhile sweetheart, the young man patted the pretty bowed back, and sought to soothe her.

"But can't you understand," he argued gently, "that I'm not 'gone,' that I'm right close to you day after day, helping you as I never could help you had I stayed in life with you?"

No, she couldn't, and she said so. So they clung to each other---and everyone present must have felt a bit embarrassed, as though violating some sort of privacy by thus looking on.

I couldn't help wondering what the skeptics and ignoramuses---who contend so raucously that no "dead" person has ever "come back"---would say, to sit witnessing such a reunion as this, a young man stepping into mortality for a brief ten minutes to put his arms around a beloved sweetheart whom he had been obliged to part with, when he had to go ahead of her into the more exquisite phases of experiencing Consciousness. But the evening was getting on.

Between half-past ten and eleven o'clock it was, and after the victrola records had run out, to be succeeded by a beautiful rhythmic humming of "Holy Night" on the part of the sitters, that the curtains trembled, were pulled energetically open, and a white figure stepped through without the slightest pause or hesitation, heading straight for my chair.

SOMEHOW I seemed to know telepathically when this Lady in White walked out, that she had materialized for me and none other, though I couldn't tell who she was at once. As she crossed the space of rug, she seemed to loom above me in unnatural proportions.

Presently I was to see that this effect was supplied by swathes of chiffon about her head and held together on the center of her breast.

"Dudley, my son!" she cried raggedly as I got to my feet. Now there had been only one such woman who had gone on the other side, who had ever used my middle name in addressing me as a lad, and that was my maternal grandmother. But could

this be my maternal grandmother? She had blue eyes, as my maternal grandmother had blue eyes. She had something of the same contours of face. But my mother's mother, Hanna, had been an elderly woman---some sixty-five or seventy years old---when making the Passing in 1912. This lady did not look a day over forty, if that old, and her figure lacked my Grandmother Goodale's portliness.

On the other hand, I had heard plenty in other seances of a process in the higher dimensions of certain souls' "growing back to a norm" of maturity and remaining there until progressing along to loftier planes of consciousness. Was my grandmother doing that? Certainly in the ensuing few moments I had small doubt about its being my grandmother's spirit. I followed her to a position in front of the cabinet where the ruby spotlight gave maximum illumination.

"You poor boy," she crooned, "what a terrible time you are going through! And all so unfair and unmerited!" Probably had I known Grandmother in her middle life, I might not have felt so confused at having a person apparently younger than myself at the moment---at least in looks---designate herself as my mother's mother.

Feeling strange in her presence therefore, I scarcely knew how, or what, to reply. But of this thing I took note.

Her mental or emotional anguish was poignant to behold. Her distress was so great that it called up a counter-sympathy. As I struggled for poise, she asked me—"What's the matter? Can't you see me? Haven't I done what is necessary to be 'real' to you? It's the first time I've ever done anything of this sort, you know."

"I can see you all right, Grandmother," I assured her.

"I can't stay very long. . . it's all so awkward, so different from anything I've ever been used to. But I had to come to you tonight to try to cheer and encourage you in the awful ordeal you're being called to suffer. It's all part of your career, my son. Fancy talking to you, though, now that you're a man grown, face to face!" How does one talk to one's grandmother whom one hasn't seen in substantiality in over thirty years? One thing is certain. One doesn't feel facetious. . . .

This blue-eyed lady, however, had nothing of the ethereal about her except for the chiffon head scarf and robes. She seemed to have considerable difficulty holding the latter together in front. She kept pulling the folds together with her left hand while she tried in a sort of affectionate caress to pass her right hand over my hair and down about my shoulders.

"It's all in one's life work, I suppose," I said tritely.

"But will you remember my words of counsel, son? Will you surely remember them?"

"Meaning what? What counsel?"

"This counsel---that no matter what predicament you think that you're in, with the authorities or anyone else, 'the door has been unlocked already!' Will you remember that? 'The door has been unlocked already.' Promise you'll re- member that."

"I promise," I said.

"Say after me, 'The door has been unlocked already.'"

"The door has been unlocked already," I repeated. Inasmuch as not a soul in that room but myself and George knew that I was in any particular sort of trouble, it was on the whole convincing for a materialized soul to proceed directly to giving of such solicitude.

"That's all I can say. I've got to go now. 'The door has been unlocked already.'" With another caressing gesture at my head and shoulders, she began to withdraw from me. An instant later she had vanished behind the curtains.

I WAS so upset in my feelings when I again sought my chair, that I scarcely gave any attention to the spirit that now came forth from the cabinet and greeted everyone in the voice of another child---a second little Indian girl, apparently, some ten to twelve years old.

She had not come there to meet anyone in particular. I gathered vaguely that her prime purpose was in displaying a new dress that enveloped her, somewhat after the pattern of Silverleaf's. She gave some fanciful and flowery name, but I was thinking, thinking, thinking. . . The child was obsessed with the fact that on the following afternoon, on the plane in which she resided, she was going to a party. . . Had that recent materialization been that of my grandmother or had it not? If so, and this was an example of "growing back young," what a lot of surprises some people were in for, at making the Passing themselves and greeting their loved ones on the other side, to find the latter not "lame, halt, blind or aged" as they might have gone out of flesh, but radiantly mature in the golden summer of middle existence. Certainly my "grandmother" had called me by the only name that she would use in addressing me face to face. The solicitude for me was unquestionable. And her message had plenty of consolation in it after what I had been through in the South that past week. "The door is unlocked already!" What could that mean but that the tide had definitely turned for me, and that the "out" was ready for me to experience as the days and weeks rolled onward?

I was still preoccupied with my thoughts in ruby dusk when I realized that Edward was calling "William!" That meant me again.

I looked up at the cabinet.

A portly man of some sixty to seventy years was standing before the curtains. He was clad in modern male costume and giving his name as Frederick William.

Frederick William had been the name of my father's father. Why should I be deserving of so much attention this epochal evening?

"MY SON, my son!" this entity cried thickly as I stood before him and his right hand reached out and tightened on my wrist.

"Is it you, Grandfather?" I cried in new perturbation. Then in the upset one feels in all such situations, I recall exclaiming, "---but what have you done with your thick gray whiskers?" My Grandfather Pelley, as long as I had known him, had worn a patriarchal beard halfway down his chest. This was my grandfather's figure all right, but his beard was black, and not nearly so long.

"But, my son" he chuckled, "whiskers have generally gone out of fashion. All the same I've got some on---can't you see them?"

No, I couldn't see them, and peered closer into his face.

"You've got something on," I argued banally, "but the light is so poor, or my eyes aren't accustomed to it, that I can't tell what it is."

"My son, don't let's waste such important time arguing over such a matter as whiskers. I haven't worn mine on my present plane for years."

I wondered what was required of me. How could I ever ask him the intimate family detail that I wanted to ask him, with all these strangers present and hanging on every word? Knowing that many persons with Second Sight had often described him as being on the platform with me and seeming to counsel me as I had addressed past audiences, I felt he should be in a position to approve or condemn my present work. Not thinking how else to put it, I asked---

"Well, granddad, how am I doing?"

This brought a titter of laughter around the circle. My grandsire joined in it. His hand, as strong and virile as it ever had been in life---and he had been a powerful man---continued on my wrist. "My son, you're doing fine," he said huskily after a moment. "In fact, there's times when it seems to your watching relatives that you're doing too much."

"Too much," I echoed. "How could that be possible?"

"You make so much progress in your work yourself that you're not allowing the time for the rest of humanity to catch up. However, they'll do that in time. Be patient. What I particularly wanted to do tonight was to thank your friend George for the aid he's been to you in getting your printing works established. The books that you're printing are doing more good throughout the land than you'll ever know till you get in our position and see it. Will you call him up?"

I called to George and he responded.

"This is my paternal grandfather, Frederick William," I announced---as though he had not been hearkening to every word spoken by either of us from the first.

George acknowledged the introduction and my grandfather ran his left hand under George's elbow.

"Just let me thank you, dear fellow," he said, "for the help you're giving to our grandson." George started to deprecate it.

"No, no," cried the old gentleman, "you're as much a part of his lifework as his own wits or pen. And all his relatives are grateful and are showing it by seeing that the two of you don't get into serious trouble."

Hardly had my grandfather gotten these words out than his voice wavered queerly. His shoulders and figure seemed to sway. The hand on my arm relaxed its clutch and dropped.

Suddenly, weird as it sounds to relate, though it did not seem as awesome to watch it happen, the old gentleman jack-knifed at the waist. My instinct was to reach out and catch him, but as I had been warned against seizing hold of these people during materializations since it might have serious effect on the medium, I pulled back a step, and then, before my eyes, I saw my grandsire begin to sink through the floor precisely as the nun had done, following her blessing.

He sank through the floor directly at my feet. One moment he had been standing before me, talking with me like any normal man. The next he had bent forward and in the bending, his feet had begun to go through the rug as though it were the surface of a pool of water. I stood there gaping while he sank down, down, till only his head was visible between George's feet and mine. *The next moment he was gone!*

There was nothing whatsoever to indicate that he had been there. I was close enough to the phenomena to see everything in utmost detail.

Somehow I got back to my chair and devoutly wished that the sitting would end. I was mentally, emotionally and

spiritually punch-drunck. I had seen so much that I wanted only to get out and *think!* Happily enough, my grandfather's was the last materialization for the night. From behind the draperies we heard Silver leaf exclaim: "Oh shucks! The power's getting so weak that these things fall apart!" It was a queer but practical way to phrase it. A moment later she added philosophically: "Nope, I guess we can't go along anymore tonight, even if there are a lot of folks left who'd like to talk with the rest of you. But I'll tell you who's here. ."

Thereat the child started calling out names of persons who hadn't been able to avail themselves of the mediumistic ectoplasm. She must have called out at least a dozen, every last one of them absolutely accurate. Twice she called out names of former women business associates of George's, giving last names as well as first.

"Uncle Jo-Jo," she said, "you remember Margaret G---, don't *you*? She says she gave you a pair of cuff-links and a stickpin one Christmas. Is that right?"

"It most certainly is," agreed George. "Tell her I had them stolen from my house when a prowler got in."

"Oh, she knows that," returned Silver leaf, matter-of-factly. "What became of them doesn't count. Any gift is only in the giving, anyhow. Uncle Billy!"

"Yes, Silverleaf," I answered.

"A long time ago you had a daughter Harriet, didn't you? She passed over when she was a teeny girl."

"Two years old," I agreed.

"I know. Well, she's a big grown woman now. About thirty years old. And she says to tell you, 'God bless Dad.' "

It was the first time in twelve years of psychical research that I had received trace of my daughter Harriet in the higher realms of life.

"Well, I guess we've all got to go now. We've had a nice evening, haven't we?"

"A wonderful evening, Silverleaf," responded the audience sincerely.

"Then good night, everybody!"

"Good night, Silverleaf!"

Suddenly the maiden's voice, still clear and lovely, began to sing---

"Good night, dear one,
Good night, dear one,
Good night, dear one,
We're going to leave you now!"

The tune was the well-known old song, "Good Night, Ladies," only when she arrived at the chorus, she altered it thus-

"Merrily we fade away,
Fade away, fade away,
Merrily we fade away,
Over the Sea of Love. . ."

The child's voice trailed off, fainter and fainter, as if receding into remotest distance. Presently the room was silent. Edward said to George, "Open the door, George, so that we can get the indirect light from the bathroom." George opened the door. The electric illumination was sickly, garish, as it came through the inner hallway. In a moment someone switched on a floorlamp. Edward went to the cabinet and tossed back the drapes.

"Wake up, Bertie," he coaxed. "Everything's over. People are ready to go home."

Miss Candler was plainly to be seen by everyone. She sat slumped down in the wooden chair, head rolled on one side, unconscious in slumber. Edward shook her gently. She shuddered, yawned, sat up.

"It's so frightfully hot in here!" were her first words since she had bidden us "Good night!" three hours before. "It feels like I'd been in a forest fire."

Edward stayed beside her till she came fully awake and then helped her to her feet. Coming from the cabinet, she paused before my chair.

"How was it?" she asked. "Did you get anything?"

"You're a sweetheart!" I cried impulsively. "We got at least twenty-five people. It's been the most amazing evening of phenomena I've ever witnessed in my life." This was no exaggeration.

"I'm glad," she said. She walked to a vacated chair and sat down, still rubbing her eyes and yawning.

The woman on my right asked me the time. I looked at my wrist watch. "Ten minutes past eleven o'clock," I said. Then I left the room, to get out in cool night air for a minute and light up a welcome cigar. . . .

Chapter XVII

GRACIOUS LADY



UCH was the coming of Bertie Lilly Candler into my life. I had long since established the publishing house that had first been given the title of *Galahad Press*, then *Pelley Publishers*, then *Fellowship Press*, to finally level off under the significant title of *Soulcraft Chapels*. I had maintained headquarters in New York City, then Washington, D. C., then Asheville, N. C., then Noblesville, Indiana. It was a long way back to that night in Altadena, California, when I had climbed the stairs to my bungalow bedroom to undergo the experience that has now become historical as "My Seven Minutes in Eternity". Water under Time's Bridge indeed! As I draw this revised version of *Why I Believe the Dead Are Alive* toward a close that water has been twenty-six years flowing. . .

Political conditions south of Mason & Dixon's Line had grown so intolerable after 1940 that I had transferred linotype machines, presses and general publishing equipment up into Hoosierland, buying a property in a wholesome American small town sixteen miles north of Indianapolis, the State's

Capital. Adelaide, my younger daughter, was unmarried in 1940 and we likewise acquired residence in the latter city, driving back and forth to Noblesville morning and night. It was in the Indianapolis home, therefore, that Adelaide and I became hostess and host to Bertie Lilly, and the long series of seances began, in Noblesville and otherwise, that were to cement the bonds of fellowship that have made the Candler name a byword in ten thousand households wherever Soulcraft periodicals and books have been read. Only one other medium has been thus informally connected with the Greater Soulcraft program, ranking anywhere within Bertie Lilly's classification---that was Mary Beattie, of Chesterfield, Indiana, curiously enough a materializing adept with whom Bertie Lilly had sat for development in her younger years. Mary Beattie's husband, after her untimely demise in 1952, joined Soulcraft as invaluable compositor in its printing-room. But Bertie Lilly's coming to Indiana in 1941 had opened a new sequence of personal proofs of the utter fallacy of death as any permanent tragedy.

IT IS one thing to enter upon strange premises as a paying spectator, and see what appears to be phenomena occur before the eyes, realizing that the human vision is the easiest of the senses to deceive. It is quite another to have the phenomena projected within one's own home, where one is arbiter of every condition, where one knows to a certainty there can be no secret entrances, where certainly none of the fifteen to twenty materialized types of humanity, either sex and all ages, could have been present five minutes before the doors were fastened and the lights turned off. Insinuations as to fraud or deception

are unqualifiedly eliminated. Strangely enough, therefore, it was in the first seance thus held in the Indianapolis home, that my eldest daughter, Harriet, staged her initial appearance to me in her recreated "body" . . . Inasmuch as Harriet herself has since grown into a Soulcraft institution, no volume listing my evidence as to why I believe the dead are alive would be complete without description of that memorable first seance.

Harriet, my first child, had been born in Springfield, Mass. in November of 1912. Two years later, in Wilmington, Vermont, she succumbed to cerebral meningitis. You may recall my recounting in an earlier chapter how Pauline, my brother-in-law's bride, had first gotten in touch with her soldier-husband at Lake Pleasant, Mass., when learning about "the nurse of the Mohawk Trail." "He's got a violet-eyed little girl with him who's inseparably attached to him," Pauline had reported. She had not known Harriet as a baby nor ever seen her in the flesh. But such description had caused us to pay attention. Harriet had been noted for her strange violet eyes---not blue, not grey, but an out-of-this-world violet. Who could "be with" Ernest but our long-lost baby? He had been a member of our Vermont house-hold all through her prolonged illness and demise.

It was a May evening of 1941 that Bertie Lilly and Edward gave us their first seance in our Indianapolis library, where the George Fisher of previous mention had personally supervised the sealing of the windows with beaver-board and created a "cabinet" by stretching two heavy velours drapes across the southeast corner of the twenty-foot-square room. The

Candlers had motored up from Miami; George had driven over from Darien, Conn. I had invited a choice assortment of guests and employees to witness the wonders, one of the former being the chief of the state vigilante police, another a leading attorney of the State Capital. Some two dozen people had gathered at eight p.m. in chairs around the north and west walls of the library. The front door had been locked and doorbell and telephone disconnected. The general program of the seance followed the one previously described. The room was illumined by a red spotlight turned on the front of the velours curtains from a position atop the bookshelves in the northwest corner.

The first soul-spirit to substantialize was, as usual, Silverleaf---who greeted each guest by his or her first name, although almost none of them was known to the medium and some of them had only been invited on the spur of the moment within the hour before the affair was called. The second materialization had been a portly stranger of advanced years who called lustily to his adult son seated in a back corner, one of the Miehle pressmen at the Noblesville plant. Charley came forth from his corner astounded.

It was his father, who had "died" before World War I. He proved to Charles' satisfaction that he was the parent, not only by his appearance and voice but by narration of an incident that had occurred in Minnesota when Charles had been a lad of ten, and in 1940 he was in his fifties. "Remember how you got some poison oak on a camping trip we took?" he reminded his son. "What was the fool thing I tried for it, when we didn't have any other antidotes? . . No, let *me* tell *you*. . It was a mustard plaster I happened to have along, wasn't it?"

Charles cried afterward, "He was one hundred percent correct. But no one in God's world but he and I knew anything about it! I'd never even mentioned the incident to my wife."

What do we want for proof that the "dead" are alive? Mustard plasters on poisoned oak assailments . . the very quaintness of the incident gave it validity.

Then, for the first time, I saw my beloved first daughter, grown to womanhood. . .

THE PRESSMAN'S father had scarcely retired within the cabinet, after general banter about the son's vicissitudes since the father's death, when I beheld a great "snowball" of whitish effluvia beginning to quiver and contort *in front of the drapes*. It seemed to be forming and growing not fifteen inches from my left foot, where I was seated on a low divan to the east of the curtains. Edward, the sleeping medium's husband, exclaimed, "Someone's building up right in plain sight for you!"

The "snowball" lost its rotundity and became elongated vertically. It oscillated, it writhed, it mounted higher and higher. Reaching a pillar of five feet two or three, it gave a peculiar shuddering twist. Then even in ruby light I blinked my eyes. *A particularly handsome young woman stood before me, gowned in white*. Her long chestnut hair fell in curls down her back from under a Juliette cap. She was personable, she was graceful. In a voice whose chuckle did not cancel its culture, she accosted me, "'Well, Daddy, how do you like *that*?"

I could scarcely speak. "You're. . . Harriet?" I managed to exclaim on my second attempt.

"Uh-huh, . . . of course! Are you surprised to meet me for the first time, full-grown?"

What could I say to her? Unfortunately, the ruby light---wholly adequate as it was otherwise---did not permit me to determine the color of her eyes. But she placed warm pulsating hands on my shoulders. She looked into my face from a distance of twelve to fifteen inches. Was this actually the beloved child who had waved me a final and scarcely audible "Bye!" from her crib in the kitchen that long-ago winter's morning in Wilmington, Vermont, two hours before the town's physician had rushed her to Brattleboro Hospital? She chuckled again.

"I know what you're thinking. You've carried the notion about for years, while I've been growing up on the Higher Side, that Adelaide might have been my reborn soul, coming along as she did five or six months after I made that Wilmington passing. Am I not right?"

Yes, she was right. But I had never mentioned it to anyone, that I recalled. She tossed her adorable chin.

"Well, I certainly am no one *but* myself, and Adelaide is no one but herself. And at last we're together, Daddy, face to face. Isn't it wonderful?"

Words had no effect in translating the wonderment of it. The lump in my throat was interfering with speech. And Harriet pivoted lightly on her toes and swung completely about for me to view her total figure.

"Don't you remember Aunt Pauline telling you from time to time she saw me in company with Uncle Ernest?"

Here was family evidence that could not have existed even in the medium's mind, since up to then my acquaintance with Bertie Lilly had not been replete enough to rehearse my past domestic affairs with her. So I asked about Ernest. It was the beginning of a colloquy on family relationships that established beyond all doubt that I had met up again in truth with my long-lost baby girl. It was likewise the beginning of a sixteen-year intimacy in other and greater matters, during which I have watched her grow from a vivacious maiden in her middle twenties to a sedate woman of forty-one. I was to confront her equally vividly time upon time when visiting Mary Beattie at Chesterfield and Anderson, Indiana---the same girl, same Juliette cap and white gown, same characterful profile, same dainty and cultured voice, same personality in every respect.

That to me is the big test of personality survival, to the utter demolition of fraud. No matter what medium I visited for such sessions, *identically the same girl unerringly materialized*. Moreover, time and again she made references to matters we had discussed or mentioned at earlier sessions when the medium was some other person.

Remember, this was occurring in my own house and library, in which no such physically living girl had been contained when the seance started.

She greeted her younger sister, Adelaide, who was present, and her brother, William, warning him, incidentally, to draw in his long legs from where he sat on the rug directly in front of her so that she wouldn't trip over them. Then she asked the loan of my handkerchief.

What on earth could she want with that? I stammered that I had no handkerchief but the honestly soiled one that I had used all day out at the plant in Noblesville. No matter, I must let her have it. She was going to do something with it I would never forget.

I handed across the wobbed square of cloth. Standing in the rug's center in plain sight of all guests, she pulled it taut across all four corners. Then grasping it by right and left edges she started a peculiar motion of seeming to throw it away from her. She called it "weaving."

Presently we were thunderstruck to note that the fabric was increasing in size. It was big as a towel. She continued to give it that outward-throwing motion, till it became so wide that she could no longer keep it taut between her hands. Rapidly it was increasing to the size of a bedsheet.

"Harriet, darling, how in the world are you contriving that?" I wanted to know. "I'm increasing the distances---by the powers of Thought---between each electron and proton in the linen atoms," she replied. "It's the way, too, that we weave clothing for those of you who come up onto Our Side naked when they've quitted their physical bodies for good."

She was commencing to pant from the exertion of it. And the fabric was so sizable and so filmy that it floated and billowed on the still air of the library where twenty spectators about three walls were feeling its gossamer edges against their faces. Suddenly she tossed her clutch of it in air, darted under it, siezed it in its center, and began doing a ballet dance under it---unfortunately wiithout music, but no less graceful for that.

Then she retreated to her original position before me, reversed her efforts, "wove" the gossamer fabric closer and closer to herself---and we watched it diminish in proportions. Back to bedsheet and towel size she worked it, back to the dimensions of a man's everyday handkerchief. Suddenly with a dexterous flip of her fingers she had seized it by opposite corners, twisted it and tied a knot in it. Knotted thus, she tossed it down upon my lap.

Later in the evening when the electric lights were on, I examined the knotted fabric. It was some sort of fourth dimensional knot she had tied. The diagonal handkerchief-corners were *inside* this knot. Try to tie a knot sometime with the corners enwrapped inside, and tell me how you did it.

I have that handkerchief and knot preserved to this moment among my psychical keepsakes, and the diagonal corners are still hidden inside it.

"We're going to have lots of good times together, you and I, Daddy, from here on out," she promised before leaving us. "It's the Beginning of something, wait and see!"

And how truly she spoke!

How many times I have confronted my eldest girl in the past sixteen years I cannot say accurately. When Mary Beattie was alive in nearby Anderson, I had only to get into my motorcar after arranging an appointment, and be with my beautiful child in half an hour. I am concluding the writing of the revised version of this book of an afternoon in early September, 1954, and I have met and conversed with her three times under Mrs. Candler's sponsorship since the first of this past June. During my political incarceration at the hands of the Red fellow-travelers in the

Administration during World War II, Mrs. Candler paid a visit to Seattle, Wash. One Sunday afternoon she went into trance on the platform of Silver Lodge, I am informed, and Harriet thus materialized, came to the edge of the dais, and talked to two hundred of my followers in a public address for a matter of twenty minutes. After expounding to them the exact significance of my temporary imprisonment and bidding them to be of good cheer, she disintegrated before their eyes. . .

"THAT is why I had to leave you, Daddy, when I was a baby, and come out here," she explained to me in a materialization last October, "to be able to work in association with you---you on the earth-side and I on the heavenly side---to demonstrate to a world of bewildered and error-tormented people that there is no such thing as Death."

And how she is doing it!

Yet always my mind reverts to a winter's morning in early 1914 when they had phoned from the hospital in Brattleboro for me to come over the twenty miles from Wilmington as fast as I could travel, if I wanted to see my child again alive. As I urged my panting horse up the western grade of Hogback Mountain, alone in the sleigh, I groaned aloud in my anguish, "Oh God, *don't* let her die! . . . *don't* let her die!" But I arrived too late.

That was forty-one years bygone, and yet it had been on Kismet's cards to happen, that the very Soulcraft work in which I am currently engaged in my sunset years could go forward. I am still in the mortal role this lazy September afternoon as I write,

yet Harriet is back with me and has been sixteen years continuously back with me. I have her piquant and distinctive voice on fifteen electronic tape recordings. Never have I gone to a psychical seance since that first appearance of hers in our Indianapolis library, that she has failed in coming out and conversing with me.

Are the dead alive, indeed! . . .

Chapter XVIII

SEEING SHOULD BE BELIEVING



HE SKEPTIC with orthodox reflexes, who never has witnessed such phenomena, is puzzled or caustic because he does not know what happens. How in the name of sound sense can persons who have vacated mortal vehicles---and these vehicles been interred in cemeteries---possibly "come back" in organic equipment and give every evidence of being alive in former aspects of personality? Likewise, if this sort of thing is actual, why haven't more people heard about it? The first is easier to answer than the second.

As you will have minutely delineated to you if you read more of the Soulcraft books treating with such paraphysics, the self-conscious soul of a human being---one hundred percent of human beings---is an indestructible and imperishable entity. Mortal life is a series of adventures in going into a physical body, using it for worldly purposes a given number of years, and "dying" out of it. But always it is the body that dies, not the soul-spirit. The soul of man is said in the Higher Realms to be a

spermatozoic emanation of God Himself, thus accounting for sentient life in each and every instance. As I'll relate to you in my next chapter, I have reason to believe that it was Mary Baker Eddy, beloved founder of the Christian Science Church, who made that clear to me. And this indestructible and imperishable soul comes back again and again in many bodies over vast numbers of years, in different lands and civilizations, until it perfects its moral attributes so that nothing is ever to be gained further by coming back. Thereat it goes on about its higher cosmic business. However, this happens---

The "thinking" of the soul-spirit is done in the intellectual mechanism of what is called the Light-Body, or the Pattern Body. This is the vehicle, operating at a higher frequency of atomic vibration, that keeps the atoms and molecules of the physical body in one consistent pattern throughout the earthly sojourn. Remember, the molecules of every person's physical body are completely renewed every seven years, but renewal or no, they always conform to the given design that keeps the physical organism recognizable from decade to decade. When the life-course is run, the business of "dying" is merely the process of this Pattern Body pulling out of the gross atomic body, and beginning to view life in its higher frequencies of Matter. Consciousness, I repeat, is carried in the mental equipment of this Light Body, or Design-Body, else none of us would ever remember what had happened to us on earth, after we got to "heaven" . . . Very good then. . .

This business of "spirit return", giving it to you in a nutshell, is merely achieving the stunt of finding something that will make the Light-Body or Design-Body tangible again in

consistencies of Matter peculiar to this physical or material plane on which we are now living. So-called "Mediums"---like Bertie Lilly Candler or Mary Beattie or a hundred others---are women born with an excessive amount of phosphorus and albumin in their physical systems which under the stresses of trance they can release and provide for the use of others. Such phosphorus and albumin in combination is known by the technical name of Ectoplasm. They release prodigious amounts of it out of the orifices of their physical bodies and it becomes available for persons who have entered onto the higher frequencies of substance-in-Matter to use to infiltrate their Light-Bodies or Design-Bodies and make them appreciable again to the frequencies of this earth-plane. There is little that is necromantic about it---certainly nothing diabolical, unless we want to call all chemistry diabolical. Calling anything one doesn't understand "deviltry" is, of course, nothing but the ruse of illiterates. What these "spirit" people truly do is "coat" themselves with a material substance provided from the medium, and when the coating is successfully consummated we say that a given "dead" person "materializes" .

THEY are emphatically *not* dead persons, of course, because there has never been any death. There is only metamorphosis from one rate of atomic vibration to a higher rate of atomic vibration. Higher rates of atomic vibration can be aware of lower rates but rarely the reverse. In other words, people on the more tenuous octaves of reality can be consciously aware of what is transpiring on the grosser and lower rates, but when they manifest it, usually the earth-people have an attack of heebie-

jeebies at the "supernatural" . . is there anything particularly supernatural about your turning your radio to get an orchestra in Cincinnati on a "low frequency rate" but a statesman talking in Europe on a short-wave frequency? The analogy is pat.

WE ARE finding now, in this age of radio and nuclear fission, that we have hoodwinked ourselves by saying that "if you can't measure it, it has no existence." There are all sorts and degrees of atomic vibration that you can't measure, and yet one may not be aware of the other, in that both can operate in the same spatial area without their phenomena conflicting.

That is what these materialized persons do. They operate in several spatial areas without their phenomena conflicting. They have never perished or gone off to the biblical heaven or hell when their bodies succumbed. They have simply pulled their soul-consciousness out of their defunct organic vehicles and operated on a higher velocity of atomic matter. When we ask them to present themselves to us in the seance room, we provide them with access to a coating or covering for their higher light-body atoms that make them recognizable to this earthly plane. Their Light-Bodies or Pattern-Bodies are just as real to them as our physical bodies are to us. By coating them with ectoplasm they become real to us also. But the people inside them are exactly the same individuals that they were when their vehicles weighed 150 pounds on this plane, had to eat three meals a day to "keep their strength up" and get six to eight hours sleep o' nights or find their nerves misbehaving.

It is a long and somewhat involved technical study, and I am giving it to you in a nutshell as I can, so that you may understand that there is little or no hocus-pocus in one of these seances when honestly conducted by an honest and competent medium. If you want more technical information about it, get the Soulcraft books *Star Guests* or *Beyond Grandeur*.

Actually it is the mass ignorance of *hoi polloi* that creates the phenomenon we call "grief" in this world. Truly informed people never grieve. Principally they lack anything to grieve *about*. Grief is a sign of ignorance---always remember that. If you know what is transpiring, you find nothing to feel sorry over or lament.

I am giving it to you as I have had it expounded minutely unto me. However, this proposition about so few knowing about what goes on, is another story. . .

IN THE first place, it stands without argument that there are not enough bona fide and competent mediums to go around. In the second place, traditional religion---constructed mostly on allegorical theory---has built up a great superstructure of theological conjecture about the Afterlife, and protected itself by announcing that anybody who challenges or disproves it is in league with the Devil. Naturally the illiterate communicant doesn't care to become classified as in league with the Devil, so whenever the phenomena of psychical research manifests itself, the orthodox communicant runs a mile. It is all very tragic; all very silly and childish and immature.

An age of Science is undoubtedly slated to put the blitz

on the whole of it. But not for a little time yet. Science must pave the way to make spiritual emancipation creditable. It jolts some people to be told that if the optic ensemble of the human eye could accommodate a light wave one tenthousandth of an inch longer than it does commonly at present, the whole aspect of the material world would alter. We would see scores of items and conditions that we do not see at present, whereas another score of items and conditions would become electrically invisible to us. Of course, becoming electrically invisible we would doubtless declare they had ceased to exist.

I am told on reliable scientific authority that if the common human eye could accommodate rays of ultra-violet length, *the race would suddenly become aware of the complete nonoccurrence of death.*

We should see the Light Bodies of those who have made the metamorphosis ahead of us, realizing they are often moving closely about us. It is their invisibility, owing to the enhanced rate of vibration at which they are moving atomically in their vehicle-composition, which makes us regard them as "gone". Their entire world of material reality is similarly composed of a vibratory frequency swifter than ours. So it is intangible to us. Not sensing it commonly, we contend it is ethereal. But we are constantly getting indications that it has a reality equal to our world of slower atomic frequencies, that we are visible to those inhabiting it although they are not visible under ordinary conditions to us. Conversely, they tell us that there are octaves of reality above theirs that are quite as incomprehensible to them as theirs is incomprehensible to us.

References to discoveries of Science should not overlook the possibility that a gaseous chemical now being experimented with, may crack the enigma of death for the lay rank-and-file, making all the "invisibles" in a room where such chemical is released, opaque to mortal sight. It is a sort of synthetic ectoplasm, I am told. But try to envision what such a chemical discovery would mean to orthodox theological concepts of the afterlife. When the "dead" can be located visibly by means of a peculiar gas released in a room or house, what of the exaggerated allegorical concepts of the departed dwelling in some far-off celestial locality populated by the angels and cherubim, or---without facetiousness---"asleep in Jesus"?

Still another school of scientific thought is considering the possibility that the ultra-violet vibratory rates of the "dead" may be slowed down to the rates of our mundane world by the same variety of resonating magnetic force that is said to materialize and propel today's Flying Saucers.

YOU note that this narrative is singularly clear of stories of phenomenal attributes distinguishing others. I have tried to make it the accounting of what I myself have had attested through the medium of my own senses. But during the twenty-six years of affairs which it covers, I most certainly have encountered plenty of persons whose abnormal eyesight permitted them to see into realms of the ultra-violet. Those twenty-six years have been replete with the presences in my affairs of individuals able to discern at a glance, and describe most minutely, the Light Bodies or Pattern-Bodies of presences not discernible to me or the man in the street.

In particular do I recall a naval commander in Norfolk, Va. who attended a week of lectures I gave there---a man of Scottish birth gifted with Second Sight---who described again and again personages who were visible to him as being on the platform with me during my delivered remarks. And those descriptions were so distinctive that I could identify the personalities thus invisible to my normal human Vision.

However, to get back to what we term the phenomena of the materializing seance-room. These graduated people in the swifter velocities of Time and Space gather into the apartment where a materializing seance seems to be imminent, and when the ruby illumination has supplanted the yellow actinic rays of light, stepped their more tenuous personal selves into the exuded ectoplasm derived from the medium's physical self. Forming themselves in the low-rate earthy pattern again by the direction of their Thought Powers, they walk out to us in their previous aspects of earthly reality, speak to us in voices that we recognize, and reminisce with us on activities together when they were constituted as our present selves. The layman thinks of the process as Spiritualism. It is only Spiritualism as we identify the necromantic activity by the religious cult of that name that openly accredits such phenomena in the religious manner. Those of us who have approached such wonders along the secular route, as I myself have done as described in these pages, no more consider the supernatural aspects of it as Spiritualism than the Spiritualists consider the super-natural aspects of radio, radar, or television as Spiritualism. What the Spiritualists seem to do truly

in practice, is furnish opportunity for *hoi polloi* to form contact through mediumistic professionals with relatives who have moved their habitat into the higher atomic frequencies, and their "religious" services take on the pattern of Questions-and-Answers intercourse with those on the next immediate octaves of consciousness. Is grandma suffering any more in her higher vibration, in result of the malady that carried her off? Should Uncle John sell the house lot on the corner of Main and Third Street or hold it for a higher price in the autumn? Is the young man who has started to "go" with Betsy Jane serious in his attentions? Fancy making a religious ritual of such personal trivia!

And yet the Spiritualists have come closer to Truth in appreciating the literalities of the post-mortem state than any other sect distinguishing the modern religious scene. Soulcraft, which is coming along behind Spiritualism, considers whatever is sacred in any vibration of matter on its merits as sacrosanct regardless of any vibratory phenomena---relegating the phenomena to a classification of its own, the mechanistic and not the philosophical.

"Seeing is believing" is the old folklore axiom generally accepted by the rank and file. Only it isn't. None of the five senses is more open to deception or delusion than the sense of vision. But when the unit of consciousness that has materialized, begins a sequence of reminiscing on experiences it may have undergone in the mortal body with one or more persons now present as spectators, what more absolute proof can be forthcoming of the authentic nature of the soul-spirit? Again and

again I have known this to be carried to an extent well-nigh incredible.

For instance, a week ago Saturday night Bertie Lilly Candler was visiting us when a motorcar drove up with some friends from Chicago. Prior to such arrival two or three hours before the seance, Bertie Candler had been unaware of their existence on this earth. She had by no means spent the intervening time picking their brains in any respect concerning their earlier lives or associations. Yet during the course of the evening's session, the nephew of one of the Chicago men---now a lad of seventeen, who had graduated into the higher frequency at the age of four---materialized and carried on a twenty-minute reunion with his uncle concerning parental relatives up in Chicago. This lad, whose name was Roger, expressed his dislike of a portrait of himself that hung beside a living room door in his parents' house of the present. In the course of their converse he voluntarily asked his uncle if he recalled how the latter blew smoke-rings for the small nephew's amusement as a tad, as well as rode him on his outstretched foot. But the real pay-off was a query about a small red sweater the uncle had bought for the boy the Yuletide before the boy "passed", coupled with an incident on a Chicago beach in winter when the small nephew had made off with the uncle's fur-lined gloves.

It is going rather far afield to rationalize such memories by declaring that the medium in trance "picks the spectator's subconscious mind" for such poignant memories. What shall be said sustaining this view, when a third person, mutually

acquainted with earthly relative and materialized spirit, joins in the conversation and asks questions, with the spirit giving answers that are unknown to anyone present, whose accuracy has to be determined from later investigation? Harriet, on many occasions has let fall remarks or comments about our family affairs that could have been in the subconscious minds of no one present, and the medium could not have been in prior possession of such bits of information because unaware of the existence of the parties involved.

As for the authenticity of identities thus manifesting, what shall be said of Walter Stinson of previous mention in the sparrow-hawk incident inside a living room, who materialized his hand and let 72 impressions of its fingerprints be taken, found to correspond in absolute accuracy with his fingerprints left behind on the toilet articles he had used just prior to his physical transition? The Boston Police Department vouched for such accuracies.

When the living dead can be fingerprinted and found to be infallibly identified by such scientific means, where does it leave the orthodox or the skeptics?

It is time we awakened to the terrific potencies in what we have been discussing for nearly three hundred pages.

The "dead" are very much alive, and we have their fingerprints to attest it. What more can we demand, in all common sense?

Chapter XIX

BEYOND GRANDEUR



ND SO here I am, at approximately sixty-five, looking back on twenty-six years of this out-of-this-world career in which I have been living in two worlds at once. Death as a finality has gone from my philosophy. I went to sleep that long-ago night in my Altadena bungalow to penetrate before morning into a higher reality of Etheria and return to this physical world and take up the burden of trying to convince the bereaved and grief-stricken that they are lamenting needlessly. Their beloved relatives have not "gone" anywhere; they have merely changed the conditions of their living and functioning.

But along with such assurance I have cultivated the capabilities of my Inner Ear to follow the tacit thought-speech of those in such changed condition, and my converse with them has become continuous. I took down a 6,000-word communication on my typewriter from Ari, one of my outstanding mentors, no later than yesterday morning---since I have written the foregoing chapter of this book. I mention it to refute the claims of the skeptics that as one ages, his Inner Faculties

gradually fall into disuse. The Inner Faculties do nothing of the sort. They sharpen and strengthen as one is faithful in the exercise of them. This I know from personal evidence as well.

I have thus recorded from such mentor-speech something like 11,300 typed pages of higher-life intelligence, all of it faithfully preserved, indexed, and bound for instant reference. No question have I ever put to those so communicating to me without a sensible and rational answer forthcoming. And this goes equally for questions addressed to many of my communicators when they have materialized before me in temporary flesh. There is no evasion, no equivocation. If they possess the information I desire, I get it forthwith.

So the great Soulcraft Enlightenment has grown up around such converse.

A million-and-a-half words of treatises on every conceivable cosmic enigma, three hundred thousand words of strictly sacred material---long since memorialized in the *Golden Scripts*---twelve volumes of *Soulscripts* for laymen students, something like twenty-one volumes of my own composition, of which this book which you are holding in your hand is one, . . . truly a great literature unparalleled in delineations of Mysticism has come into existence, and I can term it such because outside of the last twenty-one volumes mentioned I have functioned only as amanuensis and recorder. There are, in my files, literally thousands of letters from scholars who have examined Theosophy, Rosicrucianism, Swedenborgianism, Spiritualism and Christian Science, who unreservedly pronounce the Soulcraft writings as going far in excess of these in quality,

quantity, and profundity. By 1930 I had abandoned all further work for the popular American periodicals and was devoting my time the clock around to the zealous compiling of this great mass of erudition from life's higher octaves.

As I believe I have stated earlier in these chapters, I had closed my bungalow in California and disposed of it, in March of 1929, moving my effects to Manhattan and taking an apartment at 56 West 53rd Street--between 5th and 6th Avenues. Here in three rooms on the second floor of a "brownstone walk-up" I labored throughout 1930 and 1931, beginning the transcribing of the ineffable *Golden Scripts*. In these three rooms too, I had experienced my first mediumistic experiments. The celebrated "vacating" medium, George Wehner, author of the book *A Curious Life*, made an errand of visiting the little group of investigators I gathered around me, each Friday night. George would compose himself, sink into trance, go deliberately out of his body and leave his organism to be utilized by whomsoever wished to converse audibly with me from the higher levels of life and consciousness.

Joseph Conrad was the first of these, as celebrities, who thus made himself known to me. Accompanying Conrad on one occasion was Robert Louis Stevenson. These two declared they were thus honoring me because of our common devotion to the writing craft. Conrad had told me that he had been interested in my stories of Vermont small-town life published in the English magazines before his 1923 demise. However, throughout the years covered by this narrative, my entertainment of celebrities has been rare. I have always held reservations on the type of

psychical operative who seems to form contact out of hand with all the famous persons of any era, chiefly, I suspect, because accuracy of identification is so difficult. Perhaps an excessive modesty on my part has been responsible, but it has seemed to me that outstanding great souls would have no more reason for looking me up after their passing than they might have had before it. I had several times been apprised during the writing of the heavyweight book on Constitutional matters, *Nations-in- Law*, which ran to two volumes, that none other than Abe Lincoln was aiding me with the diction but I never had physical evidence that it was so. I had known through Detroit friends that Mr. Henry Ford, the auto magnate, a profound esoteric scholar during his lifetime, had retained the exclusive services of an outstanding medium to enable him to counsel with Mr. Lincoln in the management of his gargantuan motor empire, and that Lincoln appeared to Mr. Ford in materialized form constantly. I have talked with reliable and reputable persons who were present at some of the sessions. I understand it was because of this association that the highest priced automobile made by Mr. Ford, bore the Great Emancipator's name.

So the great sessions of my life---in Manhattan, Washington, D. C., Asheville, N. C., and Indianapolis---came and passed with varying degrees of fortune but with sales of these psychically transcribed books growing to extraordinary proportions and finding markets all over the world, when in October of 1953 came the climactic contact in a dramatic and kaleidoscopic career. The gracious personage identifying herself as *Mary Baker Eddy walked into my life!*

THIS unexpected, unsolicited, and altogether history-making advent of the founder of the great Christian Science faith into my personal affairs came on the 14th of March, 1953, and no history of why I have ample cause for accepting that the physically dead are consciously and spiritually alive would be complete without making the details of record. Remember that in what I now relate, putting the capstone on these memoirs, I have a great group of reliable witnesses to substantiate my statements. More than that, *I have continuous rolls of electronic recording tapes containing the celebrated lady's voice at all sessions of her materialized appearances.* These I have duplicated exactly and placed the copies in hands of trusted friends across many States, to assure their preservation. Fifty years from this present writing, the assertedly literal voice of Mrs. Eddy on recording tape 44 years after her retirement from the fleshly vehicle, may be hailed as a major advance in scientific proof of survival. We shall see.

The materialization of this celebrated woman had been prefaced by a visit one February evening of my head legal counsel to the Noblesville publishing plant to consult me on secular matters. He remained to chat informally about the work of far-flung enlightenment that Soulcraft was achieving among the spiritually circumscribed. I had long since collected all the Master Transcripts of the Elder Brother received up across a quarter century, and issued them in bible format. They had run to 273 chapters in a volume of 844 pages, which had gone out to over ten thousand spiritual leaders not only in America but foreign countries.

Attorney George A. Henry of Indianapolis had been my counsel almost continuously in legal matters since 1935, winning many important law cases for me. Enjoying an unblemished reputation among his Indiana colleagues, he had been a zealous student of Mrs. Eddy's Christian Science writings since his return from military service with the U. S. forces in World War I.

"I have a strange feeling," Mr. Henry declared, "that you should give serious consideration to doing a book at an early date that bridges the gap between Mrs. Eddy's *Science & Health* and the *Golden Scripts*. After all, there is startling polarity between the tenets of Christian Science and Soulcraft. Christian Science provides health and physical well-being for the student of spiritual matters on the earth-side; Soulcraft continues the instruction in higher octaves upon the ethereal side. Just file my suggestion away in your mind and see what confirmations you may get in your clairaudient work with your higher mentors."

I promised to do so, but overburdened with publishing responsibilities as I was in the early spring of 1953, the chances of authoring such a volume then seemed remote. In fact, I had almost dismissed it from my mind when the evening of March 14, 1953 arrived. Shortly before midnight on that date I was working alone in my writing studio at the plant, when in the eerie silence of the publishing premises I was distinctly interrupted at my editorial work on VALOR, by a feminine voice seeming to call me softly. .

"William!" this semi-audible voice appealed. "Oh, William!" It seemed to be speaking in a half-whisper from ten or twelve feet behind me and slightly above my head.

"Yes!" I cried, half-aloud. "Who's speaking?"

"Mary Glover," the answer came at once.

One of the quaint aspects of this extraordinary liaison was the fact that not until my midnight visitor made passing reference to the tenets and affairs of the Christian Science mother-church did I "place" the name Mary Glover. It had been the first married name of Mary Baker Eddy.

I could "feel" the powerful feminine presence just at my shoulder after a moment, and it left me fazed with astonishment and shock. As the charming and cultured accents went along, repeating Mr. Henry's suggestion about the proposed book, I cried, "How does it happen that you, who publicly repudiated Spiritist contacts in your much-emphasized chapter against Spiritualism in *Science & Health*, come to me like this and so address me?"

"I was wrong in that repudiation," the Voice declared, "and am paying grievously for it. I have found, since gaining to this Higher Side of Consciousness, that communication between the planes is unquestionably scientific." I have the same statement since recorded in her audible voice on electronic tapes when she materialized in my studio on October 13th, confirming all of the converse in which we indulged this memorable March night.

"Would it be permissible," I asked her after a time, "to put paper in my typewriter and make of permanent record the things you are telling me, for reading and studying later in the week or month?"

"By all means," she most graciously assented. And when I had prepared the paper, she went back to the opening of her converse and gave me the whole from the beginning.

The subject is of such engrossing interest to the millions of Christ Scientists throughout the earth, that I deem it expedient to reprint this monograph in the pages now following, to absolve myself of any charges of capitalizing upon Christian Science in the efforts which its celebrated founder seems purposefully making to extend Christian Science as she is able, into Soulcraft.

Mrs. Eddy's Introductory Address:

DEAR BROTHER IN THE FAITH:



IT IS excellent that you hear my voice, for I have much in which to instruct you. We are both Children in the Spirit. That is, it is the care of God that we both perform excellently, you on your earth-plane and I in my heavenly plane---for compared to yours of the present, this plane indeed is heavenly.

Now what I want to say to you in this initial paper is this: We have great common cause as the foundational structure of our efforts. I do not think you are going to be permitted to go too far out of season with your economic precepts until the spiritual foundations have been clarified. You will know this as you advance.

When I headed the earthly sect of those that today are recognized as Christian Scientists, I had a very devoted end in view. I wished to help grief-stricken and blinded humanity out of its serious faults of perception about eternal matters, especially as they applied to current affairs of the presiding life. I had no

idea that my own teachings were going quite so far as they did go before I finished.

I have been assiduously employed in our Dear Lord's work ever since the infancy of my soul, and shall continue to be so employed. But there are still strictures to be overcome. For instance, I had been seriously purblind all my mortal days respecting eternal life, or life beyond and above Mortality. I "could not see it," to use that term, because my time and attention were applied solely to aiding persons in the practical--and usually ailing---circumstance. I am above that restriction now. I wish I might declare to you, dear Brother in Christ, all that I now see and know, respecting the true and correct nature of this so-called After-Life. . you would be astonished if you could behold but a corner of it.

Now, however, it is not that I wish to superimpose any form of Spiritism upon so-called Christian Science. What I would like to see achieved is the extension of Christian Science as an earth-study of Matter and Materialisms into realms of the psychically abstruse, if I may use that term. I am not a Spiritist in the popular sense of the term. I am not a therapeutic religious teacher, even. I am a contrite and devout woman who wishes to transfer to my brothers and sisters on the earth-plane an agenda of what I believe to be true in respect to the eternal survival of the human spirit for greater and greater performings in flesh and out of it as the age progresses into the Millennia of Beauty. Let us seek to work in liaison to such end, will you, please? I do not ask your fealty. I do not propose to attempt converting you to any of the doctrines I propounded at divine instruction while on the earth-plane. I merely wish to convey to you as a person in the God-Work with myself, that

which I should much like to have conveyed to my earthly disciples in the flesh. If you can find some way to do that, as by a published book or otherwise, you will earn my deathless gratitude.

FOR YOU SEE, I made certain errors of concept while in flesh and doing my teaching.

Privately I conceived of God as a Personage. And Holy Spirit in the God-sense is all the persons who have ever lived or ever will live, coagulated into a gesture that exhibits the God Purpose. It is likewise all the other manifestations of earthly phenomena that enter into the material or mental scene.

It is the question of a shortage of time "before the Night cometh" that I want to be specific about, and as articulate as I can be, in this my first written communication to you.

Shall we proceed? . .

Now you are not going to be shortsuited or let down in your plans for aiding to bring in the Kingdom, any more than is necessary to guide you into paths of correct performings for our Dear Lord. But there are principles you must be aware of, as a result of transcribing the beloved Golden Speakings of our Loved One.

First you must be aware, every hour of the day and night, and all moments in between, that He never for one instant relaxes in His care or concernment for you and over you. For always recall that your work is His work, and *vice versa*. He's more accurately aware of your need than you are in your own right. But you must also do this---

Acknowledge when matters do not terminate or proceed as you envision them for what you call Success in your efforts, that you are being prepared for a colossal task to begin in the very near future, and obstacles are really being *removed* from your path instead of placed in it. I can assure you of this, my dear brother, as I can affirm nothing else. So be it.

Now as to time. You have literally "all the time there is," remember that, remember it. True, worldly events are due to mature to a set and positive schedule, but not the golden cure for the hearts of harassed men and women. Those are not matters of fixed mechanical moments, in turning themselves, or yielding themselves, to His Grace. Remember, the great commander of Israel, Moses, never was allowed to do more than glimpse the Promised Land, and yet He by no means felt sorry for himself in consequence. *He would be on hand in spirit when His people did enter the Promised Land*, so what difference did it truly make to him whether or not he happened to go there in physical flesh?

You have been called to complete my work, or the work that stemmed from my pen, in a greater aspect in this generation than you realize. Because you are given divine keys of understanding to that which was so abstruse to so many whom I tried to instruct in the Heavenly pathways. No matter. You will do it because I recognize that it is on the Cards of Accomplishment already. Be you aware and positive of this. You can be aware and positive of much that is of lesser consequence. Why can you not be equally set as to will-power on this last?

You are not to think I wish my books or autobiographical material rewritten. . nothing of the sort. I have no desire to see

anything I have left behind on the plane of earth disturbed intellectually. . that is not my point in addressing you..

I WOULD LIKE TO SEE A CONTINUATION OF MY LOGIC CARRIED TO THE POINT OF MAGNIFICATION OF THE NEXT IMMEDIATE WORLD or shadow of Consciousness, so that Christian Science presents a well-rounded picture of the entire life errand, from the start of the Soul to ultimate glorification. Use my name and writings as much as you please, but lift consideration of their import onto the next worthy plane of intellectual effort and you will not be proceeding far wrongly. Don't try to tell what I failed to say. Tell what I might have said had I gained to a broader and loftier perspective of all equations entering into the Consciousness Exhibit and Performance.

Now I am going to withdraw for a time, but I do wish you would entertain my suggestions and see what we can make out of them. I will correct you if you interpret what I tried to express, incorrectly.

Do the thing you feel motivated to do, as you feel motivated to do it and rest assured you will not be falling into much serious error. I shall try to give you as much of my time and counsel as you may command by your attention to the principles involved.

And now for the evening, I say temporary farewell to you. In our Dear Lord's name let us work in unison and see what matures from the combination of mental effort. .

PEACE, LOVE AND HEALING,
(ETERNITY)

I WAS properly overwhelmed at recording such converse. Particularly was I overwhelmed at one statement the lady had just made, that I was "called to complete" her work. Well did I appreciate what havoc might result in the ranks of Christian Scientists who had long-since deified the lady and would tolerate no suggestions that in her worldly writings she could have "made a mistake." As well imply that Christ Jesus Himself, in the Sermon on the Mount, could have "made mistakes." But the phenomena were happening and I could but bide my time and see whether the whole thing proved up or contradicted itself.

On October 14, 1953, Mrs. Candler drove up to Indiana from Miami for another week-end visit with us and gave us a sitting at 8:30 p.m. Judge my stupefaction when a commanding and personable materialization issued from behind the drapes, announced herself audibly as Mary Baker Eddy, and made reference to the clairaudient converse she had previously had with me when I transcribed the foregoing. I was not twenty inches distant from the soul-spirit of the great founder of the Church of Christ Scientist apparently. The interesting feature of the materialization to me was, that I had not disclosed to Bertie Lilly Candler the details of the clairaudient session that had preceded the materialization by something like seven months.

The alleged Mrs. Eddy's remarks on this substantiated appearance encompassed the following statements---

"I came to you the other evening, and it was a privilege to make the contact. . and I would like you to put this in print and

I shall bring you many messages. . I was a medium when I was on the earth-plane. . the people of those days in Boston were not ready for the truth, and they called it fortune-telling, and so, I changed the form of the intelligence into the doctrine of Christ Scientist. But since coming Out Here in transition, I see many mistakes. After entering into this New World and looking back upon the space of time upon the mortal plane, I realize many mistakes. . I should have acquainted my public with the fact that communication and survival is a fact. Because we *live* out here, and it's beautiful in our world. I want the people to know that we do come back. The Church is doing a great amount of good. It's reaching a multitude of people. But I want them to know that *communication between the two worlds is scientific!* . . proven by our return. It has to be possible, because if one Man survived the grave, and returned, as Jesus did, all men do. And I will come and help you with your manuscript, and we'll have a beautiful story. . but *you* have to write the book . . "

THERE was more to her converse on this epochal evening, but this was the genesis of the book that I did write, *Beyond Grandeur*.

I spent many evenings between the 13th of October and May the 8th in direct mental contact with this superb spirit that I identified and accepted as Mary Baker Eddy. That great volume, *Beyond Grandeur*, was the result of the collaboration between us. Already it is a bestseller. I finished the typing of it, put it upon the linotype, and had printed it to page 214, when Bertie Lilly Candler---totally unaware of what had transpired since her last

visit---visited Noblesville again and gave us another seance. Out of the cabinet in due order of event stepped this superb soul-spirit that I have accepted as Mary Eddy, and commented as follows---"I am delighted to come and greet you, my friends! . . ." My partner, Miss Henderson, immediately put the question, "Do you like the Chief's book?"

To this, the materialized spirit replied---

"It is the message that I gave him." Then turning to me she said, "I gave you the words," and I interrupted her to ask directly, "So that *is* your book?" meaning *Beyond Grandeur*. She responded positively, "That is my book!" . .

I said, "Good enough, I just wanted that confirmation. I didn't know but some of the things I'd said in there had been contradictory to some of the things you might have preached in life." Thereupon Mrs. Eddy favored us with the following homily—

"Probably some of the things *would* be contradictory to the things I taught in life, because when you make the change of Transition called Death, you see things as from a different picture and at a different angle. Then we change our viewpoints and our teachings in many ways. I was a medium in earth-life as I have told you many times before. And I want the world to know that I have had to return to give to the people of the world the message of glad tidings of survival, that we *live* Out Here, and that I denied the great psychic force that worked through me to prove to humanity that man survived the grave and to stand on truth. . I denied the truth that was in my soul. And I have had to work it out, and that is why I have returned to bring a message to the people.

"There is good in all religions. But we will not have the religions, we will have the *Truth* of the Word of Wisdom that will lead mankind out of darkness into light. Truth will stand forever. Truth will release your soul from cares and burdens. It will give you a great understanding of the principles and laws of life. It will lead you into the great things that are spiritual. When you have found the Kingdom, all else will be added unto you."

I said, "I know. Many of those passages in *Beyond Grandeur*, I'm very happy to hear that you approve of. I wondered if they were correct."

"Yes," Mary said, "they *are* correct! . . And I want the people who read from page to page and from cover to cover to know it has been my message that has been sent through you, the teacher, to give to mankind upon the earth-plane." Such was the spoken and audible dialogue of her second visit with me. The third occurred on the 13th of July---

"GOOD evening, friends!" she announced herself. .
"Mary Baker Eddy! . . A privilege to come to greet you, my children. (To WDP) My beloved William! . . for I will be Mary Baker Eddy to you, and you William to me. I want to thank you for the great work which you have finished---or not finished--- which we are going on with, because we have a great work to do. Our work is never finished, and if I could have gone on while in flesh, and the peoples of the world had understood the great Truth of immortality of the soul, I would not have had to come back like this. My work was *not* finished. The things that I denied, I have to pick up the threads and give the truth. "

I said, "And now, Mary, *how* are we going to convince the public of this fact?"

"It makes no difference," she replied, "whether we convince them or not. Did the Christ convince all peoples when He was in earth-life?"

"Well, He has, in the last two thousand years convinced an awful lot of them," I argued.

"He has convinced many souls," she agreed conditionally, "but has not reached all mankind."

"No, He hasn't reached *all* mankind."

"Neither will *our* work reach into the hearts of *all* people, but it will fall upon the souls of many."

"I was just wondering about the messages you gave us the other night---*how* are we going to get that across to the people that you want to reach? If you have any suggestions that would help, I would love to hear you tell me what I ought to do."

"I want to say this to you. . within their souls there will be an arousing. . and a desire will be created within their beings, so that they will wish to read between the lines of the book, and from one to another the seeds will be planted in their consciousness, and one by one as sheep they will find their fold and their leader."

"Well, in other words, it is a proposal of just going along and letting them discover it."

"They will discover it."

"You think they will?"

"Positively! They're already speaking of it."

"They are?"

"Oh, positively! Many of them are very much aroused and confused. Could it be possible? And then they realize and know what the communications of their being with the higher forces have meant to them in the silence and meditation of their souls and light breaks on them. There is something beyond that comes forth to help them." Then she turned her specific attention to Attorney Henry who was present and listening. To him she said, "I want to thank you, my brother, for giving the power of thought and word to my beloved William, of whom I speak, and who has found my message sent through into the pages that you inspired him and helped him and told him to go on with. Would you understand that?"

George understood, and so indicated. Mary continued---

"Because it has been wonderful. And to you. . you know the truth of Divine Love, don't you?"

I interrupted, "In other words, Mary, were *you* the one who inspired the idea for *Beyond Grandeur* in George's mind?"

"I did. You must remember this: through the Divine Mind of the Christ there is always a channel open that we can work through. We reach the channel that is opened to bring forth the message. We must have a channel, a clear channel, to work through, and you (WDP) were the only one whom I could find on the mortal plane with a high state of consciousness that I could reach through, that you could hear my voice, that I could tune in with you and bring forth the message to the peoples of the world."

I said, "That's quite a compliment, . . thank you." After moment's reference to a recent Christian Science visitor from Boston, I asked, "Do you want us to communicate with any of the heads of the Mother Church?"

"I will impress him," Mary answered concerning the visitor. "You can tell him that I was here. And through the Divine Love and through communication between the two worlds, we continue to live out here and we do not die. And we continue our work in the ethereal form, out upon the high planes of expression to reach back and help others. I was inspired when I was on the earth-plane. I was a medium. The people of those times were not ready for the truth and they would persecute and condemn, and I went into the study and I came forth with Christ Scientist, Christian Science, the development of the soul and mind. Because the soul and mind are part of God, the Christ Consciousness, isn't it right?"

A physician who was present, interrupted to ask, "Will you help *me*, Mrs. Eddy?"

She responded, "I shall help all the peoples of the world. All peoples of the world are my brothers and my sisters."

My partner in the Soulcraft work, sitting at my left, inquired, "Mrs. Eddy, would you see or talk a moment with the doctor's wife?"

"I would be happy to see your friends," the Superior Lady answered. Then a moment later she addressed the wife, "You, my child, are in the state of consciousness of not understanding the great laws of communication between the two worlds. You do not appear to know, and understand the great laws of life as your companion. But in the future, and through the reading-matter and the meditations of your soul, you will realize the spark of divinity within you and that we move on, out of one house into another. The mortal flesh falls but the spirit rises and goes on, and I come in my ethereal form to bless all of you at

this time. Blessings of the Divine Christ of love upon all of you!" She paused. Half a dozen persons were then summoned up to meet the famous visitor, and she overlooked none of them. Finally turning to me, she said---

"You have a great work to do, William."

I said, "But what I most wish is your cue as to whether I'm doing it right."

Thereupon she gave voice to this: "You know, we should pick up the threads that were left broken when I came to This Side of Life, and we should have a school, a teaching of the fundamental truths of the immortality of the soul of man and the development therein. We will not take from our Church of Christ Scientist, but we will only add to it, because of life eternal. "

One of the ladies standing close by, said, "Mr. D---'s aunt is a practitioner in California, Mrs. Eddy," referring to a man-friend on her left.

"Oh, that is very splendid," the Supernal Lady said. "She is probably doing great work."

"Yes," said the first speaker, "in a State Mental Hospital, Mrs. Eddy."

"Healing?" Mary suggested.

"Yes."

"You know, my children of earth, there's healing of the body and healing of the *mind*, through the Christ Light of our Lord. . May the blessing of Divine Love that is ever present be with you, and I will go on and help all of you. . Good evening! . . "

Orthodox critics who rant purblindly about such appearances being of Satan, should be present and hear the great sanctity in which such blessings are uttered. Truly have I

heard more devoutness, more piety, more solicitude and sacred compassion evidenced by such higher callers at these sessions than I have heard in any churches. Christ Himself once remarked to similar critics on the absurdity of Satan's house being thus divided against itself by such pronouncements.

Then on August 27th of this year of 1954, Mary came to us a fourth time and said in the same reverent and somewhat melancholy tone---

"MARY BAKER EDDY!"..

I said, "Good evening, Mary!"

"Again it's a privilege to stand among you. . I want to speak to him," indicating my attorney who was again present, "Henry."

I said, "Oh, George! . . Mrs. Eddy would like to talk to *you*."

George arose from his chair and came up within twenty inches of the figure robed in bejeweled white. He stood stiffly owing to a foot injury he had suffered many years ago. "This is Mary Baker Eddy," she repeated. "I come with my blessing. And through the Divine Mind of the Christ may His healing inflow and come and make you well."

Then turning back to me, she went on, "you must always remember, in *Science & Health*, it is Mind over Matter. But I have changed many of my theories and beliefs since the Transition called death. Because I have found many things that I left undone. Now you are picking up---and have to tuck in---the threads for me because I need a channel to work *through*. And you were my inspiration and my channel that I chose to work

through. And we have other work that we're going to do. We'll go on with *Science & Health*, and our Church. But our people are going to be quite confused in trying to understand the great laws of Spirit through the Divine Consciousness and the Light and illumination of the Divine Christ. I want you to go on. I want to help all your helpers to find the great consciousness of understanding of Truth, of immortality of the soul of man, because we only move *on* and *out* . . out here into the Land of the Living where there is no more parting, and the light of Spirit to guide you on your way. Bless you, my people! We must tie the threads and weave the links of chains together that they may never more be broken. Because links of the Golden Chain of Love and Wisdom will guide the human race into the New Age and into the New Time of the Great Spirit of the Risen Christ . . I want you all to work together for the great cause which we represent from this side of life, through the channel which I have come to work through. I want you to go on and lay your plans, and let us build our temple, and let us have our school and our lessons of life to help others, that the Light may shine on the weary peaks of the world that life is eternal and that God is a loving God. Through the Divine Mind of the Christ may He bless you all . . Good-night!"

THUS the four materialized appearances of this Supernal Spirit Lady who has made herself known to me as I have described. Nothing that has occurred in Soulcraft since its inception surpasses it.

Remember that almost nightly from October to May, I conversed with her by the Inner Voice and heard her respond to me through the Inner Ear. Before I had thus formed this platonic attachment, I had assumed her to be a some-what autocratic lady pedant with a trace of aloofness for other denominations, given almost to what I might call religious snobbery. In those evenings of writing *Beyond Grandeur* in her company, I discovered her compassionate, magnetic, super-intelligent and altogether charming. Small wonder, I frequently remarked to friends, that during her life in this earth-world she had acquired three husbands. Supposedly eighty-nine or thereabouts when she passed on in 1910, she has since grown back toward her prime---or is in the process of growing back. She appears to be in her fifties at present, easily recognizable for her likeness to the celebrated portrait painted of her by a grateful Howard Chandler Christie for her healing of him before her Transition. But what an irony that the anti-spiritualistic instruction she gave to her communicants throughout her life now works to sustain a barrier between them and herself in these years of the overwhelming success of the Church of Christ Scientist. The tragedy of her postmortem years is this self-imposed insulation from them. She declares that she "knew better" when she wrote as she did, but that she wrote earnestly enough in her desire to keep her people from indulgence in promiscuous seances with nonspiritual discarnate entities.

It is as dear an instance of the karma that is so prominently delineated in Soulcraft as anything that has come beneath my observation.

How long it can maintain---this alienation---presents an intriguing problem. I have covenanted to do all that lies within my power to aid her to rectify it, and we shall note what it brings forth.

But this is not a volume about Karma; it is a volume reviewing my outstanding experiences of the past two and a half decades that have resulted in my conviction that Death as a reality is utter fallacy. . make of it what you will. At any rate, in any ideological controversy with Christian-Science orthodoxy, I would seem to have the founder of that mighty institution in my corner, as I am in hers.

The outcome may be history-making.

We shall see.

Chapter XX

“TILL WE MEET AGAIN---”



O I say, what about it?

Is there evidence that the “dead” are alive, or is there not? Of course you can reply that the evidence as I have described it in this book appears convincing, but after all it is *my* evidence and not yours. Had the same things happened to you that I contend have happened to me, then the doubt might be in my mind and not in yours. Nine out of ten people declare, “Let me sit in on one of those materializing sessions, and see, and talk with, someone I have known in life, and I’ll believe.” The odd thing I confront a hundred times a year is the fact that precisely such sight and speech occurs and yet those people by no means believe. It must have been some sort of trick or illusion, they will tell you, or if it were not trickery or illusion, then it was possibly a demonstration by the Devil himself. You would be astonished to realize what numbers of otherwise rational and normal people are more ready to accredit the existence and demonstration of

the Devil than they stand ready to accredit the existence and demonstration of their beloved relatives and friends indicating their existence on the higher planes of life. Again and again I have sought to explain to my own satisfaction what can be operating in the mental processes of such doubters, or rather, accreditors of Satan? I have come to the conclusion that they by no means believe in Satan literally, but that karmic complexes are operating that they can by no means ignore.

Reluctantly I am compelled to decide that insufferable human *vanity* lies at the bottom of much of it.

People don't care to admit that something important has been going on of which they have been kept in woeful ignorance. The same chagrin assails them as afflicted the Scotsman who was persuaded to bet a shilling on a horse race and to his stupefaction won two pounds. "In the devil's name," cried Sandy, "how lang has this been hoppening?" Then again there is the chagrin arising from realization that some previous teacher or mentor, in whom they had every cause to repose confidence, may have instructed them wrongly. This apparently is Mrs. Eddy's predicament as being such previous teacher or mentor. I had it illustrated the day following one of the sessions I have lately set down, when a life-long Christian Scientist who had been present got me into a corner and asked in a whisper---

"Please tell me *what* it was that I witnessed last night?"

I asked, "You mean the Eddy manifestation?"

He qualified, "I saw a woman's figure substantial enough in your study. The features resembled Mrs. Eddy's as we have come to know them from paintings of her in life. The voice that came *from* the figure declared it was Mary Eddy speaking and

talked penitently and devoutly. But Mrs. Eddy told us without reservations in *Science & Health* that there is no such thing as spirit-return, so *what was I looking at and hearing?*"

"Didn't you hear her say plainly enough that she erred in earth-life in writing that there was no spirit-return or communication?"

"Yes, I heard it. But if I concede that Mary Eddy erred in a single statement anywhere in *Science & Health*, I've got to concede she might have erred in a hundred statements? And I can't do that."

"Why can't you do that?"

"Unless I accept that Mary Eddy was infallible in all the statements about Mind and Matter that she uttered in earth-life, I might as well throw all Science overboard. Who am I to say which of her earthly statements were true and which were in error?"

"It wouldn't occur to you, would it, that plain self-chagrin might be working in you? . . . that you hate to acknowledge you listened to a teacher who wasn't divinely infallible?"

"But Truth has to be infallible or it isn't *Truth*."

"Granted. But can't you grasp that your deification of Mrs. Eddy, as being synonymous with Truth, is your weakness, not hers? The lady herself is big enough in character to admit she made a blunder in that one item of spirit-return or communication. She is evidently---somewhat pathetically---rectifying it. Shouldn't we honor her for that integrity and not damn a great book of hers otherwise because on Page 70 she wrote some inaccurate pronouncements? Are you yourself a congenital liar and not to be trusted in any of your statements

because you gave your business partner some incorrect information about the stock market last week that lost him five thousand dollars?"

"I am not Mary Baker Eddy," returned my friend stiffishly. "I'm merely a follower of hers who took the entire volume of her principles for granted. If I've got to throw the chapter on Spiritualism and Animal Magnetism out of *Science & Health*, I've got to toss away the whole book---because I'm incapable of judging what otherwise might be more 'mistakes' . . ."

"Then your own discretions and discriminations don't enter into it?"

"I'm not capable of having any---not in religious matters."

"Why do you imagine you were given a mind?"

"I wasn't given a mind to argue something of which I'm humanly ignorant. So I say to you, what was it I saw with my eyes and heard with my ears last night? I certainly did see and hear something, but Mary Eddy herself said there was no such thing. So where does that leave *me*?"

"It leaves you," I answered, "in the somewhat incongruous position of believing statements she made in print in earth-life but doubting the statements she made vocally in ethereal life."

"I'm not persuaded it was Mrs. Eddy who made the vocal statements."

"Very good, who was it?"

"I don't know. It could be someone impersonating her, couldn't it?"

"To what purpose?"

"To destroy Christian Science."

"Don't be ridiculous, man. How could the elimination of those two chapters in *Science & Health* 'destroy' Christian Science in its profounder and more constructive recommendations of the powers of Mind over Matter?"

My visitor couldn't, or wouldn't, reply. The fact was, his intellect had been sealed up across a number of years against accrediting anything as reality that couldn't be measured, and he didn't propose to unseal it at fifty-six.

Sealed intellects! . . . Why is Religion the only field in which the intellect must be sealed and such sealing adulated? Supposing the scientist manifested the same sealed intellect, or the astronomer?

Why go on with it?

LIFE insurance statistics inform us that a person "dies" physically in the United States every eight seconds day and night the clock around. Each bids final adieu to the physical vehicle that has permitted him such characteristic expression since the doctor spanked the breath of life into his infantile organism and he issued forth into a consciousness of worldly reality afresh. He carries in his soul-self his load of earthly memories---not to mention sense of identity---his spiritual attainments and even the design-pattern of his physical appearance. If he did not carry his thinking apparatus in his soul-self, even the pentecostal plan of Salvation advocated theologically would have no meaning, since eternal rewards or punishments would then have no significance to him. Why reward or punish a soul for something that is utterly oblivious to his mental ensemble? If you concede the continuation of the personality in the pentecostal salvation

program, you're forced to acknowledge it in areas of consciousness to which the soul-self does arouse in likelier orientations of Truth.

My own conclusions and convictions after twenty-six years of exploring and experimenting in octaves higher than the mortal have it that thinking and reasoning---which entails all the phenomena of remembering---are strictly attributes of the spirit personality, and the bodily brain has little to do with it at all. The bodily brain has been responsible, true enough, for conveying sense-impressions of the material world to that spirit intellect, but the Design-Body is the real repository for them of permanence. If this were not true, the 17-year-old boy, Roger, who materialized in my studio a week ago Friday night could not have carried on a running conversation with his Uncle Lawrence about events in the family in Chicago that occurred back in 1937. "Do you remember the little red sweater with the turtleneck you bought me, Uncle Lawrence, that I was so proud of?" . . . these were voluntary interrogations on Roger's part and his uncle as readily acknowledged them. As for the Light-Body or Design-Body being the exact prototype in a higher atomic frequency of the physical self, how about Walter Stinson offering seventy-two replicas of his hand containing his accurate fingerprints, as his toilet articles showed them to have been in mortality? I claim that people who still find objections and challenges to such evidence are putting themselves in the category with my Christian Scientist friend---or the aforementioned Scotsman---whose self-chagrin is apparent in their demand, "How long has this been going on?" But to return to this matter of the personality

discovering itself emerged from the chrysalis of the physical vehicle. .

OBVIOUSLY it ascends into a sort of "double consciousness"---of the higher ethereal reality where there are landscapes and architectural structures and forms of society not unlike those it has left in this lower and slower world---and of the coarser or grosser atomic ensemble that we term the mortal exhibit. Having gained to the higher condition, the soul-self discovers it can, by a sort of manipulation of its vibrations, manifest on both levels at once. Or rather, it makes the discovery that the mortal world seems to be the shadow or replica of the ethereal world. It is, certainly, more conscious of the operations of life on this lower and slower plane than we upon this lower and slower plane are commonly conscious of the existence of those on the higher. Understand me in all this, I'm not attempting to rationalize all conditions of the after-life in this closing chapter. I'm merely conveying to you what obviously happens to the graduating soul as I've learned about it from twenty-six years of aggressive contact. If you want the whole agenda of the sensations of "dying" and the orientation following discarnation, you can get it in a score of other books you'll find I've written on the subject. But here *is* one interesting feature of your metamorphosis. . when this Light-Body, Design-Body, Pattern-Body---call it what you will---disengages from the long-time physical self, it seems to go into the ethereal world stark naked. Harriet has described in detail how relatives, guardians or helpers are at hand to take it in charge and convey it to what they call The Rose-Room of Rest. There they permit it to nap for

a time and recover its strength and poise. During this interval the relatives, guardians and helpers, "weave" out of higher atomic stuffs by the operations of Thought the fabrics in which the personality will subsequently be clothed in the interests, apparently, of common decency. On only one occasion have I ever beheld a soul-spirit materialize in a nude appearance on this side, and that seemed to be because the tulle-stuffs of which the "clothing" was composed were so tenuous as to seem almost transparent, disclosing the feminine charms beneath. But assuming the Thought-Weaving provides garments for the transitioning spirit, the next occasion is an awakening in truth to the fact that the transition has been made by sometimes conveying the soul-spirit back into the earthly condition and permitting it to be present at the burial service over its lifeless day. I recall upon an occasion of the materialization of Harry Martin, my former executive associate in Asheville, that he laughingly criticized the laudatory remarks I spoke over his bier as I preached his funeral sermon. "It was an awfully funny experience," Harry attested, "listening to you pronouncing all that malarky over my effigy lying in a box surrounded by flowers, whereas the real *me* was right there in the funeral parlor, practically beside you, conscious of 'two worlds at once', the world from which I had come and the world which I had suddenly gained." On another occasion in a town near Seattle, Mr. Samuel Labbe of Portland, a former associate of mine in the Northwest, was reported to me as communicating during a public Bertie Lilly Candler seance and saying the same to a group of a hundred listening and watching people. At still a third occasion in Manhattan in 1945, my little 83-year-old mother succeeded in

"getting through" and thanking my son-in-law, Melford Pearson, for the help he contributed to her burial services when I had been unable to attend.

Such data would fill a volume unto itself. However, while the lowering of the personal "vibrations" down onto the frequencies of the medium's ectoplasm may produce a condition where the soul-self may manifest its identity on this physical plane of earth, by no means does it follow that these are strictly one-way trips. There are occasions beyond listing where living persons on This Side have made incursions onto the higher ethereal strata without physical death resulting. . .

LOOKING back over all the adventures, explorings, and contacts I have succeeded in negotiating the past two-and-a-half decades, I can appreciate now that such was exactly the thing I described purblindly in the now celebrated narrative, *My Seven Minutes in Eternity*. I left my 38-year- old physical self lying on the bed in an upper room of my bungalow on Mount Curve Drive in Altadena, California, on the night of May 29, 1928, and spent something like four hours interviewing former friends and associates whose similar bodies I had seen buried in cemeteries. You remember, if you read that article in *The American* at the time, that I was shameless in describing my "physical" condition in the first half of the experience as being nude. It was not only because no one was present in the first sequence except two men-friends, Albert Boyden and William Derieux, that I felt no embarrassment. My physical condition was simply not an item in my thinking at the moment. This corresponded perfectly with

what Harriet recounted to us the other evening about the RoseRoom of Rest. Later, in the second half of the Seven-Minute experience, when a large assortment of mixed company entered the now-famous patio to greet me, I no longer sensed myself as naked. From somewhere I had acquired a sort of Greek chiton to cover me, although I had always supposed it had materialized in the aftermath of my sampling a pool of oddly clear water in the southeastern corner of the beauteous place. Now I'm not so certain that I hadn't "woven" my own chiton garment by powers of thought subconsciously, not desiring to confront lady friends in my birthday suit. The point is immaterial.

The fact remains that we do vacate our earthly mortal vehicles upon occasion and penetrate the higher areas, just as those in the higher areas do upon occasion descend into our "shadow world" and give tacit evidence of their personality survival. *I got over 30,000 letters of attestments from AMERICAN MAGAZINE readers, not only congratulating me for writing so candid and revealing an article, but describing similar experiences in their own rights which they had been diffident about confiding to their intimates.*

I took heart at those. If 30,000 other persons had undergone a similar discarnation at some time or other in their lives, then my own experience after all was not so bizarre nor so peculiar. But more significant than these have been the numbers of persons I likewise have encountered who have attained some degree of proficiency of ascending from one octave of consciousness into the higher, voluntarily and deliberately. But

the attainment of such adeptship belongs in a realm of mystical accomplishment outside the data of this book. .

ONE OTHER matter I do wish to touch upon briefly, however, before writing *Finis* to this manuscript. . the queries that long-since have come to me about confronting so-called Dwellers on the Threshold in making the passing from the physical to the ethereal.

Judging from what I've been able to compile upon the subject, yes, there's a sort of Astral Purgatory next above the strict physical conditions of earth, where those of low, brutal, purblind soul-expression find themselves blundering in a sort of semi-gloom, unable to discover where they are or how to escape. It seems to be from such Low Astral that Helena Blavatsky compiled her data in which she made such reference to Dwellers on the Threshold---in Theosophy. In this condition the low-grade and non-developed spirit finds itself confronting Thought Forms and astral husks that may not be too pleasant to contemplate. But it's more or less a self-elected condition. It is by no means obligatory for the high-quality and altruistic spirit of the enlightened Christian who accredits that he has no more to be fearful of in the After-life than he had in contemplating the facts and factors of physical birth.

Howard Candler, Bertie Lilly's brother, who made the Passing when he was twenty-three, gave us a lengthy lecture on this condition of non-developed souls at a recent Noblesville seance, from which I quote---

I said to Howard, "May I ask a question? . . . Isn't it true that on this plane we have conditions of conflict between temperaments, but do profit by experience if we have progress to make. . . whereas, when you have no conflicting conditions, you won't profit?"

"Correct," Howard answered in strong and emphatic accents, "you won't profit. Because you must have the mistakes and conflicts *to* profit. They are lessons in your life."

I said, "That' s just what I mean. You, on the higher levels then, would seem not to be getting such character-increments in a state of society where all is tranquil and without dissension. Of the two, would not the earth-state be preferable?"

"But you must remember, my brother of earth, we have the lower planes here, where there *is* much conflict, where men who have passed have not been prepared for that passing, where souls have been ushered out in war and disasters, and the criminals, and the murderers. They have their place of abode, and many of them come back to the earth and are hovering around it, to seek avenues to get through to destroy because they are not educated. These are what we call Uneducated Souls."

"What I mean is, aren't we developing our own characters by combating those conditions?"

"Positively you are, because if a child never fell down it would never try to get up and move on. If you sat constantly in a chair and never exercised the will to go forward, but just sat there, you would become an invalid. Because you must have that push-power of the mind and the spirit, for the body and the soul to go forward. Every experience is a teacher for you, and it's

for every man upon the earth-plane to realize and understand and know it's a *blessed* experience he's going through. And too, another thing, is not to run away from anything. Because it will follow you wherever you go, and you'll run into something more unpleasant than what you were trying to combat. You cannot hide from a single thing. You must work it out because it's in your path. Stars come and stars go, the sun shines and the rain falls; it falls on the just and the unjust. Yet God never changes. He is just in all things. But the mortal mind in sin and confusion has made the mortal world that in which you live at the present time."

"Don't we know it!"

"Our world is beautiful. Try to realize our great seminaries, our great colleges, . . . we have the Great Teachers, the archangels, . . . we have our fountains and our lakes. We have all the things, my friends of earth, that you have---"

"Howard," I interrupted, "do those interpenetrate the atomic structures of this world or are they higher in Etheria?"

"They're very high in Etheria," he replied. "The atomic powers do not interfere with us. Now some will say that they frighten us. We do not become frightened because the Spirit in which we move is not fearful or frightened."

"Then you don't have any disruptions from the atom bomb explosions?"

"Positively not. But those who are living in what you would call Purgatory, what the Catholic would call the Dark Zones, from which they have not evolved, they become frightened because *they* can hear the explosions. And when the souls from here go out on what you call missionary work, and illuminate their Soul Light to find and help those people, you will

see the undeveloped falling with their faces to the earth, or they run down into the Dark Waters to bathe themselves and hide from us because they are afraid of the missionaries, like many of the people on your earth-plane that missionaries would go out to teach and to help. Even in your great schools of philosophy, many people criticize and are afraid of them and want to shun them, isn't it true? So it is over here. They are afraid and they run to escape the light and illumination of the angels and all the spirits that go to save them as prey from a tiger. Because they do not want to be helped. They have revenge in their hearts because they were so undeveloped when they made the transition called Death. They were so engrossed in sin and evil while in flesh that when they make the Transition called Death it is enveloped in their soul consciousness. They have carried this with them in their Thought out here and it has an effective reaction upon them, and they are afraid. I'm happy to greet you, friends. It's a glorious privilege to have been here. And may God bless each one of you. I shall voice to you again from time to time with my blessing. I will withdraw and leave way for others. Howard Candler."

THE ORTHODOX Christian cries, of course, "But if what you say be true, then what becomes of our current theology---in fact, our whole Christian religion? The church teaches us that there is only One Man who has ever enjoyed actual resurrection and that has been Jesus the Christ. All the rest of the people who have died since Calvary are "sleep in Jesus' and "know not anything until Judgment Day.' How reconcile the two?"

Truth and Error can never be reconciled. And there is not a shred of logic in expecting that they should be.

However, it isn't that the church has the facts of survival wrong; the church has simply been the espouser of a hypothesis that has been gravely warped, misrepresented and, in cases, wickedly or stupidly prostituted. Christ himself was the greatest psychic who ever trod this earth. He was great as a clairvoyant, great as a clairaudient, great as a psycho-metric, great as a divine medium. But clerics who knew naught of these marvels behind mortality, or branded them as evil because they feared disclosures from them, edited or censored out the facts of the early Christian "mysteries" that pertained to all of these phenomena, to suit their own inhibited or fearsome notions.

Today as "sacred" teaching, we get the doctrines that they--and they alone---have pronounced "infallible," simply because numbers of such clerics have gathered in council from time to time and legislated according to their bigotries instead of the basic life-facts they have gone to no trouble to explore.

ANYHOW, I have written this initial book to tell you exactly how it has been with me in arriving at a constant daily psychology that Death is a misnomer, that mortal life is merely experience in a classroom of earth where our bodies are the garments that clothe us while we enact the role of students.

I am appalled neither by death itself as a fact of Cosmos nor as a possibility for myself at any hour of the day.

I was, in a manner of speaking, allotted something like 26,280 days in this earthly tenure to bring myself to maturity, do a certain work, and achieve a certain result. Something like 22,542 of those days I have expended to the moment. How shall I account for the 3,738 days that I have reason to believe are left?

Getting back among my friends in the higher octaves will be like the award that a trip around the globe might be, with all expenses paid, and somebody along to arrange tickets and luggage.

However, the divine Father has been infinite in His compassion for most of us who may not have arrived at my convictions concerning survival, in that He has instituted a most beautiful process for easing each transition. We do not all make the Passing at once!

As the years roll by, and we grow older and maturer, the relatives, intimates and dear ones who have been with us in many beloved adventures in the body, drop one by one along the wayside. We attend funerals---over their tired husks and weep many tears that we shall not know such adventures with them more.

But one by one they are simply moving along ahead of us into the Radiant Summerland, until finally there are more of them on That Side than on This. Going to them is but a transport of reunion. We would rather be with the lovely horde of them in realms of beauty than to continue to plod, stumble and endure in this world of sorrows, disappointments and ordeals. So comes the moment when our own life-equations are balanced, and the

Hour Tranquil when we lay us down to the peace that passes understanding. .

Need there be anything morbid about it? Should we consider it phenomenal or carnal, either?

Well, anyhow, we do know that when we descended to this mortal realm as babes, there were loving hearts ready to welcome us, and loving hands ready to receive us and minister to us. If we have found that to be so in the earthly venture, shall it not be doubly so in the venture that is to come? Will not equally loving voices cry forth their greetings as we are caught sight of in the throng moving in through heaven's gate, and arms be thrown about us that mean the end of separation?

I, for one, believe that it shall happen.

Incidentally forgive my mentioning that if, when I come to such moment of entry, there be not a flag-patch of wagging dog-tails, and barks of excited welcome as all the dog souls I have ever loved leap upon me in hysterical greeting, I shall count my life as poorly lived indeed and heaven not the place that I fondly anticipate. But that is whim-digression. . To me there are no dead, even before the day of such reunion is reached. I have seen the Broad Highroad, and the Grand Progression on it. I have already talked and walked with those who have witnessed the Bright Scene from a thousand dazzling vantage-points. And this is my encyclical---We are truly all gods, advancing together from embryo, and he who would shrink from the realities of Cosmos, performs but a shrinking from the divinity that is himself! Suppose we leave it there. .

The Present Moment Always Endures!

FINIS

SO YOU ARRIVE AT THE END OF THE VOLUME NAMED
WHY I BELIEVE THE DEAD ARE ALIVE WRITTEN BY
WILLIAM DUDLEY PELLEY FOR THE SOULCRAFT
AUDIENCE AND DONE INTO A BOOK BY SOULCRAFT
CHAPELS WHOSE ADDRESS IN OCTOBER OF NINETEEN
HUNDRED AND FIFTYFOUR IS POST OFFICE BOX ONE
HUNDRED AND NINETYTWO, IN THE CITY OF NOBLESVILLE,
STATE OF INDIANA, IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
PLANET EARTH, SOLAR SYSTEM, OMNIVERSE OF GOD