

'Twiſt Earth and Heaven

A Psychic's Experiences

by

Annie Brittain

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Frontispiece]

THE AUTHOR

Yours Sincerely
Annie Brittain

*I dedicate this book to my
Father, Mother, and brother Jack,
who are helping to build the bridge
"Twixt Earth and Heaven"*

FOREWORD

I COMMEND this effort of Mrs. Brittain's to give a simple unbiased account of her early experiences and the training that she had to go through on the way to becoming a trustworthy medium. I have had sufficient experience of Mrs. Brittain's powers to know that, although she is not always at her best, she has a genuine faculty of perception, and has been able to give some remarkable evidence.

SIR OLIVER LODGE.

29th August, 1935.

AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION.

I HAVE tried, in a brief way, to give the reader an idea of my work as a medium. It is not so explanatory as I would have desired it to be; I would like to tell him with what eyes I see the visions, and how that strange substance called ectoplasm is taken from me and built up into form, but alas, I cannot do so. They are powers which are just beyond the range of my physical senses, and as I cannot handle or touch them, how can I give an idea of their nature?

With my normal eyes and ears I see and hear just as everyone does, but I do not see or hear in the psychic or spiritual world with them: they are adapted to function in a limited dimension.

There are two very distinct worlds in which I can sense, and each world seems to require a different sensory avenue. For instance, a few days ago a man came for a séance; as he walked into the room a large dog followed him in, and when he sat down the dog lay at his feet. Now I saw each clearly, yet I was aware that the dog was not a material vision. I closed my eyes, I could still see the dog, but not the man. To my

ordinary vision the dog did not exist, and when I concentrated with normal sight the dog was not there. It seemed as though I were seeing the man and the room with one pair of eyes and the dog with another pair, the animal being of an entirely different body substance to the man, and both were registered quite clearly and vividly. The sitter said the dog had died the week before and had been his constant companion when alive. Here, therefore, we have a man in the material world with a dog companion who was in the spiritual world, and I seeing one with my material eyes and the other with my spiritual eyes.

St. Paul said: "There is a natural body and a spiritual body." This saying appeals to me, and I firmly believe that as a medium I have that power to see and hear, both with the natural and spiritual body, in the natural and spiritual realms.

I am quite as sure of the existence of the spiritual realm as I am of the material, or, as St. Paul says, the natural, but I can only find ordinary language to describe it, and as its substance is of an ethereal nature, I cannot in any way find a means of touching it with material instruments to test its solidity. To my psychic sight it is as real as a chair is to my eyes.

The scientist of to-day is approaching the fringe of this spiritual realm. He is beginning

to speak of an intangible Mind Substance, and is aware of substance outside the range of the most powerful microscope. Perhaps it is from this finer substance that the divine spark within each one of us builds up the spiritual body.

With these few words of comparison, I must leave my readers to form their own opinions whilst perusing my psychic experiences.

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'TWIXT EARTH AND HEAVEN

Chapter I

EARLY EXPERIENCES

I CANNOT remember the time when I was not a psychic. In my earliest childhood I saw visions, was the subject of unseen influences, and felt forces at work in the air which were unseen and unfelt by others. As a child of four I would often wake to find the floor of my bedroom being used as a playground by a whole nursery of babies. When my mother came in to dress me and take me downstairs, I would tell her where to tread, so as not to disturb my little playmates. Playfully she would comply with my wishes, and place her feet as I directed her. I think now, that my psychic unfoldment owed much to my mother's sympathy, and to the understanding she showed by entering into the spirit of my childish visions.

Little children are very near to the spiritual world, the creative forces of the race find expression in their imaginative play.

“Not in entire forgetfulness,
But trailing clouds of glory, do we come
From God, who is our home.”

The psychic nature of children is more active than that of grown-ups. How else can one account for their subtle sensings, their strange likes and dislikes. How a little child will chuckle at some object which fails to provide amusement for its sober-minded elders. How often have we seen a baby, too young to talk, turn away its little face with a frown or an expression of fear from someone whom the world calls charming, and hold out its little arms to another who has no physical charm for grown-ups but who possesses that sympathy and sweetness of disposition which is so keenly felt by the child. But in my days, at any rate, the system of education tended to crush or crowd out these subtle psychic faculties, and encouraged them as little as they encouraged the cultivation of the artistic sense and other forms of spontaneity. I have come to believe that almost all highly-strung children develop psychic perceptions at some period of their growth, though the phase may be of only short duration. The various traits which manifest themselves from day to day in the life of the modern sensitive child are like a thousand tender green shoots on a wonderful plant. The stronger and coarser shoots will look after themselves, but the delicate ones may die on the day of their birth if they are not cared for. Your ideal educator is he who detects each fresh

shoot as it appears, and succeeds in nursing as many of them as possible to a healthy and vigorous life.

I was the first-born of the family, and four years old when the first of my brothers came on the scene. During this period I was seldom lonely, and played with children my parents could never see. For hours I would sit under the table or out on the grass with these shadowy playmates of mine, telling them stories or listening to theirs, or playing make-believe games with them. They seemed to grow up with me, and I knew all their names. But I could never touch them, and I often thought it strange that they should be unable to grasp my toys, and I unable to pick up the delicate and wonderful flowers which they laid at my feet. My mother often watched me trying to pick up something from the floor which she could not see, and I, in my turn, have seen my son Jack, when quite a baby, on his hands and knees roaming about the floor of my room, which had a plain grey carpet. He seemed to me to be trying to pick up some object which to me was invisible, and when I asked him what he was doing, he would say "picking pretty flowers."

When he was only five, the following little incident occurred, which illustrates the natural clairvoyance of children:

I took him with me to visit a friend who then had a small week-end bungalow down in the country. There were several other people present, and suddenly the child said to me:

"Mummy, why does Mrs. C. live here?"

I answered: "Because it belongs to her."

"No it doesn't," he replied, "it belongs to Charlie."

My friend, who was very interested, said: "Who told you that?"

"Why, Charlie did, he doesn't like these people here, but I can stay," said little Jack, quite naturally.

We asked him who Charlie was, and where he could see him, to which he replied: "He is a big man, and he is sitting here by me," indicating a kind of settle on which he was sitting.

My friend was greatly struck by what the child had said, and told us that Charlie was her brother-in-law, who had died some years previously through consumption, and for two years prior to his passing over, he had lived at the bungalow and was very attached to it, so much so that although they had thought of selling it, they had not done so, as they felt that it belonged to him. He had been of a rather reserved temperament and did not care for visitors, and when any were

present, he always sat on the little settle, as my little Jack had said. Some time later we asked Jack if "Charlie" was still there, and he replied: "Oh, no, he has gone now, he must have gone in the rain." It was quite evident that "Charlie" was a living reality to the child, and he spoke of him in a perfectly natural manner.

To return to my own childhood. Just as I had reached talking age, my parents would often hear me speak of "Sis, Sis," and as I got a little older I began to speak of someone who was beautiful with lovely golden hair, and still called her "Sis" or "Sisly." Then one day my mother passed a photograph to my father which she had taken from a letter which she had just received. As it passed me I cried out "Mine, my Sis, Sis," and was not content until I had it. The photograph happened to be that of an old school friend of my mother's, who had passed away when they were still at school. She was a beautiful girl with long golden curls, and her name was Cecily. My grandmother, who was leaving her house, was clearing her desk, and came across the old photograph which she sent to my mother, and in this way was my "Sis, Sis," of babyhood identified.

I ought to mention here that at this time my parents knew nothing of Spiritualism, and in fact

did not come into contact with it until I was twelve years old. Nor, with the exception of myself, did any member of the household show any signs of psychic gifts, so my childhood was not spent in a Spiritualistic atmosphere.

I shall relate now an experience which took place when I was eight years old, and impressed me vividly. No evidential value was attached to the incident, and after such a lapse of time, many details are forgotten, and my account will lack the colour of a piece of imaginative fiction. Besides, no child of eight analyses her sensations minutely, and I write from the standpoint of a child of this age.

Florrie was a little cripple girl for whom I had always felt very sorry and whom I had taken under my special protection. When she died I missed her very much. It was the first time death's shadow had fallen across my path. Just before my little friend's body was put in the coffin I went to see it, taking with me a basket of camellias which I placed on the bed by her side. I remember wondering whether they had any flowers in heaven. One night about a fortnight later, soon after going to sleep I seemed to wake with a sort of shock, and found myself floating in the air above my sleeping body in the bed. I recognized the form lying on the bed as myself,

but cannot remember that the sight caused me any consternation. I felt quite detached from my sleeping body, and yet I seem to have noticed very little about my new body—the “I” that floated above the bed. I cannot even remember as to whether I wore clothes. But I do remember that the room was intensely bright and that this radiance seemed to emanate from a beautiful lady whom I had never seen before. As I looked at her, wonderingly but unafraid, she moved towards me and took my hand, saying: “Don’t be afraid, Florrie wants you.” Together we floated out of the room as though walls, windows, and roof did not exist. In passing amongst the objects in the room and through the wall I felt like Alice moving amongst the shadows of Looking-glass-land. All solid things seemed shadows; we ourselves only were real. When we had passed through the wall, we seemed to float up and up through an intensely bright and warm atmosphere which seemed empty of everything except light. The place was simply drenched with light. Soon children’s shouts and laughter were wafted to our ears, and I realized that we were floating down into what appeared to be a beautiful park full of splendid trees, shrubs and flowers. The sun shone brightly, and the sky was a soft luminous blue. We alighted and walked on the

soft springy turf. I could not find names for the many exquisite and wonderful flowers that I saw: I had never seen anything like them before. Scattered about on the grass were groups of bonny children all dressed in white and garlanded with flowers. They had pretty pink, wax-like complexions and starry eyes, and hair that seemed woven out of sunbeams. Some were picking flowers and weaving them into crowns and garlands. Some were dancing and singing in the sunshine. Others were playing games. I longed to join one of the happy groups, but my companion led me away to where a child was sitting alone and crying bitterly. I recognized my little Florrie, and by her side was my basket of camellias.

Then my companion smiled at my little cripple and said: "See, I have brought you your playmate for a little while. Now play together and be happy!" When my little friend caught sight of me her face was transformed with happiness. Her joy was like a burst of sunshine after April rain. I led her to some who were dancing, and lo! Florrie was no longer a cripple but nimble and fleet and fair as the rest, and we danced madly and were happy. Then the lady who had been my guide came to me presently and bade me return with her. But I was happy and heeded

her not, and continued with the dance. Then she reminded me of my mother, and said it would be impossible for her to visit me here, and I remembered my mother and became homesick. So I bade my little friend good-bye and took my guide's hand and returned. Together we floated up, and the children's laughter grew faint, and the sound of their singing died away. Then we sank in the bright air and passed through the shadowy walls, and I found myself floating above the body in the bed. I entered my body with the same kind of shock I had experienced in leaving it, and found myself awake. This experience of "spirit travelling" was the first of several which I hope to describe later.

Some of the things which happened in my eleventh year were puzzling both to those who knew me and to myself. At school the other girls and I were fond of playing a game called "Gipsy," or "Old Woman," in which each in turn would pretend to tell the fortunes of the others. When it came to my turn to be "Gipsy" I would begin in fun, telling them about their sweethearts etc.; but sometimes a dreamy feeling would steal over me, and I would lose consciousness of my surroundings, and go on talking with my eyes closed. On coming to my senses the others would be very excited and tell me I had

been talking strangely, but I did not remember anything of what I had been saying. They would say "Annie's been talking true again." One such occasion comes back to my mind vividly. I can picture myself with pinafore and pig-tail, standing in an angle between two of the playground walls. It is the afternoon recess, and I have just come out of one of my strange trances. A little knot of girls are gathered round me, hushed and awed. One little girl is crying, for I have been telling her that her mother has died during the afternoon. The others lead her away to the school-mistress who sends for me and scolds me. I am bewildered, but I steadfastly deny having said the things with which I am accredited, and the mistress communicates with my parents. But when the little girl arrives home, it is to find that her mother is really dead, and that all the strange details I had given her in the playground are true.

One other incident which happened when I was twelve years old has left a lasting impression on my mind. My father was a builder and joiner, and his workshop was in the yard at the back of the house. The carpenter's shop was in the second storey and was reached from the ground floor by a short flight of wooden steps. At this time my grandmother lived with us in the house, and

though she had been ailing for some time, her condition was not such as to cause any serious anxiety. One night, on which both my parents and grandmother were out and I was alone in the house, a man called for a "coffin-board" which he had ordered. This is simply an oaken board on which the dead are "laid out" pending the arrival of the coffin. I asked the man to wait while I went into the shop to fetch the board. I did not take a light, as there was a brilliant full moon. When I had mounted the steps I saw the board resting tilted against the wall with one end on the carpenter's bench. The moon was shining full upon it and it was steeped in silent white light. I had taken perhaps two steps into the room when the moonshine took on the appearance of a figure, and instantly I saw my grandmother like white marble, stretched on the board for burial, in her nightdress, with her arms folded on her chest. She seemed to smile, and at that smile I broke through the spell of horror and fled for the steps. To this day I cannot tell how I escaped without broken bones, for I leapt from top to bottom, picked myself up and ran terrified into the house. I do not remember seeing the man take away the coffin-board, but I think he went himself to get it. When my mother returned, she said I must on no account mention the matter to my grandmother.

A week later the old lady had a sudden seizure and died!

After my grandmother's death, my mother, who was her daughter, seemed inconsolable. Just about this time, however, a cousin who lived in the same little village as ourselves told my mother of a Spiritualist Society which held its meetings at Wakefield, a few miles away, and with some vague hope of getting comfort, my mother consented to accompany my cousin to one of the gatherings.

It was the kind of meeting that all frequenters of Spiritualistic séances in the provinces know so well; there was the "trance address," the "Clairvoyance," and the "after circle," but to my mother it was all new and fascinating. The clairvoyant did not describe anything to my mother, but at the close of the meeting a black man, who sat behind her, addressed my parent in these words: "Excuse me, madam, but I saw the spirit of a dear old lady come into the room with you and she put her hand on your shoulder," and he concluded with an excellent description of my grandmother, who, he said, gave this message to my mother: "My dear child, you must not fret and worry so much about me, it upsets me and I cannot rest."

From that time onward my mother was more

cheerful, for she felt that her mother was quite close to her and had never really been taken away from her. Soon indeed, both my parents became ardent spiritualists, and my mother afterwards herself saw Granny, looking very happy and bright.

Chapter II

UNCLE PERCY'S GHOST

AT school I was considered to be a rather bright and intelligent girl, arithmetic was my strong point, and the most complicated problems had no terrors for me. It had been my ambition to pass through High School and College, but my parents' views on the subject of a girl's vocation and training were old-fashioned and severely puritanical, and when I was twelve years old, they decided that I should stay at home to assist my mother in the household duties and look after the younger children. I have thought since that the insane pressure and over-strain which the modern High School system imposes upon a girl's physique might easily have killed my psychic gift. As it was, my psychic powers remained dormant during the adolescent years, to awake with renewed strength in my sixteenth year.

When I was sixteen, my family removed from the West Riding of Yorkshire and went to live in Longton, one of the Five Towns. Six months later I was sent back to my old home for a few

days to transact some family business, and while there, visited my Uncle Percy who was ill. Uncle Percy told me he was greatly concerned about the new religion of spiritualism that my parents had embraced, that he had grave fears for their souls, that in short, they were on the wrong track and heading for a hot corner. People's souls, by the way, were of great concern with Uncle Percy and he did a lot with them. However, to set all doubts at rest, he made this pact with me before we parted: "that when he died he would return and show himself to me if he found it possible."

My uncle was not seriously ill, and I cannot recall giving the pact another thought. A girl of sixteen finds life exciting anywhere, even in the Five Towns, and my uncle's promise to haunt me was forgotten until six weeks later it was brought home to me in a singularly terrifying fashion. I was devoted to my Uncle Percy, but I often think he had no sense of humour. To frighten a young girl almost out of her wits by projecting himself as a grey mist into the crack of a door, then to emerge from it a new man, like a new hat out of a band-box, and to have engineered all this just ten minutes after he had shuffled off this mortal coil, was, to say the least, a little inconsiderate of him, and dreadfully unnerving. But as this is a ghost story that is absolutely true, I will tell it just

as it happened, neither suppressing nor exaggerating, with the meticulous accuracy of the professional narrator of events relating to apparitions.

It was a Saturday evening and I was feeling unwell. My parents had just gone out and left me alone in the house, and as they would not return for two or three hours, I bolted the yard gate, re-entered the house, and bolted the front and back doors. The house was very old, and a large stone-flagged passage led from the front door into the living-room, which also had a paved floor. The least sound made by anyone in the passage resounded throughout the house. I went into the living-room, which was large and airy, and closing the door, lay on the couch to rest, but not to sleep. A minute later I got up again to turn the gas low and soften the glare, then settled myself on the couch once more, leaving sufficient light to enable me to see everything in the room clearly.

I had been resting for nearly half an hour when quite distinctly I heard the front door open, and was startled by a heavy tread in the passage. Just for a moment I thought my father had returned, but remembered, with a little shock, that both doors had been bolted on the inside and that anyone who entered would have to be admitted by me. Burglars flashed into my mind. I

propped myself on one elbow, and tried to shout, but no sound would come from my throat.

Tramp, tramp, tramp came the approaching steps, and the echoes followed in their wake. The few seconds which elapsed before the footsteps reached the door seemed an eternity, and each trivial detail in the room seems photographed on my brain. The hands of the little clock on the mantelpiece pointed to nine-thirty-five; even its ticking seemed to be suspended. Just before the steps reached the door, I remember noticing that the stool used by one of my young brothers was lying overturned on the hearth. The intruder halted at the door. Imagine my feelings when the knob began to turn and the door opened inch by inch. As the door swung noiselessly on its hinges, I saw the crack fill with a dense grey mist, and when it was fully open, a thick cloud, oval in shape, reached from top to bottom of the doorway almost touching the sides at its widest part. I think I had expected a man, but the horror of this nameless thing unnerved me. As the dreadful thing drew on towards me, perspiration broke out all over my body. I had no more control over my legs than if they had been made of lead, or I think I should have run for the door the moment it was clear. I could neither speak nor scream, but I tried to wave the horrid thing away with my arms.

As though it were aware of my anguish, it moved along by the table towards the centre of the room. And now the cloud began to shrink and disperse on the outside, as though it were being fanned away by something lurking at the core. Even as I watched I saw it take on the faint outlines of a man. Then the thing burst. It was just as if a match had been put to a cloud of petrol vapour, only it burst, not into flame, but into Uncle Percy! For an instant I saw him stand there as real as life, and I remember exclaiming: "Oh! Uncle Percy." Then something gave way in my head and the blessed mantle of unconsciousness fell over me.

Whether my Uncle Percy attempted to revive me with astral smelling salts I do not know, but when I came to myself I was lying on the hearthrug where my father had found me and my father was bending over me with restoratives in his hand. My first words were: "Oh! father, Uncle Percy is dead!" and I related to him what had happened. It seems that he had returned alone, had knocked repeatedly and receiving no answer had become alarmed. Then he had looked through the window and seen me lying on the hearthrug in a faint, and finally he had broken a pane in the back kitchen window, undone the catch, and entered that way.

The sequel is short, but very dramatic. While we were at breakfast next morning a telegram arrived which read—"Percy died nine-twenty-five last night"—just ten minutes before he had kept his pact.

This experience seemed to revive my psychic powers, and I began to do active work amongst the Spiritualists.

Chapter III

HAUNTED HOUSES

I HAVE few experiences to relate concerning very old houses since I am extremely shy of entering these old buildings in which generations of men have lived and died. In particular, old castles make me nervous, and wild horses would not drag me into some of their rooms. It will doubtless seem strange to many that I who am constantly seeing spirits of the dead should feel a dread of such places. And yet quite normal people will probably discover the clue to my fears in their own psychic intimations. Who has not lived at some time or other under the shadow of an old cathedral, and seen how the dead hand of the past lies heavy upon a whole town, resisting silently the inroads of modernity and carrying an atmosphere of the cloisters into the age of electricity and steam? Or has the reader ever wandered over the scene of some grim old battlefield, and experienced the brooding sense of gloom which is like a miasma over everything, so that the dumb spell is upon the very peasants who till the fields?

Or perhaps he has been standing in the turret or on the battlements of an ancient keep, when suddenly a fit of dreaming has overtaken him and he has been transported from this bustling century into an age that is not his own, and finds himself in fancy amongst the strange men of bygone days. Now if this is the experience of the normal imaginative man or woman, in the case of the full-fledged psychic, these vague intimations are multiplied and intensified a thousand-fold. Whenever I enter an old castle I am conscious at first of a heavy sense of oppression. Dim, mist-shrouded figures lurk in the shadows and menacing hands seem to bar one's way on the old stone stairs. Soon I am aware of many other figures in the room, but all move as in a mist. Then suddenly the mists clear, the figures fall into groups, the smouldering ashes of the past burst into an intense life and bygone scenes of love and tragedy are enacted again before my eyes. I have seen processions of strange men go hurrying by me—monks in their cowls and soldiers with their pikes, all moving swiftly with eager intent faces and seldom deigning to take the least notice of me.

In the same house in which I had seen my Uncle Percy I sometimes met quaint old-fashioned people. The house is old and roomy, and possesses one of those old-fashioned winding stair-

cases which, with many landings, take you right to the top of the house. One night, about six months after seeing Uncle, I was coming downstairs and had just reached one of the landings, when I was astonished to see trooping up the steps towards me, a procession of quaint-looking men. My feelings were of surprise and bewilderment rather than of fear, and I stepped hastily into a dark corner of the landing hoping they would pass without seeing me. There were perhaps a score of them, and they seemed in no hurry, so I had plenty of time in which to observe them. Under their wide-brimmed hats they all had long straight hair and clean-shaven faces; they wore plain coats of a peculiar cut, immaculate hose and leather gaiters. Their faces looked grave and prosperous and never did I see even the ghost of a smile flit across them. They passed me, these strange silent men, and gave not so much as a sign, but continued grave and preoccupied on their way, and I watched them until I saw them disappear into one of the rooms above.

I hurried downstairs and brought my mother on the scene: together we went upstairs and explored the room into which they had vanished, but we found not the slightest sign of them. I have met these same people many times since, but always on the same evening of the week, and

always on the stairs, never in any other part of the house. Once I encountered the procession when I was half-way between two landings, and I saw they must either pass over me or step aside. They chose politely the latter course, and as they squeezed by me, one by one, I expected each one to speak. But in this I was disappointed, as not one of them condescended even to look at me, and judging from the expression on their faces, which was sterner than usual, they must have considered me an intruder.

We have since made some inquiries into the history of the house and discovered that in the early part of the last century it had a Quaker tenant, and that the friends were accustomed to hold meetings there. My scientific friends will laugh if I tell them that it pleases me to believe that this little band of Quakers, although in the spirit world, still continue to use the old house as a meeting-place in which to discuss the matters that interest them and maintain their old friendship and ways. The idea is pretty, and I prefer it to "etheric records," just as I prefer with Mr. Chesterton to think of heaven as a beautiful garden, and not as a "series of cycles and spirals of spiritual evolution."

The most gruesome experience I have ever had occurred at a house in North Wales in which I

was staying during a visit to some friends in the year 1909. The house is very old and has a business attached to it; for this reason I am not mentioning the names of either the town or the people. The moment I entered the house I was conscious of a peculiar psychic atmosphere, a suffocating sense of oppression which, despite all the bright good humour and cheeriness of my friends, would not dispel as the day wore on. My friends were a musical family, and we spent a jovial evening. At bedtime I was shown to my room and wished the usual good night and sound sleep. My bedroom was small, but I noticed nothing unusual about it, and being rather tired, undressed quickly, blew out the candle and settled comfortably in bed for a good night's rest. But I courted sleep, in vain. That weird feeling which had remained with me during the day seemed now to be in the very air I was breathing. It was as the advent of some horror, formless and unspeakable, that, drawing ever closer, would presently fall upon me and strangle me.

I had been lying awake for perhaps an hour, when suddenly the bed was flooded with a faint unearthly light which seemed to come from over the head of the bed. Fearfully, I turned my head, and lo! where there had been solid wall was now an open door, through which the mysterious light

was streaming, and standing just within the doorway was a man, wild-eyed, and with his throat slit from ear to ear. Blood was pouring from the frightful jagged wound and soaking his clothes. I did not wait for further developments, but pulled the bedclothes over my head quickly, and shutting my eyes tightly, prayed for my "guides" to protect me. I asked that this poor earth-bound spirit (for such I judged him to be) might be set free, and as if in answer to my prayer, I felt presently a soothing influence steal over me and sank into a dreamless sleep.

When I woke the sun was shining brightly and the sky was a happy, carefree blue. The oppression of the night had vanished like smoke, and I felt quite lighthearted.

After I had dressed I examined the wall at the back of the bed at the spot where I had seen the apparition. At first glance it seemed quite sound, but on looking closer I found that although the wallpaper was unbroken, I could trace beneath it the outline of a door.

I had determined to say nothing to my hostess of my uncanny and unwelcome midnight visitor, but at breakfast one of my friends inquired if I had slept well, and I suppose deciding from my hesitating manner that I had not, beguiled me into relating my experience. My friends now told me

that many years ago a former tenant had committed suicide in the house, but in precisely which room they were unable to say. They, too, had noticed the signs of the door at the head of my bed, but as it was papered over at the time they had taken the house, and they had never felt any urgent need of extra room, it had remained undisturbed. I said I was certain that the act had been committed in the small room behind the door, and during the day this conjecture was confirmed by a gentleman who had known the former tenant well. This same gentleman was also able to tell me that what I had seen in my vision was a true description of the manner in which the man had died. My hostess wished to change my room, but I desired her not to do so, as I felt that the apparition would not trouble me again. Nor did he, for from that time the psychic atmosphere was clearer, and I slept undisturbed.

Such an experience as this is horrid in the extreme, and I hope sincerely that I shall never have another. Yet from a scientific point of view it is interesting. We have to consider two quite distinct explanations and weigh their possibilities. The first is that we have an earthbound spirit vividly picturing to himself the gruesome details of his death many years after it had occurred, and

by this means conveying to me a telepathic apparition of himself as he appeared in the hour of death. On the face of it such an explanation seems highly improbable. Judging from mundane analogies, it is difficult to think of a spirit as being chained for years to one single locality or to one single mental condition. On the other hand, we must remember that spirits often re-enact their death scenes quite involuntarily in their first attempts to communicate through a medium.

The second explanation supposes that the spirit was not communicating, but that the vivid emotion associated with the man's violent death had in some mysterious way left an indelible mark upon the locality—an "etheric record" as some would say. I must confess that I don't like this idea of an "ether record," and I fail to see how even were such a mechanical record made, my brain could interpret it intelligently without knowing the code, or how I should be able to select this particular record from the thousands of others that must be superimposed upon it.

I believe that a truer explanation of this, and similar phenomena, must be sought for in the new conception of time and space which Prof. Einstein has brought into prominence or along the lines of Mr. W. Whateley-Smith's book, "The Mechanism of Survival." It is probable that the

spirit functions in an envelope of four-dimensional matter, and until the relations which this four-dimensional substance has to our three-dimensional time and space are more fully understood, it seems unprofitable to speculate upon the theory of such an experience as I have related.

Chapter IV

SPIRIT TRAVELLING

IT is a fatal mistake to imagine that because we can make theories about things we thereby know them. Experience is the only real and living knowledge. Life calls upon us imperiously to see, to feel, to touch, and to know beauty. And if this applies to the life of the senses, it applies pre-eminently to those worlds that lie beyond the rhythms of sense. We may read all the automatic communications that have ever been written purporting to describe the spirit world, and they will not satisfy us. We may spend hours in the séance room, and in the end be no wiser than the prisoners in the cave in Plato's allegory, who watched and argued about the shadows moving on the wall, shadows which gave them only a faint idea of things existing in the sunlit world outside the cave. In the séance room we are only on the outskirts, the fringes, of the psychic world. If we wish to know its inhabitants, its valleys, mountains and seas, we must enter it and live in it. Fortunately there are, as yet, no Cook's

trips to the spirit world. Only two roads lead to it. One is the road we shall all tread, and that takes us through gates that close behind and shut us from the physical body; the other takes us through the ivory gates of sleep and mesmeric trance.

My own journeys to this fascinating country have either taken place whilst under the control of my guides or in a mesmeric trance which has been induced by my husband. And here let me say that most of the dangers with which the popular novelist has invested the subject of hypnotism are purely imaginary. In a wide personal experience extending over a good many years, I have never known the hypnotist who could make his subject carry out suggestions which in the normal state would be repugnant to him. Not only is it impossible to make your subject commit crimes or immoral acts, but he will fail to respond to quite trivial suggestions that offend his dignity, or for which he has a great aversion in his waking life. Let me cite two of many cases I have observed.

A youth who had a decided objection to dancing was put into a deep hypnotic sleep. He was responding well to suggestions, when the hypnotist told him to dance. The subject took one step as if to begin, and then stopped. The

suggestion was repeated again and again, but the only effect was to bring drops of perspiration on to the forehead. On the hypnotist continuing to push his suggestion, the lad suddenly opened his eyes and woke. He did not recollect the suggestion which had ended his trance, but thought he had been awakened in the ordinary way.

On another occasion, a lady of fastidious habits and a good singer, was singing, in the entranced state, when without any warning, the operator told her that a flea was biting her back. The lady made an effort to scratch her back but suddenly stopped singing and awoke. She, like the other subject, retained no knowledge of the distasteful suggestion.

Not only is hypnotism now widely used by the medical profession in the treatment of mental disorders such as shell-shock, but it is, I believe, the master key to psychic unfoldment. Many of our most successful mediums started their career as hypnotic subjects. Dr. Andrew Jackson Davis and Mrs. Emma Hardings Britten, two of the best mediums who ever worked for the Spiritualist movement, were both subjects of the mesmerist. I certainly feel that hypnotism has helped me to attain to my present clearness of clairvoyance and clairaudience.

It is, of course, not every hypnotic subject who

has the power of leaving his body or of "spirit travelling." Those who do possess the power will find that they possess also a nervous system of very sensitive pattern, and one that is easily put out of tune. Let anyone who attempts the journey remember, therefore, that the greatest care must be taken to shield the body from shock while the spirit is absent. And, above all, let him arrange for some friend to be at hand to prevent any well-intentioned person from attempting to waken him by rough handling. If such precautions are not observed, the nervous system may be shattered, if death does not ensue.

It may not be out of place, perhaps, to express the hope that all who cultivate psychic gifts will take the greatest care of their nerves. What is it to be a medium? It is to be sensitive to all the vibrations of existence. It is to feel intensely both the joys and the sorrows of life. It is to possess to an extraordinary degree that "capacity for pain which is the mark of rank." Let those who aspire to mediumship, therefore, accustom themselves early to be either positive or negative to sensation at will, to regulate the influx of sensation, according to the tone of the nervous system in much the same way as the governor of an engine, by controlling the amount of steam, regulates the speed according to the load. Only in this way can

psychic work be done without wear and tear, and no one wishes to feel too keenly the sorrowful side of life.

I am often asked what it feels like to be out of the body. My scientific friends have often told me that if they had my power of "spirit travel" they would analyse their sensations closely, make careful and accurate observations, and bring back a marvellous account of what they had seen in the spirit world. No! they would not. For when you leave your body behind you leave behind also part of your earthly consciousness. I will explain myself. You, reader, are sitting in a room reading my little book. Your attention is fixed on the printed page but you are vaguely aware of many other things: of your own body, of the objects in the room, of the sound in the street, of the things you did yesterday, of the things you will do to-morrow. Some of these things are very indistinct, but by an act of volition you could make any one of them the centre of attention.

Now let us consider quite a different state of consciousness. Let us imagine you are half-way under the influence of chloroform. You may be vividly aware of a black cloud swirling before your eyes and of a humming in your ears, but you may have forgotten that you ever had arms or legs or a body. When you are recovering

from the anæsthetic you may find yourself working some problem in mathematics before even it has dawned on you that you are lying in bed. Even in an ordinary dream it is possible to wander through various scenes and speak to various people without being conscious of either your own body or your clothes.

Once you understand this narrowing down and focusing of the field of consciousness, you will grasp the difficulties which we encounter when we try to remember details of what we have seen in our travels. When I leave my body my mental volition is not entirely suspended, although my consciousness is directed towards certain things, and away from others. I am sometimes aware of my "spirit body" and sometimes not. On one occasion I had sufficient volition to try an experiment. I tried to grasp and move some cups and saucers in the room, but my fingers passed through them as if they were shadows. On the same occasion I tried to slap and pinch the faces of the people in the room but could make no impression on them, and they did not take the least notice of me. I walked through a table as though it were an optical illusion. I remember feeling amused to think that I was so superior to flesh and blood, which usually comes off second best in encounters

with wood, stone or steel. Tables, chairs, walls, the bodies of humans, seem as unsubstantial as shadows when one is out of the body. Yet whenever my attention is directed to my own spirit body, it seems solid and real, and as far as I have been able to observe, an exact replica of my earthly body.

I am certain, however, that I am not always aware of the whole of my "spirit body," but sometimes only of the part which I am using. Likewise the trees, houses, etc., of the spiritual world seem solid and dense, and it is the same with the bodies of its inhabitants. It is a strange sensation to move about in the physical world and make no impression on it; to see your friends and relatives, apparently unaware of your existence, giving you the cold shoulder, to hear them talk about you in a fashion that is perhaps not entirely complimentary, and be unable to make any effective rejoinder or make your presence felt in any way. One understands how a spirit feels in the séance room.

I should mention in passing that I am seldom conscious of leaving the body. I simply find myself standing beside my sleeping form. The sensation on returning is always distinct; it is a sort of shock—the kind of physical shock one experiences when one wakes from sleep with a

start. How I really enter I cannot explain; we seem to fuse into each other with a sort of snap.

In my spirit travels I am not always moving among earthly scenes, but sometimes I have the sensation of being propelled upwards through a bright atmosphere into a more ethereal world. It is a world in which I see trees and flowers, houses and people. And yet I am aware that I see other things that no earthly eye will ever see; but they do not seem strange to me, it is as if I had always known them, or had known them long ago, and had forgotten them. When I wake I can recall the trees, the flowers, the houses, but these other things elude me. It is, I think, the effects of light and colour that linger with me longest when I return. How shall I ever forget that radiant, light-drenched atmosphere! The sky is blue, but it is like blue fire. In some landscapes the colours are bright, in some they are of the softest shades, the most attenuated hues, but they blend and fade into others as they do in no earthly landscape. I have seen green forests rise up tier above tier, and fade away into blue night. I have seen the most vivid colours; meadows of a richer deeper green than those in which our lakeland cattle wade; valleys so verdant as to assuage all sorrow; blues that are

soul searching; reds that are deeper than sunset or blood. In those happy regions an indescribable spell lies upon every flower and hedgerow and tree; it is like a sixth sense, and I seem to recapture the first fresh glory of earliest childhood.

Spirit Travelling on Earth

I have often been put into the mesmeric trance to search for missing people. My quarry may be on the other side of the world, and yet shall I pick up the scent, be his unseen companion, follow him unerringly in all his wanderings, and finally run him to earth.

By what strange sense I am set on the track and enabled to play this role of astral bloodhound I have not the faintest inkling. And yet, reader, is it really more mysterious than the power which you yourself exercise when you select almost instantaneously a single word or face or incident out of the millions which are stored in your brain? The processes of association and linking up may be different in the two cases, but they are equally obscure.

One evening a young man called to ask if I could help to find a young woman, a friend of

his, who had been missing for a week. The police had dragged most of the canals and pools in the neighbourhood but had found nothing. In this case there was little to suggest suicide, beyond the fact that the girl had been suffering from severe mental depression. My normal clairvoyance gave me a sensation of water and coldness, but I could not see the spirit. My husband put me into mesmeric sleep, and suggested that I should trace the young woman if alive, or find her body if dead.

I left the body, and found myself walking by a canal or river. It was dark and I could not see beyond the path and the water. I walked along till I came to a spot where the water was wider and there were rushes. I felt immediately that this was the spot, and saw in the distance an inky-blue coppice of trees and the shadowy outlines of a colliery. I did not see the body; I knew the experience would be gruesome and shrank from it. Soon afterwards I awoke and described my adventure.

A few days later the body came to the surface in the very spot amongst the rushes that I had seen in my vision.

On another occasion a lady friend of mine asked if I would trace her brother, of whom she had had no news for over two years. He

was of a roaming disposition, and wrote only occasionally.

I was put to sleep and found myself with a party of sailors creeping through the long grass of a tropical jungle. Giant creepers smothered the trees and the tree-tops were crowned with orchids. Gaudy birds flew screaming amongst the trees. We seemed to be stalking some natives, for presently I saw them with their spears, and had a distinct impression of bullets being fired. Then one of the sailors was wounded, and I saw two of the others carry him away on an improvised stretcher of boughs. I knew as by instinct that this man was my friend's brother, and I followed him to a hospital. Soon after I awoke.

About six months later my friend had still no news, and asked me to try again. This time I was on board a vessel, and my friend's brother stood by my side. We were not far from the shore and a great hill hung over the water. From the hot sky and the matting-sailed junks lying on the glassy sea, I judged we were in Chinese waters. So real was it all, that I began to feel a touch of sea-sickness which remained with me for quite half an hour after I woke. I touched the man standing on deck, but though he turned round, he did not seem to see me.

Soon I woke with the sea-sickness I have described.

It would be about three months after this that the lady brought me a letter from her brother, mentioning a fight in the jungle, his being wounded and taken to hospital, and told how, following that, he had joined a ship. From his account he must have been at Hong Kong about the time I saw him.

One morning, when I was suffering from influenza and feeling very miserable, my husband suggested an experiment. He proposed to put me into a deep trance and give the suggestion that I should wake after six hours.

About an hour after lunch, I sat in a comfortable easy chair and after a few minutes of suggestion, fell into a deep sleep. I do not know how long I remained in the trance, but I woke to find myself standing outside my body, gazing at the sleeping form in the chair. My cousin was by my side, a young man who had died some years before, and to whom I had been deeply attached. I was not greatly surprised to see him, as he had often escorted me on my spirit travels. Now he offered to take me out for the afternoon and see some of the spirit people.

We passed out through the walls of the room,

seeming to glide rather than to walk, with no more sense of motion than if we had been in a balloon. We came presently to a street corner where there was a public-house which I knew well (from the outside) and entered. I noticed the bar and the usual contents of a beer-house. The only occupants were the bar-man and two men who were drinking. Curiously I knew one of the men; he was a native of the town, and had lately taken to drinking a good deal. In a few minutes another man entered the house. At first glance I took him for a regular hanger-on at such places; he looked a typical drunkard, beer-sodden and down at heel. I quickly realized that he was a spirit, from his real and solid appearance, though his body was of a grosser texture than our own. He walked straight to the bar and called for a glass of beer, but to his disgust the barman ignored him, and did not even appear to see him. Muttering something, he tried to pick up one of the half-emptied glasses, but his fingers passed through it. Again and again he tried to grasp it, clasping and unclasping his hand, then realizing it was useless, bent down and tried to drink with his lips, but with no more success.

At this juncture the owner of the tumbler picked it up and raised it to his lips. A look of

lust and eager excitement came over the spirit's face, and he drew close to the man. As the man drank, the creature crept closer and his excitement increased. So close did he press as to seem almost to enter the body. In a few seconds I was astonished to see the look of eagerness die away on the creature's face, and an expression of sickly gratification steal over it instead. He disengaged himself and passed out of the public-house.

I turned to my cousin and asked him if it were possible that the dreadful thing had really got satisfaction in this horrible way and enjoyed the effects of the stimulant. He answered "yes, there are many here who still cling to the pleasures they enjoyed on earth, and as you have seen, obtain a certain amount of gratification by coming into contact with the nervous system of a living person who is addicted to the same vice. Persons of weak will are often influenced by such depraved spirits who seek to gratify their own lusts through the lusts of their victims."

My companion noticed that the atmosphere of the place was having a nauseating effect on me, and he led me away. "I am taking you now," he said, "to quite a different place." For a time we seemed to float away out of the physical

world into brightness. Presently I saw afar off a town with a great cathedral. As we approached, the cathedral towered up over the house-tops, all the other buildings became indistinct and the cathedral filled my vision. We entered and I went straight to an empty seat, but my cousin would not let me sit down. "No!" said he, "I want you to be an onlooker on this occasion and not a worshipper." We seemed to float high up above the nave. A white-haired venerable clergyman was praying: his body was surrounded by a beautiful blue aura and circling his head was a golden halo as we see in pictures of the saints which threw out streamers of golden rays. It was a sight so bright and pretty that for a moment, it held my eyes like a picture. Then the man's earnestness took hold of me and I felt the spiritual strength of his prayer and as those golden rays penetrated my spirit, I experienced a great upliftment. I do not think it was his words which moved me so strangely, but some subtle vibrations which those rays carried from his soul to mine.

My cousin now asked me to look at the congregation, and I could see the effect of the prayer on each one. Some were not affected and round these there was no illuminating aura. Those to whom the prayer appealed, had bright auras,

and were connected to the clergyman by fine scintillating threads of light, similar to the fine brush-discharges of some gigantic Wimshurst machine. It was a lovely sight, and when the organ began to peal, the great church was a web of wonderful colours that blended, changed and faded with the rising and falling of the music. I scarcely knew whether I was conscious of sound or colour, they were so marvellously interwoven.

I saw many spirit people, some of whom floated about like myself, while others sat in pews exactly as though in the flesh. My cousin told me that it is not uncommon to see spirit people attend Divine Service in a church.

“Indeed,” he said, “business people and those in whose lives routine has played an essential and vital part, find it exceedingly difficult to give up their old habits when they enter spirit life. Business men will still continue to watch over their affairs, even though they are quite unable to take any active part in them.”

I might mention that I am able to confirm this statement, since I have known business men who have died in their middle years in the midst of active work, and seen them clairvoyantly afterwards stepping into the early train as usual.

The Gamage Colliery Explosion

It was on 19th January, 1910, while we were holding our weekly séance at Hanley in Staffordshire, that I had this very singular experience. Six people were present, including myself, and we were seated round a large table with hands clasped in chain fashion. The room was illuminated only by a dim red light, for we were expecting the production of physical phenomena. We had commenced our séance at eight-forty p.m., and while waiting for the spirits, kept up our own by chatting and singing hymns. The reader who has ever attended such a séance, can picture us as we sat there in the red gloom. There were the faces of the sitters like pallid featureless masks of a chalky whiteness, the walls with their ghastly mirrors, the red shadows on floor and ceiling, and the dim outline of the table in our midst.

For a time nothing unusual happened and I remained quite normal, but at nine-fifteen, while the others were talking, I became entranced. Suddenly I was no longer in the room, but found myself in what, at first glance, seemed to be a round, dimly-lit workshop, in which men were working round the brickwork of the wall. Look-

ing up, I could see no roof, only blackness. The only light in the place came from small lamps that the men carried. I had only just time to notice these details, when a terrific explosion occurred. The brickwork seemed to collapse and a great shower of earth and stones came crashing down. Curiously, all this did not seem to have affected me in the least, and a moment later I found myself in the open air standing at the top of a shaft. Men were running to the shaft from all directions. Then for the first time, I realized that I was at a colliery, and from the surroundings, I recognized it as the works at which my father-in-law was general engineer.

At this stage I woke from my trance and found myself back in the séance room. I immediately described what I had seen; we noted the time and we drew up there and then a report which was signed by all present. The next day I received a letter from my sister-in-law, saying that an explosion had occurred in the very colliery I had seen in my vision, and on Thursday *The Staffordshire Sentinel* published a full report, which corroborated what I had seen. The colliery is situated about eight miles from Hanley, where the séance was held, and it appears that the explosion occurred during the sinking of a new shaft, the interior of which had

seemed to me like "a round workshop with no roof." It seems that I had described the explosion to the circle just five minutes after it had actually happened. A report of this remarkable séance was sent at the time to the spiritualist papers and copied from them by *The Staffordshire Sentinel*.

The witnesses at the séance who signed the report were: Mr. J. Jones, Mr. J. Edwards, Mrs. J. Forrester, Mrs. S. Hall, my husband and myself.

TRAVELLING ON EARTH

An Experience under Chloroform

I had one very curious experience while under the influence of chloroform. For two days I had been suffering heavily, expecting to become a mother. I well remember the blessed feeling of relief that came stealing over me with the first few whiffs of the sweet vapour.

The last thing that I was conscious of was a little black cloud like a Catherine-wheel whirling ever faster and faster before my eyes. In a very few seconds I knew that this would snap or burst, and that would be the end. That was my last conscious moment. Then I woke, to

find myself out of my body standing by the bed as a spectator. Everything in the room was very distinct, and I became aware of the presence of my sister Sally, who had died six years before. She came to me and linked her arm in mine, and leading me away gently to the window, compelled me to gaze into the street. For a long time we seemed to stand watching the traffic. I saw pass several people whom I knew, some walking, some in conveyances. It is strange, but I cannot remember leaving that window, or re-crossing the room to the bed. It was as if the street had disappeared without my noticing it, and I began to realize dimly and slowly that I was functioning through my body again.

Gradually full consciousness returned, and I found myself lying in bed, the operation over and my baby born. Immediately I felt able to talk, I mentioned my experience to my mother and husband, and gave the names of the people I had seen pass the window. My husband interviewed all these people, and was able to verify, in every case, that they had passed the house during the operation, and in the circumstances I had described.

I cannot recollect that my sensations on leaving the body on this occasion, differed intrinsically

from those which I have experienced during my other projections under mesmerism or control.

This time on awakening, I found my senses clogged and dull, but I put this down to the effects of the chloroform.

SPIRIT TRAVELLING

At the Crossing of the Valley of the Shadow

I once had the great privilege of seeing a spirit leave the body at death. At the time I was out of my own body, my organism being under control. My cousin who usually accompanied me on these explorations of the spirit realms asked: "Would you like to pay a visit to a dying woman and watch the spirit leave the body?" I said "yes," little realizing the ordeal through which I should pass.

It was not long before we had projected ourselves into the home. It took me a few minutes to visualize my surroundings. It was a middle-class one and the poor woman was dying of cancer. The body was wasted with the ravages of the disease, but the mind of the sufferer was in a far worse state at the thought of having to

leave her little family to the care of others. While the spirit was anxious to be rid of the worn-out body, it would remain a thousand times rather than leave its loved ones to the mercy of others.

Around the bed were gathered the husband and three children, the youngest of whom was in the arms of a friend. The eldest child, a boy of about eleven, was sobbing at the foot of the bed, while the other, a girl of about four, stood looking on with bewildered eyes. The husband was doing his best to keep a brave face, but the tears were rolling from his eyes. For some time I was too upset to notice the details of the transition. Presently my cousin roused me and directed my attention to the spiritual side of the matter. I realized now that we were not the only spirit people in that house of sorrow, but that many others were present. Her mother and father were there and many of her friends, all waiting with bright faces to welcome her and take charge of her tired spirit.

And now I noticed that the body on the bed was surrounded by a deep-violet aura or mist, in which little discharges of sparks were taking place like those from the brushes of an electrical machine. I asked my cousin the meaning of the violet aura and discharge. He replied: "This colour is to be seen whenever a spirit is leaving

the body. There is always intense activity of the vital electricity, more especially if there is a desire to cling to the earth life, and it is this intensity of vibration which produces the violet tone. In a little while you will see it change." And even as he spoke I saw the violet deepening round the head and the discharge of the sparks grew more rapid. I was becoming quite fascinated, when lo! the body began to take on an extra depth, and gradually above it I saw an exact replica of the old body rising, clothed in light, over the nightdress and bedclothing. This counterpart rose until it was about eight or nine inches clear of the old body. Its face was wearing the same painful expression as the other.

Now the spirit mother drew near and touched the ethereal form above the bed. Then a most glorious awakening came. The spirit, fast escaping from its earthly trammels, stretched out her arms and embraced her mother. It was very beautiful to see the smile of greeting on her face. Yet the action was a double one, in which the weary body on the bed also took part. The smile on the spirit's face was mirrored in the wasted face on the bed. All the anguish fled from it, and the shrunken arms and head came forward with the arms of the spirit body. The spirit was now nearly free. The last moment had

arrived. A flash of light passed between the two bodies, and then the mortal body collapsed on the bed a lifeless corpse. The violet aura had gone and a dense grey mist enveloped the dead body.

I looked now on the newly freed spirit. She seemed dazed and helpless and her parents and friends bore her away leaving the poor husband and little ones to mourn their loss.

I had just started to follow the little group of spirits who were retiring with their newly arrived friend, when my cousin called me back and told me I must return to my body. I answered: "Oh! but I should so like to know where they are taking her to!" But he was firm. "No!" he said, "not to-night. They are taking her to a home of rest where she will forget the suffering through which she has just passed!"

"But," he added, as he saw my disappointment, "on another occasion I will take you to see this spirit in her new home."

I asked my guide: "Why, after the first greeting, did she seem so helpless and dazed?" "That," he answered, "is due to the wearying effect of the disease on the spirit and the anxiety as to the welfare of the children she was leaving behind. She was worn out physically and

mentally. They take this condition of weariness with them to the spirit world, but as time goes on it gradually leaves them, and the spirit regains its buoyancy." "But," I asked, "are spirits always weary and helpless when they leave the body?" "No," he replied, "a person suddenly killed will awake on the other side with full powers and sometimes cannot realize for a long time that he is out of the body."

At this point we entered the séance room, and, much as I should have liked to continue the conversation, I was compelled to take charge of my body.

Chapter V

SPIRIT TRAVELLING IN THE BEYOND

The Vale of Rest

A FORTNIGHT after watching the passing over of the lady suffering from cancer, I was entranced at a séance. "Wild Rose," my guide, had taken me very deeply under control, and I found myself free from the body again. Amongst the spirit friends in the room were my two cousins George and Dorothy. They came to me and asked if I would like to visit anyone in the Spirit Spheres. I was delighted, especially as they were going to take me, and suggested a visit to the woman whom I had seen pass over. Somehow she had touched a sympathetic cord in my nature, and I felt an interest in her.

My cousin Dorothy put her arm round me and we left the séance room and all earth conditions and sights, and entered a country which had an exhilarating effect on me. It took me a few moments to accustom myself to it ere I could realize where I was and see the surrounding conditions.

We were walking up a grassy slope, very much like one sees in the Cumberland district. The grass was very green and velvety to the feet, and trees and wild flowers abounded, which added to the charm of this land.

A sense of expectancy filled my mind as we climbed towards the horizon, and I wondered what lay beyond. Whilst we were ascending the slope my companion did not speak and I felt that there was no necessity. A beautiful and harmonious feeling of companionship surrounded us, which brought with it that blissful condition which one feels at times when with kindred souls. Words are not then needed to express the feelings, some binding link tunes each mind to a sympathetic key, and all vibrate to the same note or pitch.

At the top of the hill we sat down by mutual consent. The scene which lay before us was one which would require a better pen than mine to describe.

Stretching before us was a lovely valley, rich in colouring, with trees and flowers. The musical ripple of flowing water came faintly to the ear, as it meandered down the valley and poured itself into a lake in the distance. Along the sides of the slopes were houses of the bungalow type with verandahs covered with creeping plants.

In the centre of the valley, standing clearly outlined against the trees and surrounding hills, was a huge structure with a dome roof which was supported upon white pillars. "Oh! how lovely," I cried, "I could stay here for ever!"

"It is only one of the resting-places," said Dorothy, "where people are brought to recuperate, and where the worries and trials which have worn them out mentally get cleared away."

"A convalescent home," I said.

"Yes," said George, "but we call it the Valley of Peace." The valley was indeed one of peace, everything seemed to breathe of harmony.

Now that I had become accustomed to the conditions and general surroundings, I began to take mental notes of things. I felt at the grass and ground, and to my touch they were identical with the earth I came in contact with in the physical. My body felt real and solid, the trees and flowers replicas of earth.

My cousin saw me examining them and smiled. "You do not find a great difference between the conditions of life here and on earth?" he said.

"No, I cannot realize a great difference, but there is a subtle variance which it is impossible to explain," I replied. "Yes, there is a vast difference," he said, "although apparently there

is little to your sight and touch owing to your being out of the body, and using your spiritual sight, yet this substance which appears to you so substantial, is not visible through any known microscopic power of the physical life. It is ethereal in nature, and ether is really of greater solidity than any known physical substance. The Earth itself floats in it, and is interpenetrated and saturated by it. The whole mass of what we term matter is in reality porous, and not solid, the ether saturates it as easily as water saturates a sponge, and so the spirit, and all pertaining to it, being of an etheric substance, can pass through matter quite easily."

"Whilst the spirit," he continued, "is encased in the physical body, you can only see to the extent of the power of the physical eye, which naturally is limited to the vibrations of earth conditions. When the spirit has 'thrown off the mortal coil,' however, it is limited more to the conditions of the etheric, which appears quite as real and substantial, being of the same nature, whilst the physical world which it has left appears more shadowy—matter which was actually solid to the physical body, appearing only as a shadow, the spirit being able to pass through without feeling any contact."

"I have already noticed that," I replied,

“whilst on these excursions in spirit—it is exactly a reversal of life.” “That is so,” he replied.

Dorothy interrupted at this point and said: “Annie’s time is limited here and I want to take her as far as possible.”

We moved along a path which led to one of the houses. The flowers on either side were beautiful to behold, and were similar in appearance to ours on earth, only much finer in texture and colour. Each flower seemed to radiate colour and life, giving an effect as though light was shining through them. Their fragrance was just as sweet as though they were pouring out a concentrated essence of perfume.

The house we were approaching was of the bungalow type and the rooms were so arranged as to be open on one side. On the lawn at the front was a group of people. One of them, a lady dressed in white flowing robes, came to meet us.

Dorothy told her in a few words how they had brought me on a visit, and she made me feel quite welcome. She took us to the party, but ere we arrived I recognized three of the people, they were the woman I had seen dying, and her mother and father. The latter recognized us at once and welcomed us, and introduced us

to their daughter. What a remarkable change had taken place! All the anguish of mind had gone and the marks and ravages of the disease which had worn her down to the grave were states of the past. She stood before me a beautiful woman, radiant with life and vitality.

"Oh, how wonderful to see such a change in you," I exclaimed. She smiled and said: "It is good to be born again and leave all pain behind; if only my children were here I could indeed be happy." A longing look came over her face as she spoke of her children, her love for them was evidently as strong as ever.

"But," she continued, "I have seen them several times since and perhaps I may be able to help and guide them until they come to me."

We talked about the beautiful surroundings for a short time, when I heard sweet strains of music in the distance. They informed me that it came from the domed building along the valley. The music seemed to add charm to the scene, and I almost forgot that I was only a visitor.

"Are all resting-places like this?" I asked the spirit lady who met us.

"Oh, no," she replied, "they vary according to the spiritual evolution of the person, what is harmonious to one would be obnoxious to another. In this world we are not compelled to reside in

any sphere which is not agreeable to us. There are many people to whom this lovely valley would not appeal, they would not be happy amongst the trees and flowers, and would naturally prefer to be in surroundings similar to their thoughts." "How long do people stay here?" I asked.

"Not very long," she replied, "as soon as she becomes normal she will be attracted to the surroundings of her husband and children, there she will naturally feel she must work, and although they cannot perceive her, she will be trying, in subtle ways, to influence and help. Later, as the ties of earth become weaker, she will settle down more to the home life of the spirit world."

"The duration of their stay varies according to their mental state?" I asked.

"Yes," she replied, "this lady is only tired and a little distracted: but across there," and she pointed to a man who was walking along one of the paths, "is a man who met with an injury to his head whilst in early manhood. He was a brilliant scholar at the time, but it disturbed his physical organism, and he spent a long time in an asylum before passing over. He will be here as long again as this lady."

"But surely he is not insane now?" I exclaimed.

“No,” she replied, “the moment he was free from the injured body, the normal action of the mind began, but it is necessary for the spirit to free itself from the debris accumulated during the period of abnormal activity.”

The conversation now became general, and I felt a strong desire to visit the beautiful structure from which such lovely strains of music were coming.

As though she could read my thought, our guide offered to conduct us. So, bidding adieu to the party, we followed a path along one of the terraces.

We met people on our way, to whom our guide passed a cheery greeting.

I cannot describe to you in words this glorious valley and its inhabitants. No wonder that people who have once got rid of the shackles of the physical life have no desire to return. Whilst on these short visits, I have often expressed the wish to stay, and have done with all the struggles and contentions which beset me, but all to no purpose. When the control leaves my body, some power compels me to return.

I can see now, in mental imagery, this terrace leading downwards towards the bottom of the vale, the rich colouring of its trees and the surrounding verdure, the artistically designed

temple, with the scintillating reflections of many golden hues from its dome, all blending into a harmonious mass of colour, a scene which can only be seen to be fully appreciated, as no brush or pen can paint its glories.

When we arrived at the bottom of the valley we got a clear view of the temple. It stood on a level piece of grassland, about three acres in extent. Its base appeared to be marble; the design was circular with a tier of about a dozen steps, upon the topmost of which stood a number of columns, which supported the huge dome.

We climbed the steps, and then I saw that the interior was similar to the ancient amphitheatres, with seats down to the centre. Here was a slightly raised dais on which sat the musicians. The music they were producing was of exhilarating character. Not the droll, solemn kind associated with some phases of religious service, but breathing of life and health, its vibrations seeming to stir the pulse and make one feel inclined to dance for joy. The musicians revelled in their work, as though it was as much a pleasure to them as to the audience, which was composed of people of all ages.

The scene and music had made me forget that I was only a visitor, when I felt the sensation of being detached, although I made a valiant attempt

to stay longer. My cousins saw the effort, but would not allow me my desire, so we parted from our guide and rapidly made our way back.

It was rather difficult to enter into possession of my body again, so Rose asked my husband to help. I suppose I was to blame for resisting the call when first I felt it. But it was such an entrancing visit that I am sure I should do the same thing again if ever I have the privilege of paying a return visit to such a delightful place.

The Shades of Selfishness

One of the most weird experiences out of the body I ever passed through was a visit to a strange district or sphere in the next world, where conditions existed which were far from entrancing. It occurred whilst my guide "Rose" was controlling my body at a séance. My two cousins, Dorothy and George, met me, and informed me that they desired to take me to one of the spirit spheres.

We first entered what looked like a dense, grey mist to me, at first I could distinguish no details. The feeling was as though I had entered London when enveloped in one of its thick fogs, when one can feel lamp-posts and pedestrians, but not see them. After a time of travelling in this, I

became conscious of light, and could begin to realize that we were approaching someone who was waiting for us.

The first sight was of a bright, illuminated figure in the distance. As we got nearer I thought of the angel who appeared to the prophet Ezekiel, for the description he gave seemed to portray this lone one in the mist. "Then I beheld, and lo, a likeness as the appearance of fire: from the appearance of his loins even downwards, fire; and from his loins even upward, as the appearance of brightness, as the colour of amber." I was too astonished to speak, as I had never seen so bright a spirit before.

Dorothy broke the silence: "This spirit has come to meet us and will be our guide, he is one of the spirits who is doing his best to teach and help the people whom we are visiting," she said.

"But did he know that we were coming?" I asked.

"Yes, he has visited you in your home and has asked us to bring you," she replied.

The brightness which surrounded him seemed to dispel the mist, as though his personality had some power which radiated from him, forcing it away. He was a man of commanding presence, evidently a leader of men. He welcomed us with outstretched hands, and taking both of mine in

his, he seemed to read into my soul with his gaze, and whilst holding my hands I felt a warmth stealing over me, and I noticed that my body began to emit the same kind of light. We stood thus for a few moments, which seemed minutes to me, before he spoke, welcoming me to his field of labour.

“You are an extremely welcome visitor,” he said, “because whilst here I have a mission for you.”

We had already begun to move on towards what appeared to me, through the mist, a huge quarry, from which I could just hear the voices of people evidently of querulous disposition. It was of so pronounced a nature that I hesitated a little, feeling a strong inclination to go no nearer. Our leader saw my hesitation, and said: “Have no fear, the people whom you are going to visit cannot harm you.”

When we got to the brink of this hollow, I saw that the road led to the main street of a deserted village, a look of desolation hung about.

During my other wanderings I had always felt a buoyancy in the atmosphere, as though I could float easily, but now I had to force my way, as though there was a density through which I had to push. I asked Dorothy: “Why is it so hard to travel?” “Because we are entering a lower

plane of life of a more material nature which does not harmonize with our spiritual structure," she replied. I noted the barrenness of the place—no flowers, no trees, only sordid surroundings. The houses were dilapidated, and there were no signs of home life as I understood it, yet there were inhabitants, for I could hear people talking. Our leader seemed to read my thoughts, and pointed to a woman sitting on a doorstep—I had not noticed her before.

"Speak to her," he said.

We walked up to her, but she did not take any notice of us until I said, "poor woman." Before I could say any more she screamed at me: "Poor woman indeed, I am not poor, look! riches, riches, money beyond count, don't call me poor!" and she dived her hands into her lap and brought them up full of money, and let it trickle through her fingers back again, where she continued to handle it. I stood aghast. Her face bore the look of a greedy and selfish person, there were no signs of refinement around her.

I took courage with my friends near, otherwise I would not have dared to speak to her, so avaricious did she appear.

"You have all this money, why don't you live somewhere else in a more beautiful house and district?" I asked.

For a moment it seemed as though I had awakened an interest outside, for her face seemed to show that she was trying to recall something of a past, but it soon passed away and she exclaimed: "Money is everything to me, I love it, what good is life without it?"

"But what is the value of it if you don't use it, surely you can make someone you love happier and brighter by doing so?" I asked.

She quickly replied: "My friends and relations—they only want my money, my savings, my very own—no, I cannot spare it." At this moment she tried to hide what was in her lap, and was looking behind us, and she exclaimed: "Take them away, drive them back, they will rob me!"

I turned about and saw that we were surrounded by a crowd of the most selfish-looking people I had ever seen, and began to feel afraid myself. Their faces inclined me to think that they would not stop at violence to obtain their object, and I forgot for a moment that I was not in the body, so real did they appear. They seemed as though they would lay hands upon us.

Our guide then spoke. "My friends," he said, "you must realize now that you cannot steal, and of what value to you is it here? You are all of

the same class, money, and gaining it by unscrupulous means whilst living your earth life, was your only thought, and now you are stripped of all the value of it and only desires remain. Learn to realize that within the human souls there are greater treasures than money and selfish interests. The moment you do this, and only then, will you know what the wealth of life is." Many laughed and scoffed, but our guide took no heed and walked on, we followed, as also did a few people who had been listening.

The farther we advanced the more desolate the conditions became. The houses were more and more dilapidated, until we came to the face of the rock in which were caverns which seemed to be the homes of hundreds of grovelling inhabitants. There were men and women on all sides of us who had no sense of decency, lewd and common to the last degree. I clung to my cousins, who seemed to have no fear whatever. I felt awfully sensitive, and wondered what kind of sins they had committed to condemn them to a place and condition such as this.

Our leader turned towards me, and as he did so it seemed as though a rift came in the grey mist, and as I followed with my gaze I saw it was caused by a shaft of bright, golden light which was streaming through the mist, cutting it so

clearly that it looked like a chasm of brightness with grey mist for walls. As this light shone upon me, I felt the usual sensation of going under control—for a few moments I lost consciousness, and when it returned, I was floating above my body, which was evidently under the control of some spirit of some high order. I could see the leader who had met us standing by, but there was a spirit even brighter than he, who enveloped my body in his glory. I saw myself lecturing and pleading with the people of this misty sphere. They had gathered round in a group, and evidently some were impressed, for they had a puzzled, wistful look on their faces.

After a time the dazzling light weakened, and I lost consciousness of all. When I came to realization again, I was standing in the mist where I had seen myself lecturing, surrounded by the people, but the man who had been controlling was gone. There was quite a different feeling from those around, they were looking at us with awe, and some of their faces looked brighter and happier. They seemed loth to allow us to go, but our leader made way, and led us back in the direction from which we had come, many following us right to the outskirts of the place. Here we spoke a few kindly words to them, promising to come again.

He came with us to the point where he had met us, but I was too puzzled by what I had seen to talk, until it came to the parting. He then thanked me for coming and helping him to get in touch with the people.

I asked him "why should people live in such a condition?"

"These people," he replied, "have very little more soul than a wild animal, they may have intelligence, but it has been used in the wrong direction. Instead of using it for the benefit of mankind, they have made it a means of degradation. The intellect they have had has been used as a lever to force the natural propensities into a sensuous and selfish groove, they have lived their lives on earth in a cesspool of warped animalism. The hand of death stripped all outward veneer from them, and left the soul in all its nakedness. They will stay in this condition until they realize that there is more in life than selfish aims. The moment they realize the higher attributes, and stretch out their minds towards those conditions of thought which have lifted man higher than the brute creation, will be the moment they begin to evolve. You have been used as an instrument by the more evolved spirits to show them the light; coming from the earth plane, and bringing with you a spirit nature nearer to the

physical than ours, we have been able to use you to link up a chain from the higher to the lower; it has awakened within them a desire for a different state, and so progress has been made."

"And now," he said, after a pause, "it is time for you to return. You will take with you the added blessings and powers of those you have assisted. Another time I will take you to my home sphere, where you will feel happier."

We bade him good-bye and left him. As soon as we left his atmosphere the mist grew dense again, and when we had gone some distance, I turned to look back, and saw him standing, a lone sentinel in a land of mist.

This particular phase of my mediumship has not been so active since I married and took on the responsibilities of home and children. It is probably due to my greater physical interests, and it may be that when my children have all grown up and no longer need me, this may come back to me.

"Spirit Babies"

I have always loved little children, and in my earliest rambles I expressed a desire to see their homes in the spirit world. I have been to "baby-land" several times, but the visit I am recording is the most interesting.

I was accompanied by "Wild Rose," a little Indian girl who was one of my first guides. For fifteen years this little girl was one of my most faithful controls, and I was very sorry indeed when one day she told me that she was leaving me for a time to take up work amongst the spirit babies. Before leaving, however, she trained "Belle," my present control, to take her place, and "Belle," I am glad to say, has proved to be as faithful as her predecessor. "Belle" had been with me twelve months, and was one day controlling my body when I met "Rose" in the spirit world. I was delighted to see her again and to accept her invitation to go with her to see her little "spirit babies."

We entered one of the most beautiful gardens I have ever seen. I cannot give you any idea of the exquisite and wonderful flowers and trees of this celestial garden. Many of them I had never seen before. I had read of fairyland in my childhood, but here was the real place. All that could make the soul of a child happy was here. I saw no houses, only bowers of trees and climbing plants. These bowers were lovely constructions, and I remember noticing many of the climbers of our dear old English hedgerows. Here the honeysuckle trailed its sweetness over wild tangles of traveller's joy, the convolvulus

sprang bell-like from its bed of leaves, and bryony climbed by many a matted tier of shields. Hundreds of children were playing in this lovely garden, some enjoying games and some sitting in groups on the grass. Each group was in charge of a spirit nurse.

“What a lot of nurses there are,” I said to “Rose.”

“Yes,” she replied, “and you will be surprised to learn that the majority of them are women who on earth longed for children but who were denied the happiness of motherhood. Here they realize their most secret yearnings in looking after the welfare of the baby spirits as they come over from the earth.”

My guide led me to a large bower or summer house, where we saw six nurses looking after their little charges. These nurses were beautiful spirits, their ages ranging from about thirty- to forty-five. The eldest who was in charge of the nursery, was a woman of commanding presence but kindly disposition, and “Rose” informed me that she had been a nurse on earth. There were sixteen babies, all looking very ethereal and delicate. Their little skulls seemed worn thin as shells.

“How small and delicate they are,” I exclaimed.

The nurse answered: "These children never had an earth life. They all died before birth, but we care for them here and they grow up to be men and women."

"Then they have no earthly experience at all?" I remarked.

"Not, indeed, the same kind of experience as you and I have had," she replied, "but as they grow up, they often visit the earth and gain a good deal of experience by moving amongst living people. Very often they will join their own family circle on earth, and so learn something of home life."

"But about education?" I inquired.

"They are all taught," she answered, "but the teaching is on very different lines from that on earth. For instance, commercial education here is quite unnecessary, as these children are not destined for any competitive struggle for existence. We teach our children to appreciate beauty in all its manifestations. We teach them to dance, to sing, to express themselves spontaneously in their individual ways. One child has a gift of music, and we cultivate that. Another has a fine sense of colour. Others have constructive gifts. We discover what each child's gift is, and help him to realize his own individuality through that gift. We do not cram our

children's minds with stodgy facts, as you do in so many of your earthly schools. Above all, we teach them to love."

"Will all these babies who have had no earth life beyond the womb of their mothers have the same mentality?" I asked.

"They will vary in temperament just as much as the children on earth," she replied. "Each little child here is the result of the fusion of the life forces of its earthly parents and brings with it into the spirit world the inherited tendencies of its forebears.

"Of course," she added, "they come to us at a very tender age, and they come, moreover, into a far more helpful environment than they have on earth. It is a victory of environment over heredity."

While we had been talking I noticed that the spirit bodies of the young children seemed different in substance from the bodies of their nurses who had enjoyed an earth life. It is difficult to express just in what this difference consisted, but it was as obvious as the difference in the textures of a piece of linen and a piece of silk. I called the nurse's attention to this, and asked for an explanation.

She said: "You are asking me a question which I have often thought about, but which I have

never been able to answer as my knowledge is too limited. I can only account for it by supposing that in some inexplicable way the spirit while in the earthly body gains in substance by extracting a certain amount of nourishment from the elements of physical life. This substance makes the spirit body coarser or finer as you have observed. The bodies of these children when they grow up, will always be finer and more ethereal than yours or mine."

I said: "That would explain why we so seldom see these children in the séance room. Their bodies must be too ethereal and not sufficiently physical for our gross sight to perceive."

"That is so," she answered, "but there is another reason why you do not see them. The earth has very little attraction for them. Their parents did not want them, and they were sent to this life prematurely, poisoned or murdered in some abortive way. Parents little realize that when they come over to this side they will have to meet these children."

As my time was limited and "Rose" was anxious to show me more, she led me away from the bower and conducted me to her own little charges. These were children of two or three years of age. Their dress was of a light gossamer texture, and the tint varied with each one. Their

nurses were playing games with them and they all seemed very happy.

I stayed just a few minutes watching them, and then "Rose" took me quickly from group to group, till we came to groups of children of eleven or twelve years of age. It was like one huge picnic.

"Surely, Rose," I asked, "it is not always like this every day?"

"No, not quite," she replied, "this is holiday time, but even our lesson time is happier than your playtime on earth."

I played with the children for a little while. I remember skipping with a rope that was a garland of roses.

Only too soon my stay in this happy place came to an end, and "Rose" told me I must return.

Chapter VI

EXPERIENCES WITH SITTERS

WITH regard to the experiences of those who have consulted me professionally, I have always felt that my relations to my sitters are much the same as those of a physician to his patients, or of a father-confessor to his flock, and I treat the things I learn in the séance room as confidences, always to be respected and never to be divulged without express permission from the sitters to whom I consider they rightly belong. This remark applies, of course, only to my normal clairvoyance and clairaudience, as when giving a trance sitting, my knowledge of what transpires is only gained from anything the sitter may tell me afterwards.

Of my many experiences, some are humorous, some are tragic, and some are so sacred that I can never tell them to the world, but they must remain for ever locked in my heart. Many and many a time I have been so overcome by the emotion of my sitters that I have felt I could not continue my work. How often have I longed to

be able, though it were but for a moment, to hand over my strange gifts of sight and hearing to some sorrowing parent or husband, so that they might have just one glimpse of the reality of the living presence of the son or sweetheart for whom they mourn. All we sensitives feel like that. It is only by laying our personal feelings aside as things of small account, only by remembering that we are the foot-soldiers of a great movement that uses us, and indeed works through us, that we gain the strength to go on giving sittings day by day.

And yet perhaps the greatest lesson that my forty years of professional work has taught me, could be put into a couple of sentences:

“They still live, they still love—these people who have passed beyond the veils of physical sight and hearing. They still try to help and sympathize with their friends when they are in sorrow, and share their joys with them when they are happy.” In the end it all comes to that; love is stronger than death, and is the bridge between the two worlds.

One morning, while dressing, I saw clairvoyantly a young man whose appearance was so real as to almost startle me. He said:

“I am R.R., my mother is coming to see you to-day and I want you to comfort her,” and then disappeared. I went downstairs and looked over

my appointments list, but could not find any such name. Since, however, for purposes of evidence people often booked under assumed names, I thought "R.R.'s" mother might be one of these.

In the afternoon my maid announced that a lady wished to see me. I found two ladies waiting in my room, and I spoke to one of them and asked if she had an appointment. She replied that she had not, so I told her that I was not well enough to see more persons than I was expecting. Before she left I asked if by any chance her name was Mrs. R., but she said she did not know the name. I told her of my experience with "R.R." in the morning, and then she rose to go. I was somewhat surprised to see that the other lady did not accompany her, for I had assumed that they were friends who had come together. When I returned to the room I was greeted with the words: "I am R.R.'s mother." I was overjoyed to be able to comfort her. In this case the boy clearly knew of his mother's impending visit, and his desire that I should comfort her was evidence of his love.

It is not, of course, usual or even common for the spirit to anticipate the sitter. We mediums, like all other people, have to live this mundane life with its engrossing affairs, and our brains are

not always tuned to the vibrations that at every hour of the day are trying to reach them.

A lady came one day from Wales to see me, and though I was able to give her accurate descriptions of her two brothers who had been killed in the War and to get a good deal of other evidential matter, I was, at the time, quite unable to give either of their names.

About a week later I was alone, writing at my desk, when I saw these same two spirit boys standing by my side. I heard one of them say:

"It's all right, Mrs. Brittain, I am Saul."

His whole manner was so jocular that I did not take him seriously, so he hastened to add:

"Well, if you don't like Saul, call me Robert."

The other boy said:

"I am Fred."

I wrote to the lady telling her of the incident, and she wrote in reply that both the names were correct, that one was "Saul Robert," commonly known as "Rob," and the other was "Fred." She also enclosed a photo showing a group of soldiers and suggested that I should try to pick the boys out from it. I could only find one of the boys on the photograph, and I marked it, saying that the other boy was not there. The lady in reply said that I was perfectly right.

This is a case in which the two boys, on account

of difficulties that we do not fully understand, were unable to give their names at the time their sister was present, but being exceedingly anxious to establish their identity beyond all possible doubt, took the first favourable opportunity of doing so.

I am sometimes asked: "What are the conditions that make a successful sitting?"

Something depends of course upon my own state of health. I have often noticed that on days when I am feeling run-down, my psychic faculties are nevertheless very active: at the same time, if I give sittings at such times, I suffer heavily afterwards.

A very great deal depends on the sitter. Speaking generally, I find that I obtain the best results for the people to whom I feel naturally attracted. It is a question of that mysterious thing we call "temperament." It does not seem to matter how sceptical my sitter is, so long as I can feel at home with him. We get a faint inkling of understanding when we remember that our relations with the spiritual world take place never directly by means of the normal waking consciousness, but always through the medium of the subconscious, and it is the subconscious which, as the psycho-analysts tell us, is the arbiter of likes and dislikes, of attractions and repulsions.

In this connection we all know that community of conscious interests, the fact of being of the same trade, does not constitute any real link between people. Two poets will often detest each other as vehemently as a couple of game-cocks. Byron had nothing but contempt for Keats, and Wordsworth did not exist for Shelley. On the other hand Chopin admired Bach, to all appearances his very antithesis, and Robert Louis Stevenson, always consumptive and delicate, was attracted to any big, red-cheeked vital fellow.

I remember one day there called to see me anonymously, a gentleman whom I afterwards learned had lost his son in the War and was anxious to know if he still lived and was able to communicate.

He confessed frankly that he was sceptical, but open to conviction. After chatting for a few minutes, I saw the spirit of a young officer, and the first words I heard him say were "Light up, Dad." The gentleman was very excited, and he said that whenever his son wanted to chat with him, he invariably opened the conversation with these three words. Towards the end of the sitting my client remarked: "Well, my son has given me remarkable proofs of his identity; now can he tell you what my profession is?" Like a flash I heard the spirit reply: "Not guilty, my lord."

The father was astounded; he told me he was a barrister, and that the boy had often poked fun at him with this same phrase.

Previous to this sitting, a lady whom I afterwards knew to be the mother of the young officer described above, had been to me, and I had given her what she said was a perfect description of her son, and had got the name of "Kenneth." He had then smiled and said "Billy Boy," which she afterwards told me was her "love name" for him. I then described a lady, who told me her name was "Annie," but she liked the name of "Nancie" best. I said she had passed over at about the age of fifty-five through cancer. My sitter told me I had described her mother most clearly; that her name was "Annie," but she was always called "Nancie" as she much preferred it. I also saw a dog with Kenneth which I described, and said it had a fairy name. After a slight hesitation I gave the name of "Puck." The boy also told me that the dog had been killed quite suddenly through an accident. The name proved to be quite correct, and the dog had been run over by a motor. Kenneth also said: "Give my love to ——" and signified the name by drawing a rabbit. His mother laughed and said: "I quite understand, the message is for his fiancée whose name is 'Bunny.' "

Towards the end of the sitting the boy said: "I must go to Dad, he has gone home and is alone." The lady looked at her watch and found the time was then a quarter to five. On reaching home she asked her husband what time he had arrived, and he replied: "At about a quarter to five," which quite confirmed the information given her by her son. So impressed was she with the sitting, that she persuaded her husband to come and see me, which he did with the result as previously described.

It is very singular at times how the spirit people manage to give me names. I usually hear them clairaudiently, but not in every case. Sometimes they will show me a symbolical picture.

A lady called on me one day without making an appointment, with an introduction from the editor of an Irish newspaper. I was not engaged at the time, so I gave her a reading. I described three boys to her with a great deal of evidential matter, but could only get the names of two—her nephews. The other, her son, although he gave me the most evidence, either would not, or could not, give his name. The lady pressed me to get it, but it was of no use. She told me not to trouble any further, as the messages and evidence given were remarkable, although she felt a little disappointed that her only son should have a

difficulty in giving his name. She said that she had kept it well in her mind, so that I should get it easily. Just as she was leaving the room the boy gave it to me. I exclaimed: "I have it, it is 'Leon.'" "No, that is not it," she replied. I felt nonplussed—it seemed so clear to me. "I will tell you how he gave it to me," I said. "He sketched a bar of music, and instead of notes he put letters—commencing at the farther end of the bottom line, the letter 'L,' on the line above 'E,' and above those 'O' and 'N.'" "You have it," she exclaimed, "his name is 'Noel,' and when teasing the family it was characteristic of him to put things the wrong way round. He was a good musician when on earth, and if he had survived the War was going to sit for the degree of Doctor of Music—hence his original method of giving his name."

The following is another example where symbols were used as a means of identification.

At a sitting I gave to a gentleman "A.D." on 1st December, 1919, I described a young lady who appeared so surrounded by wild roses that I mentioned the fact to the sitter, as I felt she wished me to give this as evidence of her identity.

He wrote me afterwards and said: "My little lady of the roses identified herself in a way that was least expected by me, but was more

convincing than anything else could have been, although it must have been puzzling to you." He subsequently said that he first met the lady in question on Queen Alexandra's Rose Day, when she, amongst others, was selling roses in the street, and ever afterwards, wild roses had a special meaning to them.

I have realized since, through many experiences, that the difficulty lies in the fact that the name is so wished for by the sitter, and this seems to have the effect of keeping it back. It is best to allow the spirit who is making the effort to get evidence through, to give it in his own way and time.

When here in the physical world, no two people think along the same lines, or present facts in quite the same way, and the change of death does not alter personality.

It often happens that information is given to sitters, which is not known to them at the time, but which is afterwards verified, as the following incidents will show.

On 29th March, 1919, a Mrs. F., who was quite a stranger to me, called for a sitting.

I described a soldier to her, and said that I felt his life had been uselessly thrown away through some mistake. I saw him quite close to the enemy trenches, heard confusion and noise,

and saw white puffs of smoke. I then saw him fall, but did not think he was killed outright, as I felt he died afterwards through physical collapse, and I heard him say: "I thought I was made of tougher stuff than that."

At the close of the sitting Mrs. F. told me I had given her a very accurate description of her husband, who had been reported "wounded and missing" since June, 1918, and the only information she had been able to get was that he and a few other men had been sent on a dangerous mission, and it was known that they had all been either killed or wounded, but it was thought that the wounded men had been picked up by the enemy, as they were close to their trenches. She had, therefore, hoped that her husband might be a prisoner of war and still alive, but I assured her that this was not so, as she would subsequently find out.

Mrs. F. afterwards informed me that the sequel came a few days after the séance, when her father-in-law called to see her. She could tell by his grave manner that he had evidently had bad news. Some strange impulse made her say to him: "I know what you have come to say to me, but let me tell you first." She then narrated the description of her husband's death as I had seen it. Her father-in-law was astonished, and

could hardly believe that she had not been in communication with the sole survivor of the missing company to which her husband belonged. This man had been wounded and taken prisoner, and had only returned to England two days previously. Her father-in-law had called upon him in hospital, and he had given him an account of the death of Mrs. F.'s husband, which accurately corroborated what I had already told her a few days previously. Her husband had fallen in the way I had described, and died about twenty-four hours afterwards.

A Mrs. W. came to me for a sitting on one occasion, and I recognized her as a lady with whom I had quite recently had an appointment.

She told me that at the close of the first sitting she had felt very disappointed, as, although I had given her an accurate description of her mother-in-law, whom she had not known personally in earth life, as she had died before Mrs. W. met her husband, but with whose characteristics she was well acquainted, having heard a great deal about her, the evidence was spoilt for her by two statements I made, which at the time she thought were quite wrong. I said that the lady's name was Sarah, but she had always heard of her as "Kitty," and looked upon this as a failure upon my part. I then said she

wished me to say she was quite well now, and even her bad leg was better. Mrs. W. said that her mother-in-law was a very active woman, and had never, to her knowledge, had a bad leg.

On reaching home, however, she asked her husband what his mother's real name was, and he replied that it was "Sarah," but that his father had called her "Kitty" from the day of their marriage, and "Kitty" she had remained ever since. She then mentioned the second incident which she had looked upon as incorrect, but her husband said that it was perfectly true also, as he remembered when he was a small boy and until he was in the early twenties, that his mother had suffered very much with her leg, and he had often rubbed it for her.

On 14th July, 1921, I gave a sitting to Dr. Ellis Powell and Mrs. Powell, at his private house, and the following is an account given in his own words as published in *Light*:

A number of descriptions were given, many of them highly evidential and conclusive. As usual, I took a verbatim shorthand note, and the following is a transcript of two allusions which completely beat us:

"There is one lady very close to the Doctor, very tall and very straight, and looks young, and she brings such influence of passing away when her baby was born. 'Jane or Jenny.'

"There was a friend of the Doctor's, a friend who

worked with you for a time and went down in the *Leinster*. It is a gentleman mixed up with engineering (this person has not been identified). There must be someone with him who passed away with a cancer. I feel so hungry, a sort of feeling of part of the body which would create starvation, stopping the throat. A bonnie man, a jovial man. There is a man named Robert with the Doctor who is worrying him very much, not a relative. When I said the cancer was in the throat, he said I got the wrong end. I wonder what he means by that?"

As I said, these allusions completely beat us. They remained mysteries until last Christmas, when my wife's mother, an old lady of eighty-three, happened to be staying with us. I suggested that we might read over the descriptions to her with the idea that possibly she might identify the persons.

Sure enough, she did so at once. Jane, she said, was an aunt of hers who died in childbirth many years ago, taking her baby with her. Robert was an uncle of hers. The cancer was not in the throat but in the liver. This was obviously what the spirit meant when he told the medium she had "got the wrong end." In the latter stages of the disease the patient had to be fed by injection—a fact which, of course, accounts for other allusions by the clairvoyant.

There can be here no question of telepathy, for neither my wife nor myself had the remotest knowledge of Jenny or Robert, either when the reading was given in July or at any time until the identification was made after Christmas.

On writing to some of my sitters, asking for permission to publish incidents connected with their séances with me, I have received such clear

and concise replies, that I feel I cannot do better than to reproduce them exactly as they write.

The following letter was received in November, 1921, from Mrs. McC., who said she would like it placed on record:

“On 26th August, 1920, I sat with Mrs. Brittain for the first time, to meet our son David, who was already a good communicator. Mrs. Brittain did not know our names, or who we had come to meet, and the interview was successful entirely so far as David was concerned, but I also had the great pleasure of having my mother described, and receiving a message. She had never come before, through other mediums, and I wondered why! Now I understand—others of her calibre have since come to me at Mrs. Brittain's, and I think she has a special aptitude of getting into touch with people of a shy, sensitive and refined nature.

“In this instance the medium said: ‘I see behind you a tall lady with a background of red roses, and I sense violets, which mean motherhood. She knows you have not come for her, but she wants to give you a message.’ ‘In my Father's house—xiv chapter St. John's Gospel.’ Many years ago, when my mother was almost alone in the big old house where we were brought

up, visiting her one day, I saw, laid open on her old chest of drawers, her Testament, marked at the verse which contains those words. I said: 'What is this,' and she said: 'I have ceased to worry about the old house and repairs, dear, in my Father's house are many mansions.' She soon after that occupied them. At this time I was myself worrying about a house, and she gave me this reminder.

"At another séance with Mrs. Brittain, she brought me snowdrops. Now snowdrops in the particular part of Australia where I lived, were rare, but on the anniversary of my children's deaths, my mother managed to get snowdrops for me, and in an old envelope I still have some of them pressed.

"Once, on 21st March, 1921, I went to Mrs. Brittain and got a birthday message for a friend of mine. The joys of past birthdays were described. She was one of those whom the world spoils a little. Primroses and violets were given as peculiar to the day. The night before I had dug primroses from the wood for her, and sent her a pot of violets.

"I once took a test letter to Mrs. Brittain for someone, and it was answered in the symbolism which the letter contained, the contents of which were unknown to me.

“Mrs. Brittain can also get messages for one in one’s absence. Looking one day amongst my boy’s papers, I found an old song he loved to sing as a little boy. I wrote to Mrs. Brittain, and asked if she would ask David what the song was which lay on the table by my bed. After a day or two she wrote to me and said: ‘I got the name of the song as “The Rosary.”’ Now when I left my old home in Australia, ‘The Rosary’ was most beautifully sung at a farewell gathering, and always when I hear it now, the love of my old home and country wells up in my heart. The name of the song on my table was ‘My Country, ’tis of Thee.’

“One day Mrs. Brittain sent me a message from my friend Rose, as follows: ‘That she liked working with the boys, and did not like to be left out.’ I found that in reporting a séance where the names of a certain group of David and his co-workers had been enumerated, her name had been left out, and I hastened to include the name of Rose amongst them.”

During the month of January, 1921, a Norwegian lady, Mrs. W., came to see me, and I afterwards received a letter from her, telling me how pleased she was with the result. The following is an extract from that letter:

“Whilst at your house I met my father, Johan, my sister, Elizabeth, and my father-in-law, Jonas, besides other spirits who are dear to me. You were able to describe them and say their names quite distinctly, and you gave me their messages, which have done me a great deal of good. You asked ‘Have you got a sweetheart in the other world, a young boy is sitting beside you, keeping his arms round your neck. He looks like a flying boy, he wears a cap and clothes something like those worn by pilots.’ As you described him, I knew him at once. It was my boy just as he dressed for snow ski-ing.

“He did not give me a message at that séance, but when I brought my husband a few days later, I knew then that he had reserved it so as to convince his father. As a proof that he remembered everything, he gave a description of our house and garden in detail, and the different rooms where his pictures are. He sent his love to Grannie, to his nurse, ‘Bine,’ and our little dog. He described all of it so distinctly, and so full of life and humour.

“He told me to give away his clothes (I had not been able to do so) and asked me to wear his woollen scarf. I told you that he was wearing it at the time he was lost, but you said: ‘He insists it is a woollen scarf.’ I thought that you were

mistaken, but on returning home, I remembered I had given him my own, a newer and better one before he started out. You will understand how fond I am of the old scarf.

“Your description of how he went out in the blinding snowstorm, a storm in which even hardy mountaineers would not venture, got separated from the party, and eventually fell down a high cliff, is quite accurate.”

On several occasions my sitters have been foreigners whose language I do not understand. This does not appear to have prevented the spirit people from conveying their messages in their mother tongue, however, as the following letter will show. In this instance an interpreter was absolutely essential, as my sitters did not speak a word of English, and I did not understand Italian, and the following is a copy of the letter which the interpreter sent to me:

“The following is an account of some sittings I had the pleasure of attending with you, at which your facility in ‘getting through’ foreign names was clearly demonstrated. I feel certain it will interest you.

“In the first place I was informed by you during one of my visits, that I was going to meet a person

from Italy, who would ask me to act as his interpreter during his stay in London. That I was to accept this engagement, as it would not interfere with my own business affairs. A fortnight later the prophecy was fulfilled, and I took up my duties with Signor M. of Naples, who, with his wife, was on a visit to London for the first time. Hearing from me that, through you, I had known I was going to meet him, Signor M. expressed the desire to meet you, and a sitting was arranged, at which I was present as the Signor's interpreter. It lasted two hours, during which time the Signor's father, three brothers, a sister, an aunt, and a friend, 'came through.' You correctly described in detail their appearance, manner, and the cause of their passing over, whilst their respective names were correctly given as follows: 'Tomaso,' 'Antonio,' 'Davide,' 'Roberto,' 'Margherita,' 'Caterina,' and 'Luigi.' Signor M. himself being called by his childhood's pet name of 'Bimbo Gioia.'

"A discussion on intimate matters, only known to himself, was carried on by Signor M. and his spirit relative, through you.

"On returning to his hotel, Signor M. described the result of the sitting to his wife, and, her interest being awakened, I arranged another sitting, notwithstanding that she was a confirmed

unbeliever in the continuity of life after death.

"I again acted as interpreter. This time, besides Signor M.'s relatives, also came through Signora M.'s mother, two sisters and an uncle. They were correctly described in the most detailed way, including the manner and cause of their passing over, and as before, their names were correctly given as follows: 'Matilda,' 'Elena,' 'Guisseppina,' and 'Enrico.' Signora M. being addressed as 'Carissima Angela' by her spirit mother. Messages were given for Signora M.'s two brothers, 'Mario' and 'Edvardo,' who are still in earth life, as well as for her father, whom you correctly said had married again and had three more children. A remarkable thing at this sitting was the information that an uncle of Signora M., who had disappeared from home many years ago and was thought by everyone to be dead, was still alive and living in America. You gave this man's name correctly: 'Francesco.'

"You will see that these sittings were really extraordinary, when one considers that you do not speak Italian, that Signor and Signora M. do not speak English, while I myself knew absolutely nothing of the family history of the latter.

"The sitting convinced Signora M. of the real living existence of her mother, and she left it a completely changed woman."

On one occasion I gave a sitting to a gentleman from Iceland, and the following is an account of it, which he sent to *Light* on 12th November, 1921.

THE EVIDENCE FOR SPIRIT COMMUNICATION

A sitting with Mrs. Annie Brittain

(By EINAR H. KVARAN, of Reykjavik, Iceland)

I

I WENT to Mrs. Brittain's house, together with my son, on 21st October, 1921, at 6 p.m. Mrs. Brittain had absolutely no means of knowing anything about me. I had come to London from Iceland ten days before, and there is not a man in London who knows anything, so far as I am aware, about my family affairs. I am making this report from the notes my son took on the spot.

After sitting about a minute, silent, with closed eyes, so far as I understood in prayer, Mrs. Brittain tells us that there are two spirit ladies with us, both very lovable. One of them is rather old, she does not know how old, but at least more

than fifty, though looking younger than she really was. "Medium height, rather broad, but had got much thinner before she died. The face round, blue eyes, rather long nose, the cheeks red. Very active and orderly. Well dressed. Whatever she wore it always looked neat. She has lacework on the dress about the collar. Now she has put on another dress with some sort of stripes on the skirt. She was fond of lace. She is strongly built, with broad shoulders. She has a brooch, rather a large one. She suffered much internally before she passed away. She died very suddenly, and sooner than she or others expected.

"The other lady is young, taller, more slender, with a longer neck, good-looking. She calls the elder lady 'mother.'"

Now Mrs. Brittain tries to get a name. She harps on "Mar," "Mary," but does not get it. She tells me that she is trying to catch the first name of the young lady. "She has two names; she died in childbirth."

She says the young lady parted her hair on the side.

"There is a boy-baby with her. There is also another boy with her, much bigger."

I asked her if he is very much bigger.

Mrs. B.: "He seems to me to be grown up. She passed away across the water. She tells me

she has met your friend who was drowned. His hair is curly. Fine forehead, straight nose, good-looking. The hair parted and long, and looking like an artist's hair. She says she has known him in the earth life. Rather strongly built, but not fat. Who is Edward? That is your friend.

"There is an anniversary in connection with her now, or about this time. It is either a birthday or an anniversary of someone's death."

Mrs. B. tries to give the name of the young lady; she says that it sounds very much like Matilda. "But she has another name, shorter, only three or four letters, but I cannot get it. There are three children with her, all boys, and one of them grown up. . . .

"Karl or Charles is a relative of hers."

Mrs. Brittain then says she will try and give the name of one of the boys. "Sig. . . Sigurdur." She has some difficulty in pronouncing it, but at last it comes quite distinctly. The name of another of the boys begins with M.

"There is something about a cup of tea."

I ask her if she is sure it is tea.

"No, I don't know. She just shows me a cup and a saucer, and there is something in it. Something smoking hot and white, as if there was cream in it. It may be tea, and it might also be coffee.

"Joseph sends his love."

Mrs. B. then tries to get the name of the old lady, but cannot catch it. "Katrin" (with the accent on the first syllable). "Can it be Catharine?"

"You are going away from London, but you don't know where you are going. Something unsettled."

I ask her if she thinks I am going home the direct way. "No; you are going a roundabout way, stopping at some places before you get there.

"Peter—there is someone by the name of Peter. It is an old man. Now she is saying 'Poor Peter,' and she laughs. She is laughing so much at Peter. She is laughing all the time.

"Einar." Mrs. B. gives the name without any explanation, so I ask her:

"What about Einar? Is he one of the boys?"

"Yes. She is speaking about some book in connection with her that you have got. You do not read often in that book. And now she laughs.

"Now she is saying she was sorry to go away. She could not help it. It is all right now: she has her work to do there. She really could not help going, but she knows that, in a way, it was her fault. She is very happy now, and although she has her work, she has really never left you, and she is always with you.

“She sends her love to a lady here, a very fair lady, nice-looking, round face, not very old, but the hair is getting grey. She is trying to give me the name.”

Mrs. B. cannot catch the name, but at last she exclaims: “Mamma—Matta!”

“Mamma is not well; she is worried and anxious. Her leg is very tired.

“There is something being parted with. A house—but that will be all right, and no need to worry on that account.

“There is someone by the name of Percy. He is not on the other side; he is alive. She sends her love to him. She sends also her love to Matilda. She is getting on fine. There has lately been a change for her for the better. She wishes her much happiness.

“She says that you got a picture of herself after she passed over, and she is very satisfied with the place in which it is, but she thinks the picture is rather too smart-looking.”

Now Mrs. B. says that she does not see the spirits as clearly as before, as the power is vanishing. And the sitting closes at seven o'clock.

II

There cannot be any doubt in my mind that the two spirit ladies whom Mrs. Brittain told me of were my first wife and her mother.

The description of the old lady was strikingly correct in every detail. Only I do not know about her brooch, nor her dresses nor her aversion for dark colour. It may be all correct, but I cannot tell. Her name was Karen. Mrs. Brittain could not come nearer to it than "Katrin." The description of my wife is quite correct, so far as it goes. She parted her hair on the side, at the time we were married. She went with me to Canada ("across the water"). We had two boys, Einar and Matthias, and she died, at the age of twenty-five, in Winnipeg, Manitoba, of puerperal fever, after having given birth to the younger one. Both the boys died in their first year. Her names were Maren Matilda (or Mathilde as the Danish form of the name is, for she was a Dane); but she was always called by the last name.

I had a boy by my second wife, whom we lost at the age of fifteen. His name was Sigurdur. I have frequently been told by mediums that he is much with my first wife. These three boys are the only children I have lost.

"Edward" I knew very intimately. We shared

rooms for two years when we were both students at the University at Copenhagen. The description of him is absolutely correct. His second name was Edward. He used to be called by his first name, Bertel, but, as a matter of fact, he was rather fond and proud of his second name. My first wife was acquainted with him.

About the "anniversary" there is this to say, that the sitting was held on the 21st of October, and my first wife passed over on the 21st of November.

So far as I know, my wife has no relative by the name of Karl. The name of one of her brothers is Michael. When I first met her I did not know that brother, and when she mentioned him the first time I did not catch the name, and thought she had said: "Min Karl" (meaning "My man-servant"). The misunderstanding was soon cleared up, and we laughed over it. I certainly do not affirm that an allusion was made at the sitting to that misunderstanding, but when this name of "Karl" was given the incident instantly came to my mind, and I am rather inclined to think that the name has been given as a kind of joke.

The allusion to the "cup and saucer" is rather touching, if I understand it rightly. Sometimes at the time we were living in Winnipeg, we had

no servant. In the cold of the Manitoba winter I used to get up in the morning, make coffee, and bring it up to my wife in bed. She appreciated this very highly and wrote to her mother in Denmark about it. Many years afterwards I made a visit to my mother-in-law. One of the first things she mentioned was the coffee that I had brought to my wife in the mornings. It seemed to me that she made ridiculously much of this simple fact. But the old lady took it as an evidence that I had been kind to her daughter. She was offering me coffee at almost any hour of the day, and usually at the same time made a mention of the coffee that I had myself been making in Winnipeg.

My brother, Joseph, a clergyman, died in Iceland some years ago. It is quite correct that I do not know where I am going from London. It is "unsettled" if I go home the direct way, or if I am going the "round-about-way" to the South of Europe.

The name of my first wife's father was Peter. He was an old man when he passed over. But the "Peter" she was laughing at seems to be another man. She had a brother by the name of Peter who was a young boy when she died. She was extremely fond of this brother and she was always joking about him. She

laughed almost every time she mentioned him.

The only book which I have got and can connect with my first wife is a cookery-book. She brought that book with her when we went away from Denmark, and I have it still. It is quite right that I do not often read in that book, and I understand her laughter.

Her utterance that she knows that in a way it was her fault that she passed over so early is highly suggestive. She would not have a doctor, and a midwife was called to attend her. The physicians asserted that the midwife had brought with her the infection of which my wife died.

There can be no doubt that the lady to whom my first wife wished to send her love is my second wife. The description is correct so far as it goes. She has a rather difficult Icelandic name, and Mrs. B. could not get it. But at last she gives the word "Mamma." I have never called her anything else for many years, and that is what my whole family calls her. I do not know that she is "worried and anxious" now, but last summer she hurt her leg, and when I went away she complained of being tired in that leg.

I have a daughter by the name of Mathilde. She is called after my first wife. But her relatives

always call her Matta. As seen in the report, Mrs. Brittain gave both these names. The utterance about the change in her life is very much to the point.

So is also the allusion to the "house." In Reykjavik there is a great scarcity of houses. Attempts have been repeatedly made to get us out of the house, which we have rented for the last seven years. I suppose we shall have to leave it before long, although I do not know where to get any other.

The last months before my first wife passed away we lived in the same house as a little boy by the name of Percy. She was exceeding fond of him.

It is correct that I got a picture of my first wife after she had passed over.

If the reader will take the trouble of reading my report carefully, he will find that there are about seventy points that are recognized as either absolutely correct or highly suggestive. Amongst these points are ten names given in full, two approximately, and of the thirteenth name the first letter is given.

As I said in the beginning, there is no possibility of Mrs. Brittain knowing anything of my people. Neither do I think there can be any question of guess-work or chance coincidences. There was

no "fishing" at all, and the correct points are too many for that explanation.

I certainly cannot prove that Mrs. Brittain has not somehow got it all out of my own mind, but it seems to be an extremely improbable explanation. I was not consciously thinking of these points, except that I desired that my first wife and my "grown-up" son should be able to manifest themselves. I had no thought of how they should do it. Most of the points came as a surprise. As a matter of fact, many of them were without meaning to me, until I read my son's notes after I had returned to my hotel.

It seems to me a much more likely explanation that my first wife has really communicated with me through Mrs. Brittain.

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From time to time, records of sittings I have given have appeared in the *Psychic Press*, and I have inserted the following incidents, as I thought they might be of interest to my readers. The first one is not taken from a psychic paper, but is an extract taken from the *London Magazine*:

(*Extract from "London Magazine"*)

"By this time I was thoroughly convinced that communication had been established with my

boy, and was most anxious to pursue it further. At this stage a friend told us of a Mrs. Annie Brittain, a medium to whom we also owe some very convincing proofs.

“Upon the first occasion in which she acted as medium I was told from my father and mother that I would be approached by J—— (my brother) regarding a matter with which I was to advise him to have nothing to do. My brother lives in the North of England, and as I had not the slightest idea of what this message might mean, I got into touch with him over the telephone and asked him if he wanted to see me about anything. He answered: ‘Yes, I was just going to write to you.’ My reply was: ‘Whatever it is about, have nothing to do with it. This is a message from our father and mother.’ He said he wanted my advice as he contemplated contesting my mother’s will.

“Both my parents’ names were given, and though my son appeared in the Army List as Leslie Stuart Wilkinson, his name again came through as ‘Poger.’ We were also told upon this occasion that ‘there were two boys with him—Geoffrey and Malcolm.’ Both were cousins who had passed over during the War. One went down in the Defence, the other was recently killed in action.

“It would take too long, and perhaps encroach too much on space, to give in detail all our varied experiences; suffice it to say, we had the minutest description of people belonging to us, and in some cases intimate instances in their lives. The manner of my mother’s, father’s and brother’s deaths were told me, and that two of these deaths were due to accidents, details of which were described. Shortly after the death of my wife’s father, which occurred since Poger’s, and is the most recent death in our family, we were told of his presence with the boy, his name was given and a perfect description of him.

“In conclusion, I will give the strangest and most wonderful experience of all, though it is of an almost sacred nature, and only our desire to soften and assuage the grief of others induces me to write it. While my wife was nursing her father at Brighton the boy one morning stood beside her in broad daylight. It was about eight o’clock. No theory or explanation will make her accept this as an impression or possible hallucination. She firmly believes the boy to have been actually present.

“A few days later she returned to town, having made no mention of this to anyone, and only told me as we met at the station. That same afternoon we saw Mrs. Brittain. Almost

the first thing she said was: 'the boy wants to tell his mother it was not a dream, the veil was allowed to be lifted for one second. And,' added Mrs. Brittain, 'Joan has also seen him.' Joan is an intimate young friend, who a little time before had told my wife, to her astonishment, that she (Joan) had actually seen him under conditions which placed out of bounds the possibility of its having been a dream. Mrs. Brittain had never heard of and knew nothing of Joan.

"She told us many strange things at this extraordinary sitting. Thus far no medium had given my wife the name of endearment the boy used to her, and she was transfigured with joy when this time he said: 'Good-bye, Angel,' the name she was most used to from him.

"If anyone had told me a year ago that I could read, much less write with credence, the instances here set down, I would have regarded it as impossible. I should therefore like to warn the sceptic who may chance upon this, not to cast it aside with a sneer. Discard if you must, after careful consideration and an effort to understand; but great is the temerity of the man who without care or thought flippantly sets aside the profoundest of questions.

"Whatever our religion may be, let us be sure

that no one of us has a monopoly of truth. By searching the beliefs of others we may find that which answers our greatest need and completes our own imperfect conceptions.”

A MOTHER'S EXPERIENCE

BY H. A. DALLAS

Light, 29th May, 1920.

“A mother who has suffered the great sorrow of bereavement by the death of a dearly loved little son, at the age of three years and a half, has asked me to make any use I can of her experience to comfort other mothers. It is with her permission that I send the following account.

“She was a stranger to me until after the passing over of her child on 9th November, 1919. Shortly after this she wrote to me and I was able to tell her facts which brought hope and comfort to her in her great distress.

“I paid her one visit, and shortly afterwards I visited Mrs. Brittain. I hoped that the child in whom I was interested might be brought into contact with Mrs. Brittain. Of course, I was very

careful what I said, my wish being to obtain for the parents some evidence that their child was still aware of them. When, however, Mrs. Brittain began to speak of motherhood, and said: 'You have been helping a mother who is in a desolate state,' I admitted this, and I added that the child she had lost was quite young. This was the only information volunteered. After an interval Mrs. Brittain reverted to this subject, and described very correctly the characteristics of the child, and she mentioned that a 'Grannie' was looking after the boy. This, the mother thinks, was the child's great-grandmother.

"After I had had this interview the parents were sufficiently impressed by the details given to me about their child to desire a personal interview.

"From the mother's letter I extract the following account of her visit to Mrs. Brittain:"

"I said: 'I want, please, to get into touch with my small son, if I can.' She then gave a perfect description of him except that she said his right arm hung rather limply. This puzzled me, but upon relating this to my husband later he reminded me of a thing that had slipped my memory. Tony, my boy, while playing at diving off the settee a week before he went away, fell,

and bruised his arm very badly, and the bruise was black on him when he passed over.

“She then said: ‘He says you have packed away all his things, but have forgotten a little book with a torn cover, and he is anxious it should not be left behind.’

“On returning from Mrs. Brittain I told my husband about the little book, as I thought I had carefully packed away all Tony’s books, they were so precious to me; but my husband then lifted the seat of a covered settee in the sitting-room, and there, surely enough, was another wee book, with a torn cover, all among some old papers.

“Mrs. Brittain continued: ‘He also says you have packed up his picture, which you kiss every night, in a red flannel.’

“I had, just before going to Mrs. Brittain, folded his photograph, which I have always kissed every night, in my red woolly dressing-gown for fear of its smashing. Tony said he saw the white flowers I put in his christening-cup every day.

“Mrs. Brittain said: ‘He holds violets in his little white hand, and says: “Mummy sent them, but Daddy put them there,” and when Mummy comes, whether now or long after, he will be the first person to meet her with the violets. He

says something about cutting his hair, but I can't catch what he says.'

"Immediately after his passing over, which happened in the hospital, I was too ill to go, but begged my husband to put violets—my favourite flower—in his hands, and to cut me a little of his hair.

"'He also says: "You are going away from Cyril's house, after a little while, in the train to Grannie, and I am coming too. There will be apples there."'

"This is curious, as my husband is very fond of apples, and at the time of the sitting with Mrs. Brittain, she (*i.e.*, Tony's Grannie) had been putting a big dish of apples in our room, which we found on arrival. Cyril, I find, is a little son of the doctor in whose house we lived (*i.e.*, during the few months of their staying in England).

"(It is a point worth noting that Tony spoke of Cyril's house; this is a most childlike touch. It was the doctor's house, but Cyril, the little boy, would be likely to interest Tony much more than the grown-up proprietor.—H.A.D.)

"He said: 'Who taught me about Jesus?' and 'Mummy must be a good girl and I will be allowed to stay with her; if not, I may have to go away.' He also said: 'I have seen Jesus.'

"I asked the medium if she could get into touch

with a dear old Indian Christian servant called Anthony, who served us faithfully before and during Tony's lifetime, and died just before we left the East. She described him almost at once; and, as if to prove his identity, he said: '*Mem Sahib* mustn't think it was Ayah's fault master Tony got the chill. It wasn't Ayah's fault, nobody's, it was the climate and the water.' I asked Anthony if he would help baby to send messages when we were far away from the kind help we could get in England. He said yes, he would, and you know we got the message straight through on Friday night. . . . I do hope you will use our experience. I would love some other bereaved mothers, who feel as I did, to have the benefit of my experience. . . . Tony has taught me to think more of God and less of earth.'

"The great comfort which this mother has derived from the evidence afforded her that her child is intimately associated with her life may help others who are unable to obtain for themselves similar evidence. For she is not an exception; and the truth which she has now learned to realize is true, also for other parents whose love will hold their little ones in a bond death cannot destroy. And how great is the

responsibility this involves! For the influence which they would have exercised in moulding their children's characters had they remained on earth they may still exercise. 'Character, and character only, is the thing that is eternally powerful in the world. Character is the divinest thing on earth.' (Phillips Brooks.) And every parent who holds a child spirit close by love is influencing the growth of that child spirit's character, for good or evil. We understand, of course, that those who pass out of the body can influence us, but perhaps, we do not sufficiently recognize how much we may influence them.

"It is sometimes objected against attempting to get communication from them that we may hinder their progress, and keep them earth-bound. The possibility is a real one, but surely, it is not merely by the incident of communication that we may thus hinder them; if our influence is not for good it will hinder them whether we communicate through mediums or in any other way; if our aim is upward and our thoughts and ideals seek those things that are above, then close and intimate communication will bless both them and us."

VINDICATION OF MRS. A. BRITTAIN

AN EVIDENTIAL SITTING

Light, 20th Sept., 1919.

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE writes under date of the 7th instance:

“Some time ago the journal *Truth*, having acquired the information from me, published in what I consider to have been a very dishonourable way the fact that Mrs. B., whose remarkable clairvoyant results I had described, was Mrs. Brittain. She has been subject to much annoyance and mis-representation by that journal, which was totally ignorant of the remarkable series of cases upon which my opinion was formed. It would be well, therefore, to make public a recent example of this medium’s power, which will show not only how false it is to maintain that her results are from fraud, but also that the overworked theory of telepathy is unable to meet the case. Mr. Hutcheson, of Aberdeen, with a courage which is too often wanting, has allowed me to publish a letter written originally for my own eyes only.”

The following is the letter to which Sir Arthur refers:

“Sir A. C. Doyle, Dear Sir,— I desire to thank you for giving me the address of Mrs. Brittain, and in return I give you an interview that my wife and I had with that lady.

“We called upon her, without previous appointment, on Monday, 11th August, at 4 p.m. She gave an extraordinarily accurate description of our eldest son, who was a lieutenant in the Royal Air Force, and who died in Boulogne from wounds. In physical form and character we could readily recognize the lad, and her mention of several facts of his home life was very evidential. I asked Mrs. Brittain if she could get his name, and without the slightest hesitation she gave us his Christian name. I asked if friends were with him, and he stated through the medium that both grandfathers and two uncles were present, giving their Christian names.

“Most amazing was the fact that the names of two lads who were class mates of his at school and who had been killed in the War were also given. He further desired us to inform the lady next door to us, who had a son missing, that her son was with him; and the name of the young man was given. Mrs. Brittain said my son was giving her a message that B— was correct in telling his mother he believed his brother was dead. We did not comprehend this very well, as

that lad, we knew, was still in the army abroad. But when we returned to Aberdeen we were astonished to find that B—— had returned from the East, and had given expression to that belief. The young man referred to has been missing since April, 1918.

“Our second son, also a lieutenant in the Air Force, killed in October, 1918, was revealed to us, giving his name, and adding loving messages to his little sister (naming her, and also giving an aunt’s name, and that of a lady friend).

“When I asked if he had ever been to our home in Aberdeen since his death, he stated that he was there soon after, and frequently there with his brother. ‘Give evidence,’ I said, and my wife and I were astonished when he informed us of an enlarged photograph of himself, and described a slight defect in the photograph. Now, this enlargement had never been seen by our second son, as it was not in the home until six months after he had been killed. He also communicated the name of the observer in his machine, who was also killed—a Willesden lad.

“The name of a young lady, who was a member of my church choir, and died about twelve years ago, was also given.

“Telepathy! We cannot accept that, because evidence was given of what was not in our minds.

We believe our boys were with us, and are often with us. We had a real communion with them, talking, through Mrs. Brittain, in as natural a manner as though they were present in actual form. And what are we to say about those beautiful messages of hope and courage and comfort which were given, except that we felt very near the gates of Heaven, and that our lives were brightened and gladdened?

“I do wonder what the Bishop of London or Rev. F. B. Meyer (see what he said in a recent *Sunday Chronicle*) would have to say to evidence like this. Instead of drawing us from religion, it is knitting us more to the facts of a risen Christ, and His compassion for sorrowing humanity in allowing these revelations and messages to be sent.

“Yours faithfully,

“J. Hutcheson.

“114 Osborne Place, Aberdeen,

“25th August, 1919.”

Parents sometimes ask me if children born prematurely continue to live and grow up in the spirit world, and if such children watch over their earthly parents, and are reunited with them at death.

Well! I have no theoretical arguments to advance, but instead I will cite one of several personal experiences that have led me to answer in the affirmative.

I remember very distinctly giving a sitting to a gentleman, to whom I described two spirit children, one being a girl of about eighteen, and the other a boy some years younger. Their spirit robes were beautiful, and their spirit bodies of so refined a texture as to suggest that their contact with the earth had been only very slight. The girl, it seemed to me, was teasing the boy about his having no name. She told me that her own name was Alice, but that her brother had none. My sitter appeared puzzled, not seeming to recognize them as his own children. A few days later he came again, this time bringing his wife, with whom he had evidently talked the matter over. This lady now told me that both the children were prematurely born, and both died at the hour of their birth. Had the children lived, their ages would have corresponded with those of the spirit children I had described. She went on to say that before the first was born, they had decided, if it were a girl, to call her Alice. In the case of the second child, no name had been chosen by the parents.

It is hard to imagine a better device by which

the two children could have made themselves known to the parents who had forgotten them.

I am also asked if spirits appear clearer and more solid immediately after passing over than later, when they have been in the spirit world for some time, and personally I think this is so from numbers of experiences I have had, when recently passed spirits have appeared to be so solid that I have mistaken them for physical people. I recall one instance of this when a lady came to see me anonymously. A gentleman made the appointment for a friend, and I was expecting my sitter to be a man. She turned out to be a little lady, however, and when I went in to her to give the sitting I said: "Would the little girl like to sit here?" indicating a chair near the lady. I saw that she looked surprised, and said "What little girl?" and I then realized I had not seen the little girl physically, and upon describing her, the lady told me she was her little daughter who had been run over and killed in the street a very short time previously, when shopping with her mother, and it was to try and get in touch with her that she had come to see me. The child appeared so real to me that I quite thought she had come into the room with the lady.

On another occasion, I had an appointment with a gentleman, but when the time for his

appointment arrived, he did not turn up. As time went on and he still did not come, I went into my séance room to wait for him, and whilst sitting there I suddenly saw a little old lady sitting in the chair opposite me. If I had not known that she had not come into the room since I had been there, I should have thought she was in the physical body, and that my sitter was a lady instead of a man as I had expected. The little lady said to me: "My name is Sarah Turner, my husband is outside. He has lost the address and cannot remember the number." On looking outside I saw an elderly gentleman looking about in a bewildered way, and on speaking to him, I found it was just as the old lady had told me. He was very relieved when I told him I was Mrs. Brittain, and said he had mislaid my address, and although he remembered the name of the road, he could not recall the number.

I might also mention here that the experiences of Paul's mother which are already recorded in book form in "Love and Death," all resulted from sittings she had with me on various occasions.

The spirit people use many different methods of communication in order to convince their loved ones of the reality of their presence. Some choose what are known as "book tests," and the following is an example of this method:

A lady came to me for a reading a short time ago, and an old gentleman who had frequently communicated with her through me, made himself known. My sitter had studied under this old gentleman, and when in earth life, he rather discouraged her interest in psychic matters and the possibility of communication between the two worlds. After his death, however, he soon returned, and seemed particularly anxious to send messages to an old friend of his, who is also a friend of my sitter, and who passed these messages on. At the sitting referred to above, the spirit friend said: "You have a large brown book containing pieces of poetry written by many different poets, look in the poem by Dryden, line fifteen, that line is a message to you."

The next day I had a confirmation of this from the lady. She told me that she had such a book as was described which had been given to her by a mutual friend after the spirit friend had passed on. On looking up the line referred to, she found it was as follows: "And thin partitions do their bounds divide." This was particularly applicable, as early in the morning before coming for her sitting, she had herself been conscious of the presence of the old gentleman, and whilst reflecting on his reason for coming, she had suddenly felt his fingers pass through her hair. He evidently

chose the line of poetry as a double test for her; firstly to let her know that he now realized the thin partition between the two worlds, and secondly to confirm her own experience of the morning. The rest of the poem was also extremely applicable to the old gentleman's earth life, but this is of too private a nature to repeat here.

Telepathy is the hobby-horse of many opponents of Spiritualism, and it has been ridden to death as an explanation of all forms of mental phenomena such as clairvoyance, clairaudience, etc. I could quote dozens of instances, however, where all question of telepathy is completely ruled out, but will content myself with giving two examples:

One Saturday morning I was writing letters in my séance room whilst waiting for a sitter when I suddenly heard a voice say "I wish you would write to *my* mother." Mentally I replied: "I will if I know who your mother is." I went on writing, and presently the same voice told me that his name was "Paul," and that I knew his mother. It then came to my mind who his mother, a sitter of mine, might be, and at once the message came: "Tell mother I am very bucked at what she has done for me but tell her she should not be so extravagant and to look up Longfellow's poem 'Resignation.' " I happened to know the address

of the boy's mother, so immediately sent on his message, but to my surprise received no reply.

Some little time afterwards, however, a man came for an anonymous sitting, and when it was over he told me he was Paul's father and that my letter had convinced him of the truth of Spiritualism, but previous to that he had been very much against it, although his wife had been to me for readings. It seemed that some time before I sent the message, the boy's mother had sent out a rather expensive monument to be erected where the boy had fallen during the War, and the only thing she could think of to put on the stone was "There is no death," but had no idea where it came from until looking up Longfellow's poem after receiving my message. In this case I was not in touch with the boy's parents at the time I received the message from him, and had no knowledge whatsoever about the monument or the inscription on it, so I think it would be rather difficult to explain it by the telepathic theory.

The second example is as follows: I had been staying at a rectory in Cambridgeshire, and the rector, who had recently bought a new car, arranged to drive me back to London. As we were going along I saw a spirit man with the chauffeur who said "Ernest," and I turned to the rector's wife, who had accompanied us, and asked

her if the chauffeur's name was "Ernest." She replied: "I really do not know, we always call him 'Green.'" She mentioned it to her husband who told the man what I had seen and heard. Apparently his name was not "Ernest," but he said the description I had given of the spirit man was just like a brother-in-law of his, whose name was "Ernest," but that so far as he knew, he was alive and well.

On reaching London, the rector asked his wife and me if we would mind calling at Seven Sisters Road for a moment so that Green could see his wife who was staying there, which we did. Green had not been gone long, however, before he returned with a telegram in his hand which said his brother-in-law Ernest had died suddenly that morning. I should like the telepathic fiends to say how their theories could apply in this case, as no one in the car with the exception of the chauffeur knew of the existence of Ernest, and he had no knowledge that he had died that morning at the time I saw the spirit man with him.

Chapter VII

DO ANIMALS SURVIVE?

I HAVE often been asked the question: "Do you think that animals continue to live after death?"

I answer emphatically "Yes!" To try to convince me by argument that the contrary is true, would be like attempting to prove to a child that candy is not sweet, or like a man born blind arguing that there is no such sense as sight, with one who can see, or like a man with no ear, telling a musician that he is mad to think that there are such things as melodies. I know by a hundred touching experiences that my dumb friends survive. This is one of those points on which

"The rest may *reason* and welcome,
'Tis we, the psychics, who *know*,"

to adapt the words of one who was no friend to us.

I sometimes wonder when writers on psychology and philosophy will begin to weigh and consider seriously the meanings we sensitives give in explanation of our own experiences, and begin to

devote a little less time to the bizarre and extraordinary theories of people who probably have never had a psychic perception in all their lives.

Theoretical discussions are foreign to the purpose of my little book; yet perhaps I may be permitted to observe that both Science and Ethics point to animal, as well as to human survival. The ethical position is very clear, once we admit that humans survive. For surely the noble dog, whose eyes radiate love and affection, who will often give his life for his master, is as worthy, or more worthy, to survive, than, say, the human brute who ill-treats him. And the testimony of science is equally convincing. The same great evolutionary processes that raised man's body from the slime, gave to his humble friends their bodies. They, like him, are but expressions of the same great cosmic life that is thrilling all around us. Tree and crystal, animal and man—these are only a few of the lenses that bring to a focus the rays of universal life.

It is often urged that man's intellectual powers are on a different and higher plane from those of the animals. But psychic science is beginning to show that this superiority is not so great as was commonly supposed, if the *whole* mind is taken into account, and not merely the fragment that manifests in normal consciousness. The case of

Muhamed the talking horse of Elberfeld, who in about ten seconds worked out correctly $\frac{4}{1456976}$, makes us pause and wonder whether our dumb friends do not sometimes drink at the same subconscious fountains of mind as the mathematical prodigies of our race.

But to return to my own personal reminiscences. I feel convinced that on some plane or other animals continue to live, and I also believe that whenever there has been a strong tie of affection between, say, a dog and his master, that psychic affinity will be maintained after the death of the animal. I have had much evidence of this.

On one occasion a lady came to see me whom I could not remember ever having seen before, but who told me I had given her a sitting once before. I was puzzling myself as to who she might be, when I saw clairvoyantly, a beautiful King Charles spaniel leap from her lap and settle on the hearthrug. Instantly I was able to place her in my memory. I said: "I remember you now. The last time you came you had with you a pet dog to which I took a great fancy!" "Yes," she replied with tears in her eyes, "he died a fortnight ago."

It appears that on her previous visit I had been more impressed by the pet than by its mistress.

It is quite a common sight to see sitters followed

into the séance room by their dead pets, whose behaviour seems quite as natural as when in the flesh.

On another occasion, when giving a sitting to a lady, I described her father who had recently passed over, and saw with him a rather large brown Pomeranian dog, which seemed very attached to the old gentleman, and I also got the name of "Toby."

"Why, that is old Toby," the lady exclaimed, and then told me that the dog had been a great favourite of her father's, but had died nearly thirty years ago when she was quite a child, and she had almost forgotten him.

It would appear from this that the dog's affection for his master continued for many years after the animal's death, and evidently he was an unseen companion until the hand of death united them again.

While living in the Midlands, we owned a remarkably intelligent old English sheep dog called "Prince." He would quickly pick up tricks, such as ringing a bell at a sign from my husband or myself, after he had been shown them once or twice. At times he would show uncommon initiative. A case in point comes to mind.

During dinner, Prince was always allowed to

stay in the dining-room, and would be given some of the sweet pudding when this was brought in. One day, on which we had friends staying to dinner, we became absorbed in some topic of conversation, and waited rather longer than usual before ringing for the maid to bring the pudding. We were busy talking, when some short snappy barks directed our attention to Prince. We saw him sitting up on the end of the couch, with one paw on the bell-push, a very excited dog, and doubtless annoyed that the pudding did not appear. He had, of course, noticed that pressing the bell-push brought the pudding, and his dog mind had cleverly associated the two things. But his initiative was peculiar to himself.

I must explain now the incident that gives Prince a place in my book, which seems to show that animals themselves have psychic perception.

Late in the evening, we would often take Prince for a stroll, and since his death, I have often heard his feet pattering behind me, especially if I were walking in a quiet neighbourhood, but I could not always see the dog. I would stop suddenly in my walk and listen; I would hear a little swift patter of soft footfalls race up to my feet, and cease, as though Prince had been lagging behind and had just caught up with me. When I went on, I

would hear him trotting by my side. When he was alive, there was a certain shop that we could never pass without his running inside. The intrusion was bitterly resented by the dog which lived there, and the adventure usually ended in a fight. Strange to say, for some time after his death, whenever I passed that shop, the dog inside would rush out and bark excitedly, and chase round and behave just as though he could still see his enemy and was fighting him. In some instances, this would happen before I had reached the shop, as if Prince had run a little ahead and entered.

Yes! I am as sure that Prince survives as I am sure that my brother and sister survive.

I remember another occasion when a lady came to me for a reading, and I noticed what seemed to be like a fur round her neck with a little head just nestling on her shoulder and an arm round her. I described the spirit of a lady whom she did not seem to know at first, but when I gave her the name of "Emily," she said, "Oh, yes, I know Emily, she was a dear friend of mine." I replied: "Well, Emily says 'don't worry, I will take care of Susie.' " The lady was delighted with this message, and then told me that it was in the hope of hearing about Susie she had come to me. Susie, it appeared, was a pet monkey that had just

died, and she always lay on her shoulders with her head peeping over and nestling against her, just as I had seen her when I took her to be some kind of fur. The lady went away perfectly satisfied that her much-loved pet still survived and was waiting for her in the spirit world.

Chapter VIII

PHYSICAL PHENOMENA

THE moving of tables and the bringing of apports is a later phase of my mediumship, and one in which I am not particularly interested. My husband says that it is an important phase, and one which will possibly lead to the unravelling of unknown laws of force in Nature, which up to now are inexplicable.

Perhaps it is the generating of these forces of sufficient strength say to lift a heavy mahogany dining-table, which rather frightens me. When they are about to move the air in the room becomes impregnated with some invisible electrical atmosphere, of which I am the centre, or focusing point. I am so sensitive to this that I feel as though my nervous system was being screwed up to a high tension, every nerve vibrating like the string of a harp which has been twanged.

This state of nerve tension appears to be necessary to produce the psycho-active force which is

required in the production of phenomena of a physical nature.

There is always a connecting link between the object moved and myself, probably as Prof. Crawford stated in his experiments with the Goligher circle, there is a psychic rod firmly attached, built up of ectoplasm.

This was brought to my knowledge on one occasion in a rather forcible manner. I was giving a series of séances to some South African friends who were in town for a short time, and were desirous of witnessing a heavy dining-table moving without any human contact. On such occasions I arrange for a sufficient number of people to be present as will form a large circle round the table, so as to join hands in comfort. Every sitter, including myself, must be at least eighteen inches from it, measuring from the knees when seated, so that it will be quite impossible to move it with knees or feet, and as hands are all joined, no movement can be made without detection. There were two pressmen present, and my husband had arranged for one of them to press the switch of an electric light at any given time when either knockings or movements were occurring. The bulb was shaded with red paper, in order that the conditions should not be disturbed much when the light was switched on.

Unfortunately tests had not been made beforehand, and when the raps on the centre of the table were becoming loud, the light which was too bright, was suddenly flashed on, and to my consternation, and that of the friends on either side, I found myself being drawn by some invisible rope towards the table, and it pulled me slowly from the chair to the floor in a kneeling position.

The flash of light had undoubtedly caused a sudden contraction of this rod which the guides had built up and attached firmly to the table. It did not injure me, but unfortunately the spirit people could not build it up again to produce our usual results.

We have never conducted experiments with spring balances to corroborate Dr. Crawford's experiments, but I have noticed occasionally that when the table is in motion, there is some alteration in the gravity, as I feel a swaying sensation, and a sense of not being so heavy or so firmly seated on my chair; at other times the chair will ease slightly from the floor.

The table usually used is a heavy four-legged extending dining-table made of mahogany. This has been lifted quite easily with three of the heaviest men in the room seated upon it.

My physical mediumship did not develop suddenly. We started a home circle of about ten

people and sat round an ordinary square deal table, with hands resting lightly on the surface. I always prefer a four-legged table, as it does not respond so easily to any pressure which may inadvertently be placed upon it. With the three claw variety, there is always a suspicion that someone is perhaps subconsciously exerting more force, and helping to tip it, and when one is researching in a field in which every researcher is more or less suspicious of the other, it is quite as well to try and arrange conditions which will give as little room for them as possible.

We started this work in the year 1908, and after two years' sitting, we had indications that the table would move whilst our hands were slightly raised above the surface. My guide, "Rose," entranced me, and informed the sitters that the chief guide, "Sammy," thought he could move it without any contact, providing that we sat in darkness. At the next sitting we followed this advice and sat as usual round the table, but kept our hands off, although linked together. After waiting about half an hour without result, we began to hear strange creaking noises as though the wood was warping and twisting. These noises continued for about an hour until we finished the sitting, and were the only phenomena.

The following week the creaking commenced

soon after the light was put out, and grew in intensity as if strong men were straining every board in the table, and I began to think that it would fall to pieces, when suddenly it lifted bodily and came down with a crash. I can quite imagine the spirit friends having a laugh at our expense, as we were not prepared for it. The room being dark, we did not see or hear the table leave the floor, we only heard the crash, and even the calmest of us gave a jump backwards, almost upsetting our chairs.

From this time onward this power increased, and we began to find the movements not so spasmodic, but more orderly and directed with intelligence. The spirit man who was directing or controlling these wonderful operations from the spirit side, is a strong and sturdily built negro whom we named "Sammy," and it is indeed marvellous how he can manipulate a heavy table. He can so balance it as to produce the most delicate movement with precision and speed. He seems to make it a real living object, and one can hardly realize that it is a heavy, dead piece of furniture which is moving and acting as though endowed with life and intelligence.

These are home séances, where friends, both embodied and disembodied, meet in a natural way. It is not a professional séance, no fee is

charged and no presents are accepted. Should we invite a genuine investigator, they come as our invited guest, and there is no formality. We do not sit as though we were at a funeral, or as archangels who can only talk in angelic tones of higher spheres, and the glories of the Godhead, we meet just as loving human friends and we desire neither more nor less. Hence, we are very human at these home gatherings. We realize that our friends who have passed beyond the veil are exactly the same as when on earth, death only removing the physical. They love to visit us, and when we gather to meet them, it is in the same manner as we would if they were physically with us. Often, when there has been a lull in the phenomena, some joke or story has been told at which we have laughed, and those on the other side have shown their appreciation by making the mahogany table laugh, yes, laugh, as plainly as it is possible to show it in that way.

The nearest approach to describing it would be to imagine the table lifted or suspended half an inch from the floor, and each leg rapped on the floor in quick succession, in such a way as to give the sound of a rippling laugh. Occasionally when suspended, they would revolve the castors at a good speed, as though a child were playing with them. At other times we would discuss some

subject or problem, and quite suddenly they would show their interest in it, by violently stamping the table in a negative or positive answer. Very often we would be so interested in the discussion as to forget we were sitting in a circle and that friends unseen were listening attentively and either agreeing with or disapproving of our views, but they would make us quickly realize it by quietly lifting the table a foot from the floor and suddenly dropping it, and I can assure you we felt thankful that it did not drop on our feet.

For conversation we used the alphabetical method—one of the sitters would slowly repeat the alphabet, and the table would knock at the letter required. It would also answer mental questions as well as oral.

Conversation by this means is very slow and tedious, and requires a lot of patience, but that quality is an absolute necessity for those who require evidential phenomena.

After about twelve months of table movements, we began to perceive little knocks or bangs on the pictures and furniture in various parts of the rooms. After a few months they grew in intensity until they sounded as though someone was hitting the centre of the table, giving it a smart blow with the hand.

I asked how they managed to create the sound, and they informed me that an air pocket or vacuum was formed on the object they desired to hit, which was allowed to collapse suddenly, and the volume of air striking the object caused the noise. Whether this would account for all the noises they give us I cannot say, for about this time the spirit of a carpenter joined the band of guides, and he began to give evidence of his presence by simulating the idea that he was driving nails into the table. The sharp "tap, tap," of the hammer on the nail, and the final sound of it being driven home as the face of the hammer reached the wood could be plainly heard. Then he would take his saw, and so real was the sound, that we were surprised, after the séance, to find that the table was not marked. At other times it would appear that he was sawing the end of a board, and when almost cut through, we could hear the easing of the pressure on the saw, and finally, the noise made by the cut piece falling on the floor. He would then commence planing, and the whistle of the shaving as it rushed from the plane was audible to us all. Occasionally, when conditions were very good for physical phenomena, we would hear him whistling a tune whilst at work.

For about two years (1910-11) we frequently

had ornaments and flowers moved and carried about the room. The room was rarely in absolute darkness, and on several occasions we saw things float from the mantelshelf to the table. I never saw any spirit or hand near them, they seemed just to glide across. During one evening, a bright metal dog with a pincushion back, was seen by all present to float over their heads and drop on the table. Not satisfied with this, they extracted all the pins and stuck them in the dresses and even in the stockings of the members present, causing a little surprise to several as they felt the point of the pin touch the flesh.

A Hindu guide joined the band of spirit friends working with me, and whilst I was under his control, apports would appear, and apparently matter would pass through matter. This man must possess a very wonderful knowledge of metaphysics, as some of the things he does seem impossibilities to me even now, yet I know that in some mysterious way the happenings occur.

He worked consistently at our séances for about four years and then disappeared. I thought he had left us entirely, as it was several years before he appeared again. He now comes intermittently and quietly takes control without speaking a word. He will rub my hands together and bring whatever apports he desires, and just as

quietly leave me. This break was perhaps due to my not taking much interest in this class of phenomena, and to the long break in the physical séances during the War whilst my husband was on active service. I can always tell when he (the Hindu) is present in the room, although I might not see him. He radiates an atmosphere which makes me extraordinarily clairvoyant and psychometric, and I see and hear without the slightest difficulty. When apports are brought I am always in an entranced state and know nothing about them until I become normal. According to the information given me by those present, I disengage my hands from my neighbours and begin to rub them, and after a few minutes the apport arrives.

The first one we had was a large branch of chrysanthemum with eighteen flowers on, which dropped into the lap of a lady. It was quite fresh and no flowers damaged; the stem had been broken from the tree, and not cut. It was much too large for anyone to have carried or have had hidden about their person, and we had none in the house. We solved the problem of where it had come from the next day, when my brother cycled over from my mother's house, a distance of about eleven miles. As soon as he saw the flowers he said: "You might have wakened us up

last night when you called." I told him we had not been out of the house. "But you must have been," he said, "you have a branch here which you broke from our plant, and it was there when we watered it last night. This morning when we went in, we found the tree damaged as though someone had twisted the branch off, and Mother said you must have cycled over and found us all gone to bed so would not disturb us." We had the greatest difficulty in persuading him to the contrary, but after meeting several other members of the circle who declared we were at home, he had to accept our statement as to its mode of transit. His only after comment was: "the next time they come pinching flowers, they must bring either scissors or a knife, and not damage the plant."

The next occasion was one Sunday evening, when there were about twenty people in the séance. Two large flower vases were brought from the next room and placed on the floor in the midst of the circle.

Once when Mr. A. Vout Peters was present, roses were brought from his bedroom upstairs and placed on a lady's lap, the spirit friends remarking that they were sorry they had made rather a mess with them, but there was not sufficient power to bring them all downstairs. Immediately after

the séance Mr. Peters went to his room to verify this, and found some of the roses still in the vase, some on his dressing-table, and some on the floor, as though an attempt had been made to bring them all, but they had been dropped as they had informed us. A Dutch Consul was also present on this occasion, and questions were asked and answered in Russian, Danish and French, although I have no knowledge of any language but English. Another interesting event occurred at this séance. The table was moving very easily, and a lady medium present suggested she should sit upon it. This was agreed to, and the lady decided to lie full length and not sit on it. She lay quite still for about two or three minutes and the table did not move; there was not even a creak of the wood which often occurred prior to it rising. "There you are," she exclaimed, "they cannot move it with my weight on it." I was rather surprised as she was not a heavy person, and I had seen it move with three very heavy men on at séances when the power was not so strong.

We were not left in doubt long as to the motives of the guides. We suddenly heard a hysterical scream from the lady: "They are lifting me, not the table," and we could just see her form swaying. We begged of her to be calm, as they evidently were trying to levitate her, but she was

too hysterical, and they suddenly shot her right on the knees of Mr. Peters. One can quite imagine the spirit friends laughing at the joke as much as the members of the circle. I do not pretend to know how the guide managed to bring the apports. We always sat with the door locked so that no one could accidentally disturb the séances, yet they came, and in some mysterious way have passed through doors or walls. Two things my husband and others noticed—the first was that a swishing noise, like the cutting of a horse whip through the air, preceded the arrival—secondly, that a solid article, say a vase, was very hot to the touch, and that it retained the heat much longer than if it had heated artificially. My husband thinks the latter was caused by a disturbance of the molecular action, as on several occasions they were quite hot for half an hour afterwards.

I remember at one séance, a gold brooch I had on my dress at the beginning was not there when we finished, and I was deploring the loss and wondering where it could have gone to. We always provided a cup of tea afterwards, and whilst we were enjoying this and chatting, one of the people suddenly exclaimed: "There's your brooch!" at the same time pointing to the top of the curtains. There it was, sure enough, pinned

securely quite twelve feet from the floor. We had the step-ladder brought and it was got down, but to our surprise, although quite a quarter of an hour had elapsed since the séance, it was still quite hot to the touch.

Before this Hindu guide left my band, I was giving a small séance at a friend's house in London, about Christmas time in 1915. On this occasion there were seven sitters including myself. We sat for some time, and after giving some clairvoyant descriptions and messages, one of the sitters, an old gentleman, exclaimed: "Something has come into my hand," and on being asked what it was, said it felt like roots. Belle, who was controlling me at the time, said: "A lady has brought you some flowers," and from the description she gave he recognized his mother. The gentleman replied that they felt more like roots than flowers, but when the lights were put on, we saw that he was holding a beautiful bunch of violets with very long stalks upside down, and was smelling the ends of the stalks instead of the flowers, which accounted for his thinking he was holding roots.

At the beginning of 1922, my husband and I decided, owing to the scarcity of evidential phenomena of a physical nature, to form a developing circle to see if it would be obtained

under conditions which would leave no doubt in the minds of the sitters as to the reality of it.

Two of the usual conditions prevailing at most séances were to be abolished—firstly, total darkness, an illuminant of some nature to be found by experiment which would give visibility—secondly, music and singing. This latter was not a difficult proposition, as quite friendly conversation is a good substitute, although for some reason, it does not work the conditions up to the electrical state so readily.

We carefully selected ten sitters who were willing to attend regularly, and as table movements were not the principal object, we placed an aluminium trumpet in the centre instead. The one selected was in two parts, one sliding lightly over the other. The lighting was arranged by covering the electric light bulb with three or four layers of dark red tissue paper, and reflected from the ceiling, so that no direct rays fell upon the floor. For quite six sittings there was no phenomena. This surprised us very much, as in the past we had become so accustomed to seeing the movement of the heavy table in a very faint light, that we fully expected them to move a light aluminium trumpet quite easily. We afterwards had the explanation. Whilst we on our side had been deciding to build up an evidential circle, the

spirit people had been deciding to do the same thing, and had been busy rearranging their band of workers on their side to meet the new conditions. A Sioux Indian chief, "White Eagle," replaced our old favourite Sammy, so this meant a rebuilding of the psychic structure all round. The arrangements used before for the manipulation of the table would not be suitable for direct voice, or materializations, hence a new foundation had to be laid.

During these early weeks we placed the trumpet in almost every position in the circle. It was put upright, on its side lengthways, on the floor with the large end towards me, reversed, and sideways, but not a solitary movement occurred. Then suddenly success came, and we saw the trumpet roll a little backwards and forwards. It gradually extended the movement until it touched our shoes. We were delighted with this success, small as it was in comparison with our heavy table phenomena, because we could see the movements.

At each succeeding séance the spirit operators became more accomplished, they began to tap on our shoes, only lightly at first, but afterwards quite heavily. The trumpet commenced to lift at one end about a foot from the ground and swing about, and eventually lifted completely to the level

of our knees. At this stage the phenomena became very interesting. The trumpet would go to the sitters and stroke or pat them, and the movements became extremely rapid. It would gently touch one sitter, and before he had time to say "It is touching me," another sitter across the circle would exclaim that they were being touched also, almost at the same time. We could see it flash like a ray of light across, and yet there was such wonderful control over it that the touch given would be most delicate. Later on, when they could levitate it to the height of our faces, the small end would gently touch us as though giving us a kiss, and pass from one to another with such speed that the eye could hardly record it, yet we were only lightly touched. No living person holding the trumpet in their hands, even in a brilliantly lighted room, to say nothing of a very subdued one, could handle it so delicately and with such speed and precision. At other times it would tap on a ring or piece of jewellery that someone was wearing as a keepsake.

After six months they could handle it with skill, and be very heavy or light in their touch at will. So powerful were they at times, that I have thought what a battering one would get if the spirit operating the trumpet was not friendly disposed.

About this time too, "White Eagle" found that by hammering the trumpet on the floor he could separate the two halves, and rattle and jingle them together, but he had difficulty afterwards to join them again. After several attempts my husband would ask him to bring the trumpet to him and he would put them together. They always took them with the small part loose inside and the big end down. Now under ordinary circumstances the inner portion would not stop in and would naturally fall to the floor, as there would be no support to sustain it, yet "White Eagle" would suspend it and keep the inner part quite loose within the outer. My husband called attention to this, and remarked that when he gripped the outside of the larger part with one hand to hold it firm, and touched the inner with the other, it seemed to be held in position by something resilient as rubber. He could push it down and it would spring back again. He asked the sitter next to him to feel, and he felt the same resistance.

"White Eagle" struggled hard to overcome the difficulty of repairing the trumpet himself, and eventually succeeded. He had got both sections apart and each was moving separately one evening, and when he required to join them again, it was interesting to see the two parts on the floor

coming together. He first moved them into line, trying to push them without inserting the smaller through the larger. This, of course, was impossible, and we were laughing at the attempt and chaffing him, telling him to let us do it for him, but he was not to be beaten. Each part began to turn like the hands of a clock, using the small end of each section as the axis, until they completed the half-circle, which brought them into line again. Then the smaller section was projected through the larger with a speed and force which jammed it tightly in its proper place. This operation was done so neatly and with such mathematical exactitude that we watched it in amazement, and somehow I felt that "White Eagle" had planned the whole movement beforehand and that the attempt to put it in the wrong way was only to mislead us, and metaphorically "pull our leg." The moment it shot home he reared the trumpet up, large end uppermost, and danced it round the circle to show his jubilation at having accomplished what, to him, had been a difficult task.

Having now gained full control of the trumpet in sufficient light to see it, attention was paid to the production of the voice. For a long time this seemed an impossibility. Séance after séance was held, the trumpet would even float up to the

ceiling, but not a word was heard, until one evening we began to hear a sibilant sound, just as if a chicken was beginning to chirp. This continued for a sitting or so, until one evening when my husband chided them by saying: "Come along, chicken, it is time you were talking, you have chirped long enough," they evidently made a special effort, as a very faint voice replied: "We are not chickens, it is Sally and Lucy." They are two spirit sisters of mine.

I might here mention one of the most convincing proofs of spirit action which was given to me on 9th August, 1922, when my brother who was killed in action in France in 1916, wrote me a letter across the glass of his framed photograph which always stands on the desk in my sitting-room.

I will relate the details which led up to this, as it was one of a series of strange phenomena which had been happening in the house. These commenced about the anniversary of my brother's death near the end of July.

We had a visitor from the Midlands staying with us at the time, and she slept with my sister Nelly, who is of an extremely sensitive nature, and who also has a horror of burglars, and therefore locks her bedroom door before retiring.

On this particular night they went to bed as

usual and slept soundly, but on waking up in the morning, were surprised to find that the framed photograph of my brother (referred to above) had been mysteriously brought into the room, and that written on the glass of the picture was a message to my sister. The writing appeared to be in chalk and to come from our brother Jack. The lady visitor and my sister thought it very strange, and wondered if my husband had been playing a trick on them, although they found that the door was still locked. They decided to say nothing about it but to wait, and on the assumption that it was my brother Jack who had written it, see if he might write again. The message, which was of a very private and personal nature, was therefore rubbed off the glass by my sister, and the photograph quietly replaced by her in my sitting-room.

Our visitor returned home a day or so afterwards, nothing further having occurred. The following week I spent at Margate, and on the evening before my return and a week after the photo incident, my sister, who was sleeping alone, wakened up. She did not know what had disturbed her, but found herself gazing at a spirit form which was standing at the foot of the bed. It was draped in a misty kind of material and she could hardly distinguish a face, but the figure was

about the size of that of a girl of twelve. She saw it place something on the bed. She was so terrified that she screamed, or tried to. The figure then turned and glided to the door, which to her astonishment was slightly open, although she had locked it as usual when going to bed. It passed through and the door closed noiselessly behind it. My sister was so frightened that she dare not move to see what had been placed on the bed, although the room was not dark as it was illuminated by a street lamp across the street. She waited until a motor passed, the headlights of which made the room quite light, and then dashed to the electric switch. She found that the photograph of her brother, which is in an inlaid Indian frame and measures fourteen inches by twelve inches, had again been brought from my sitting-room, and on the glass was another letter of a very personal character for herself only, which entirely covered the glass. As before, she found the door locked and the key as she had left it.

On rising next morning, she re-read the letter and decided to lock it up and show it to me on my return. She hid it in her wardrobe, locked the door and put the key in her bag. She had to go to business early, so only told my husband at breakfast that she had seen a spirit. He chaffed her and told her it must have been a nightmare,

as he thought it could only be that. Had she shown him the writing he would have photographed it. She returned home at about two o'clock, and went straight to the wardrobe to pack her clothes as she was going to spend the week-end in the Midlands with her mother. She picked up the photograph to again look at the writing, and was astounded to see that it had been rubbed out, but some fresh writing now appeared across the glass which read "Sorry we frightened you." My sister again rubbed off the writing, and replaced the photograph in my sitting-room. She spent the week-end away from home and did not return until the following Tuesday, when, so nervous was she that she refused to sleep alone, and my husband said he would sleep in her room and she could sleep with me. She clung closely to me and told me all that had happened, but as she had nothing to show, I told her it must have been nightmare. "However," I said, "if it is Jack, I will believe it if he will write me something."

Nothing happened during the night, and I do not think that we slept much, my sister being so frightened that she kept starting in her sleep.

In the meantime, we had put the photo back in its accustomed place on the writing-desk, in my sitting-room, and I had myself cleaned the

glass. The photograph was in its place on the Wednesday morning, and I did not notice anything unusual when I took a lady into the room to give her a sitting. I was a long time with her, and did not think of looking at the photograph when I had finished. A few minutes afterwards a lady called on my husband for healing treatment. They both went to my sitting-room, and on opening the door the first thing that caught my husband's eye was the photograph on my desk, the glass of which was covered with writing. He came rushing with it to me. I had not been out of the room five minutes and no one had been in during the interval, yet here was a letter written to me, and in my brother's handwriting, so far as I remembered it. We hunted up an old letter and were astounded at the similarity both in the spelling and in the formation of some of the letters. There was no doubt about the signature and the writing was of the usual size. He always made errors in his spelling, and I never remember him writing the word "alright" correctly, it was always "alwrite," and this same error appears in the letter written on the photograph.

My husband took a photograph of it so that we could retain a copy, also sealed the writing under another piece of glass and made it air-tight, but I am sorry to say that it seems to be gradually

fading. This photograph was reproduced in *Light* at the time. So far as we could judge, the writing was done with chalk or some such material, there were little fragments about the glass and on the desk. How it could be written with chalk unless made into a kind of ink I do not know, as I have tried since to write on glass with chalk, and cannot do anything like it.

We have had no further manifestations of this nature, so conclude that it was sporadic.

Chapter IX

LATER PHYSICAL PHENOMENA

WE came to live at Banstead in the summer of 1926 and found the clear, still atmosphere conducive to good phenomena. We decided to form up a circle to see if we could obtain clear and distinct Direct Voice. Three members of the former group, Mr. and Mrs. Waller and their daughter Mrs. Fisher, had previously moved to this district, so a nucleus was already to hand. To these we added Mr. and Mrs. Murray. This formed a very harmonious group, and phenomena of a much stronger character than before soon began to happen.

We now decided to arrange a cabinet by hanging curtains across one corner of the room, so as to leave a good space shut off from both the sitters and myself. I have never sat in a cabinet. The sitters were arranged in horseshoe shape, the two ends being at each corner of the cabinet, so that each sitter was looking towards it. I always sit at the right end and a gentleman at the left. Inside the cabinet we placed a small table, a large

bowl of water and a vase of flowers, also on the table, a tambourine, and at various times stringed and wind musical instruments. This curtained recess we called the spirits' workshop. We tried many kinds of illumination, but found that for the early stages the best source was from cards painted with luminous paint. We made a large reflector like a trough, the light from which was so powerful that if placed in the centre of the circle, all the sitters were visible. The aluminium trumpet was also painted so that its whole surface was distinctly visible.

Our sittings were held on Sunday evenings, and from the first sitting we have not had one that was entirely blank. The musical instruments would be played and floated from the cabinet, and very complicated movements performed, requiring more than one hand or psychic rod. At first only psychic rods were used, but after two years we began to see a hand holding a trumpet. At this time we were sitting chiefly for the direct voice, but it was very slow in developing; we occasionally obtained little sibilant sounds, or a word or name, but only very softly.

At the end of the second year we added three more sitters, Dr. Auden, D.Sc., a member of the Psychical Research Society, and Mr. and Mrs. Lockey, an engineer and his wife. After about

six months the direct voice became quite clear and distinct. My guide, Ada, a Yorkshire lass, would sing quite as loudly as the sitters.

• These Sunday evenings became very interesting, our friends and relatives from the other side joining in with their conversations. They became, in reality, evenings of communion, and so natural were our spirit visitors that it seemed as if only the curtains of the cabinet separated us. Not only did they talk to us, but joined in our hymns and songs, and even played the dulcimer and accompanied the songs.

At the end of the third year a change appeared in the phenomena. Those in charge on the spirit side decided to limit the output of the direct voice and to concentrate upon materializations. First a solid hand appeared and sometimes the arm also, up to the shoulder, and at other times a leg and foot.

The spirit band of guides had a splendid addition in the person of our old friend Mr. Aaron Wilkinson, who manifested quite clearly about a fortnight after his physical death. He is really one of us, and at times it is difficult to realize he has crossed the border, especially if my husband and he start an argument and get at cross purposes.

At the end of the fourth year we added another

permanent sitter to the circle, Mr. P. H. May of London.

The materialized hands became so solid and perfect in their formation that after consultation with "White Eagle," the chief guide, we decided to have sittings in addition to the Sundays, to see if wax casts could be obtained. I personally am not interested in this class of work, but my husband and Dr. Auden are so anxious to obtain what they call "cast iron proof," that I have reluctantly acquiesced to it.

A large container full of melted paraffin wax is placed just inside the cabinet. The spirit friends dip their hands into the molten wax, withdraw them covered with a thin coating of the wax, which in fact forms a wax glove, and when the wax is set, the hands are dematerialized, leaving a delicate wax structure or mould. These moulds are carefully filled with plaster of Paris, and when this is set, a jet of steam is played upon the wax and it is melted off, leaving an exact cast of the hand which was dipped in the wax. My brother Jack directs the operation from the spirit side and is very anxious to get a perfect cast. The first casts were very imperfect, but each experiment showed an improvement. The last casts which were made during 1934 are decidedly interesting, and had not family worries and the ill health of

my father necessitated the partial closing down of this phase of my mediumship, I am sure some good work would have been done.

My husband has arranged a shaded light over the front of the cabinet, from which a column of light of a neutral tint is projected downwards, but is practically invisible until a hand is put under it, when the hand shows up quite clearly. This is directly over the wax, and we can see the hand dip into it. At the last few cast séances, some small article, such as a pencil, has been handed to the spirit hand, and they have held it in the fingers whilst making the wax mould, and the finished plaster cast is of a hand gripping the article. I think we have made an important step forward in this stage, as no living person can withdraw their fingers from a wax mould with a marked or specially selected article, without in some way destroying the wax formation—at any rate, I should be extremely surprised if they could do so.

It is quite possible for a sitter to see a materialized hand and afterwards doubt his own powers of observation, but if that sitter not only sees the hand but places in its grip something belonging to him personally, then sees that hand dip into the wax, and within a few minutes examines the mould with the article encased, and finally sees



PLATE I.—PLASTER CAST OF SPIRIT HAND

The comb was given to the spirit hand just before it was dipped into the wax. The comb (a celluloid one) warped, owing to the heat of the steam jet used to melt the wax from cast



PLATE II.—BACK OF HAND HOLDING COMB

the cast in plaster of Paris, he cannot for a moment doubt the actuality of the phenomena.

All being well, we shall resume these experiments during the coming autumn, and hope to obtain casts under very strict test conditions. Altering the arrangements for these tests involves a number of details to which careful attention must be given. A medium is only an instrument, but, if genuine, that instrument is a very sensitive one. To doubt a medium or to insist on conditions that make him or her uncomfortable and miserable, has a deterrent effect on the phenomena. I personally insist on luminous wristlets, so that the slightest movement of my hands can be seen, and whoever sits opposite me near the cabinet wears them also. At the last two séances in the early summer my husband thought of, and tried, a new scheme. Before we commence the séance, a screen of one inch wire-netting is placed between the sitters (including myself) and the cabinet. Any phenomena which are to count as important are to occur within the cabinet behind this netting, the wax casts included. This means that our spirit helpers will have to make alterations in their methods of procedure, but they are always willing to try. At the first séance under these conditions we did not get any physical

phenomena, and our friend Mr. Wilkinson was only able to speak a few words. The second séance was hopeful, however; the guides had managed to overcome the difficulties—they could build up their psychical structure, and things were quite lively within the enclosure. The tambourine was, in some mysterious way, brought outside the netting and placed in Mr. Murray's hands. Just before this occurred both Mr. Murray and myself exclaimed that we felt as if a rope was attached to our stomachs and was being pulled. A moment or so afterwards the tambourine was given to Mr. Murray.

As a typical example of our séances, I will quote from the notes which were taken on Sunday, 9th April, 1933, by Mrs. Fisher:

“At this séance twelve people were present. They sat in horseshoe formation as usual, with the medium at one end of the horseshoe and Mr. Locky (one of the permanent sitters) at the other. All members of the circle could see the movements, as they wore elastic bands on their wrists on which were spots of luminous paint.

“A card painted with luminous paint was hung on the curtain of the cabinet, and there was a cardboard trough painted in the same way, into which spirit friends frequently put their material-

ized hands or feet, so that the sitters might clearly see them. The trumpet which stood just outside the cabinet, was also entirely covered with luminous paint, and the room was dimly lighted by a special lamp, which gives a very subdued, soft light somewhat of the nature of moonlight. Mr. Brittain has been experimenting with the lighting of the séance room, and has found that this soft, greenish light is the least likely to interfere with physical phenomena.

“The cabinet consists of a curtain hung across one corner of the room, behind which, on the night in question, was a fairly heavy table, a heavy cut-glass vase containing several iris blooms, a large bowl of water weighing about 7 lbs., a tambourine and some bells. The medium always sits outside the cabinet as one of the sitters.

“After the spirit friends had joined in singing hymns in the direct voice behind the curtain without the trumpet, the bowl of water was brought from the cabinet and put on the knees of Mr. Murray, the sitter who was next to the medium, and who could plainly see it coming towards him. This was by way of a joke, as on a previous occasion this heavy bowl of water was floated on to Mr. Murray’s knees and some of the water was spilt on him. This time Sammy, the African

guide, did not spill a drop, and after leaving it a moment, he took it back into the cabinet again, remarking as he did so: 'No spill.'

"A fully materialized hand and arm was then seen shaking the tambourine through the opening in the curtain, and the luminous trumpet was picked up and the materialized hand shown against it with fingers outspread. Afterwards it was thrown up and caught, so that the sitters not only saw the hand, but heard the impact when the trumpet was caught, and the sound of the fingers sliding down it. Jack, the medium's spirit brother, next made a few remarks from behind the curtain, and the sitters then heard the bowl of water being pushed along the floor from the cabinet into the centre of the circle, followed by the table, which they saw lifted a few feet into the air in order to avoid Mr. Lockey's knees, as he was near the opening in the curtain.

"The vase of flowers was then brought out and placed on the table, together with the tambourine and trumpet. Belle spoke outside the cabinet in the centre of the circle, and took the iris blooms from the vase, throwing one to each sitter.

"Next the trumpet was balanced on top of the vase (which was full of water) and the tambourine on that, and the table lifted some feet into the air, in full view of all the sitters. This was very

remarkable, as the balance must have been perfect to keep the trumpet on the vase whilst lifting the table. The hand and arm of the spirit operator could plainly be seen on the luminous trumpet.

“Mr. Murray then exclaimed that Mrs. Brittain’s chair was being moved, and in a moment she was lifted bodily in the chair some few inches from the ground—this happened twice. The fact that she was wearing the luminous bracelets made it easy to see how high she was lifted. She was in a trance at the time.

“Mr. Aaron Wilkinson (the well-known medium who passed over three years ago and now works with this band) then spoke in the direct voice outside the cabinet without the trumpet, and said he was sitting on the table, knocking on same to let the sitters know where he was, although they were not able to see him. The previous week he had tried to materialize his face and show it in the luminous trough which the spirit operators had placed on the table after bringing the latter from the cabinet into the circle. Although no features could be discerned the round, luminous shape of the face and head could be seen, but after holding it over the trough it appeared to collapse and sink to the ground. This happened three times.

“After Ada, the Yorkshire guide, had sung a

hymn, 'White Eagle' said the power had nearly gone and this was their Swan Song. He then balanced the trumpet on top of the vase and lifted the latter high into the air. The arm and hand holding the vase could be plainly seen. He then put it back on the table and tried to lift the table back into the cabinet, but found one leg was standing in the bowl of water which had been put on the floor in the centre of the circle. He held the table in the air whilst the bowl was taken away, but then remarked that he was sorry to leave the clearing up to the sitters, as there was not sufficient power to return the things to the cabinet.

"After the spirit friends had said 'Good night,' the light was turned on, and each member of the circle was seen to be holding the iris which Belle had given them."

The foregoing notes give a good general idea of the phenomena we were getting in 1933.

What future development of the phenomena will occur I cannot say: possibly we may have the fully materialized form as tangible as the arms and legs have been.

The point that puzzles me is, how can the spirit workers collect sufficient ectoplasm to build these

materializations so solidly and real? I am often perfectly normal, not even in semi-trance, and yet I do not realize any alteration in my body except a vibratory sensation. There are no cords of ectoplasm from my hands or mouth and no objectionable smell such as some physical mediums speak of. It seems to be drawn from me and from the sitters in some natural manner without any ill-effects. Certainly whilst some of the wax moulds were being made, I was aware of a slight, sickly sensation, but I attribute that to the wax itself. The guides may not have been able to clarify the returned matter, and naturally the wax would then account for it.

We are looking forward to a stage of development under strict supervision, when phenomena of such a tangible character can be produced, that no doubt can be cast upon them, and which can be verified and corroborated over and over again by competent witnesses. Whether we shall be able to find out how the ectoplasm is extracted and built up I do not know; perhaps in the near future, with the aid of infra-red and other photographic processes, allied with delicate electrical devices, we may come to a better understanding of what, to me, are very mysterious phenomena.

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All the details given in this chapter on physical phenomena can be vouched for by the sitters who were present and witnessed the occurrences, and whose signatures are reproduced below.

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