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Editorial

Suicides, it has previously been said, are earthbound. Perhaps we should say they are liable to be earthbound; Adscripti Glebae, bound to the soil, like mediaeval peasant cultivators. Other earthbound characters include some who have not pre-determined their location by an act of earth life, only by ignorance or habit of mind. The servant in Helen Greaves' *The Wheel of Eternity,* reviewed on another page, was so described. Towards the end of her life she had attained comfort, solitude and independence. When she died she could not imagine any possible improvement, thinking with Lord Falkland that when it is not necessary to change it is necessary not to change.

Some revenants have unfinished business to accomplish, or think they have. Archbishop Temple when a young man arrived at an episcopal palace for a diocesan conference. He saw in the hall several clerics whom he knew and one that he did not. His host answering his question added that Temple seemed to have been unusually prompt in remarking this particular guest and suggested that he follow up the acquaintance by shutting himself

in the library, a favourite room, after dinner to await events. Quite soon Temple's acquaintance joined him there. Without a word being spoken Temple was directed to a certain book shelf and impelled to take down a certain book. Out of the book a piece of paper fell. Temple read this, put it in the fire, and never revealed what it had contained. The revenant was not seen again.

So far all seems as logical as a hydrogen balloon. Either it is tethered to the ground or it floats free on an ever ascending course. But the simile is misleading. The balloon is dirigible. We can no more hold it down with guy ropes than we can despatch it against its will. We can only release it when it gets tangled up in something.

"When I do attune myself to the rhythm of your world I don't feel at all as though I am being drawn back or kept back. And I don't need to be released. I don't want any of your exorcists sending me on my way rejoicing. I should only come back, probably to them, and I could make myself very tiresome, I dare say, if I tried."

Those bound to the soil, on the far side, correspond, as in a Looking Glass World, to those on this side who believe there is a boundary and, by believing it, create one. Both are static. Those are the serfs and villeins, and they are homeless, which ever side of an imaginary border line they think they dwell. In the Debatable Land of the Middle March all could be truly at home, particularly Armstrongs and Elliots who were equivocal about their nationality. And there is debatable land in place of our own border, as Bonnie Kilmeny showed there to be. "They kendna whe'er she was living or dead." No wonder, so freely did she pass to and from "that land to human spirits given, the lowermost vales of the storied heaven, from whence they can view the world below, and heaven's blue gate with sapphire glow."

This is a thoroughfare that needs to be kept open, a right of way. Warnings against traversing it, from either side, should be read carefully but not always taken at their face value. "Beware of snakes" on a gate into a forestry plantation should be considered, although it does not always deter the incendiary picnicker. "If bitten by an adder. . . ." ("Take a sharp pen knife—or suck the wound—fetch a doctor—call the nearest hospital") is solemn, particular, and potent. By all means make a note of the telephone number of the hospital. But, is *this,* in fact, adder country? Or are they all those charming and friendly grass snakes?

AE

KATHLEEN RAINE

WHO was AE? The two vowels by which he was known to his friends and his readers, with which he signed not only his poems, his paintings, his mystical writings—*The Candle of Vision, Song and its Fountains* and the rest—but also his articles in the two Irish weekly newspapers he edited, are not initials. In *The Candle of Vision* he tells how George Russell, a young Irishman from the North whose family had moved to Dublin, at the outset of his life's adventure, was given, as it seemed to him, another name: AEON. The name was, as it were, whispered to him in a vision, and at the same time it was made known to him that "Aeon" was a newly-created being in the Divine Mind. He tells how only later did he discover that the Gnostics—he had read none of their works at the time and did not even know who they were—gave the name "Aeon" to the first-created emanations of God. This coincidence—or rather complex series of coincidences, which he tells in *The Candle of Vision*—convinced him that the visions which had come to him from boyhood might be more than fantasy. The familiar signature is at once his declaration of faith and of dedication.

In academic circles AE is known as W. B. Yeats's earliest friend, fellow-poet, fellow-theosophist and fellow-student at the Metropolitan School of Art in Dublin. Yeats's sisters used to call him "the strayed angel." And Yeats scholars find no difficulty in showing that AE's inspirers notwithstanding, Yeats is incomparably the better poet. Art-critics would find no difficulty in demonstrating the same of his paintings which, for all their visionary themes and rainbow hues, are not of the same order of technical accomplishment as the work of Jack Yeats, the poet's brother. But AE was something more than the less great friend of great artists. George Moore once remarked, "You know, I think AE is too great a man to be a great artist." When he died in 1932 Mrs. Yeats is reported to have said to her husband that AE was the nearest to a saint that they had known; her husband was indeed a great poet, she said, "but no saint."

I never knew AE but I have known many who did and all bear witness to the altogether unique quality of his being. Monk Gibbon, who edited a selection of his articles; Pamela Travers, who was with him when he died; and our late President, Constance Sitwell, who was never happier than in recollecting AE. She often talked of him to her friends, and this is what she wrote about him in her book, *Six Friends* (p. 46):

To write about AE! That surely must be one of the most difficult things to try to do, for to be truthful one has to use different words than would apply to other people, and words which to those who didn't know him will seem excessive: "mighty," "glorious," "a heavenly being"—these are the words which come into my mind, and to me they seem the only right ones. . . . Wordsworth said, "I have known great men and I have known good men, but I have only known one wonderful man and that was Coleridge." And how many would say the same, but say AE instead of Coleridge?

AE even charmed and tamed George Moore's bitter satirical wit; in his *Salve* he could find nothing malicious to say about AE and wrote instead about the delight and wonder of their friendship. When first he read his writings, Moore says:

It was just as if somebody had put his hand into mine, and led me away to a young world which I recognised as the fabled Arcady. . . . White mist curled along the edge of the woods and the trees were all in blossom. There were tall flowers in the grass, and gossamer threads glittered in rays of the rising sun, and it seemed to me that the man must live always in this hour, and that he not only believed in Arcady, but that Arcady was always in him. (L. T., p. 10.)

The critic, St. John Ervine, too, found in a picture by AE something more than "art."

I have a picture by AE of an ascending road on the side of a mountain. There is rain in the air and the road has a lonely, unfrequented look. Yet, though there is no living creature visible in the picture, life fills it. I feel sometimes when I sit back in my chair and look at "The Mountain Road" that there are divine beings behind the bushes, that if I could only climb up that road and turn the corner of the mountain I should come upon the Golden Age. (L. T., p. 28.)

George Russell was born in 1867 of Protestant Northern Irish parents. The family moved from Lurgan to Dublin when he was eleven, and from that time he was to remain a Dubliner and to become one of the famous figures of the Irish renaissance. AE was a born visionary, but his visions came to him with increasing intensity from the age of seventeen or so; about the time of his meeting with Yeats. Both these young art-students became interested in Theosophy, and an Indian theosophist, Mohini Chatterjee (Yeats wrote a poem about him) came to Dublin at the invitation of the newly founded Hermetic Society, started by Charles Johnson, of which both Yeats and AE were

members. In 1886 Johnson founded the Dublin Lodge of the Theosophical Society. Two years later Yeats joined the Esoteric Section, but AE held aloof. He preferred to pursue his spiritual investigations unaided; though he did practise thought-transference with Johnson. However, in 1890 the rôles of the two friends were reversed: Yeats was turned out of the Theosophical Society by H. P. Blavatsky herself, and from then on devoted himself more and more to the way of knowledge, as an initiate of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn. Meanwhile AE had made up his mind to join the Esoteric Section and to follow the way of devotion. He was at this time, a friend remembers, "aflame with theosophy, a red-hot missionary." Only many years later did he leave the faction-torn Society because he came to regard Mrs. Besant (Mme. Blavatsky's successor) as "an evil influence." AE remained loyal to H. P. Blavatsky, believing both in her teaching and in her Tibetan Avatars. This belief was the consequence of his own experience of similar things. He became and remained a Theosophist because the teachings corresponded with his own experience. If Yeats's was an intellectual curiosity, AE followed rather a way of spiritual self-development.

Eighteen-ninety was the year in which AE's student days came to an end. He took his first job—an exceedingly dull one—as a clerk at Pims', a large drapery-store. He was a most efficient clerk with a gift for book-keeping and money matters—one more instance of the proverbial practicality of the mystics. But he still had before him seven years of spiritual apprenticeship. For soon after joining the staff of Pims' he left home to become a member of a small theosophical community called "the Household," at 3 Upper Ely Place. These years he considered as the happiest of his life. At that time he intended to live a life of celibacy, and practised Indian disciplines of meditation. The Household was, during these years, a centre of Dublin's intellectual life, with meetings both formal and informal. AE acted as librarian, vice-President and lecturer at the Lodge. He painted murals, too, visionary pictures of planets, flowers, stars, serpents, and divine and daemonic beings. AE was shocked when Charles Johnson married H. P. Blavatsky's niece; but at the end of seven years he too was to fall in love with Violet North, a fellow-member of the Lodge, whom he married, almost reluctantly, and with misgivings about the rightness of his course, in 1898, when he left the Household to enter upon a more active phase of his life.

Meanwhile he had learned to practise a traditional form of meditation; which he describes in *Song and its Fountains*:

In this meditation we start from where we are and go backwards through the day; and later, as we become quicker in the retracing of our way, through weeks, through years . . . if we persist the past surrenders to us and we can race back fleetly over days or months. (S. F., p. 2.)

He learned to practise this technique with such success that he was able to follow back his development to its earliest influences; just as if a cinema-film in which "a plant bursts into bud, leaf and blossom, had been reversed and I had seen the blossom dwindle into the bud." (S. F., p. 2.)

It was, AE believed, the first love, the earliest seed, that determines the whole of a lifetime; and with him the first love was beauty. Although he later had a deep love of the good, "Yet because the love of beauty was the first-born of the union between soul and body I could never be like Plotinus and place the good above the beautiful." (S. F., p. 8.)

He describes the memory to which retrospective meditation led him back. As a child of four or five years of age,

. . . beauty first dawned on me. I had strayed into a park, and I remember how I lay flat on grass overcome by some enchantment flickering about a clump of daffodils. A little later I read a child's story, and in this what fascinated me was that the hero had a magic sword with a hilt of silver and a blade of blue steel. The word "magic" stirred me, though I knew not what it meant, as if there was some being within me which could foresee the time when the whole universe from wheeling stars to the least motion of life would appear to be wrought by, or depend on, the magic of some mighty mind. It lay in memory, that word, until a dozen years later its transcendental significance emerged as a glittering dragon-fly will come out of a dull crysalis. But the harmony of blue and silver at once bewitched me. I murmured to myself "blue and silver! Blue and silver!" (S. F., p. 3.)

True to that first vision AE believed always that man cannot live by utilities alone. "One of the very first symptoms of the loss of soul is the loss of the sense of beauty." And as with the individual so with society:

Whatever can contribute to the sustaining of vision, imagination, beauty in a people is of prime importance in national life. Let beauty fade, and in some mysterious way public spirit, sacrifice, enthusiasm also vanish from society. (L. T., p. 183.)

To another early memory AE traced his lifelong sympathy

for revolt—not for violence, be it said, he was a pacifist and an admirer of Tagore and Gandhi—but for those oppressed, whether by imperialism or by social injustice:

> In my fantasy I was one of the Children of Light in some ancestral paradise, and it was rumoured to us there were Children of Darkness, and the thought of them was fearful and abhorrent to us. But I in my imagination had wandered far outside the circe of light into a wilderness of space, and, far from that paradise, I became aware of a dark presence beside me, and I trembled because I knew it was one of the Children of Darkness. But this being whispered gently to me, "We of the Darkness are more ancient than you of the Light," and, at the saying of that, I forsook my allegiance to the Light, and my whole being yearned to lose itself in that Divine Darkness. (S. F., p. 5.)

We may remember William Blake's *Marriage of Heaven and Hell* and his Messiah of Reason who "built a heaven of what he stole from the abyss."

But AE's visions were the very reverse of other-worldly. What he calls the greatest of all wonders in his boyhood was when, lying on a hill not far from Dublin, "Earth revealed itself to me as a living being, and rock and clay were made transparent so that I saw lovelier and lordlier beings than I had known before, and was made partner in memory of mighty things, happenings in ages long sunken behind time." (S. F., p. 7.) He realised then that "the golden age is all about us" and that in the immortal life of the earth-spirit nothing is ever lost; and within that life we "live and move and have our being." We only see, so he had come to understand, the outward vesture of the earth; but to those who see truly there are divine transfigurations that await us, and earth is seen as Plato's "many-coloured land." To AE the earth itself was a living thing; not at all what the geographers suppose it to be, and he quoted Plato, who had said that "We live like frogs at the bottom of a marsh knowing nothing of that Many Coloured Earth which is superior to this we know, yet related to it as soul to body." (C. of V., p. 32.)

> We are outcasts from Deity, therefore we defame the place of our exile. But who is there may set apart his destiny from the earth which bore him? I am one of those who would bring back the old reverence for the Mother, the magic, the love. (I. & R., p. 137.)

In *The Candle of Vision* he tells how every flower was to him a word, a thought. "The grass was speech; the trees were speech;

the waters were speech; the winds were speech." (C. of V., p. 6.)

He believed certain places to be more favourable to vision than others. When his friend Edith Lyttleton asked him why,

> He leant forward and looked at me through his great spectacles: I could not guess whether he thought I was foolish or pitiful not to know the answer. "Well," he said in a kindly voice, "the earth is a person—a goddess and we are part of her—in her. Now just as in our bodies there are certain parts which are more in contact with impressions than others, like the eyes, or perhaps the ears, so it is with the earth. There are certain places in her body which are sensitive, and beings, strangers to us, can manifest more easily in those places." (L. T., p. 75.)

Ireland, he believed, was a holy land, with many sacred places; as was Tibet, and as India still remains. How well he would have understood the present generation who gather on Glastonbury Tor, or at Stonehenge, or on Iona to look, to listen for some message from hidden presences. And many young people of this time would surely share his belief that our human hates and frenzies may arouse the forces of nature against us:

> We have supposed of the Universe it is a spiritual being, and the elements have intellectual guidance. . . . These powers await our sovereignty. There are legions of allies for us in the air, in earth, in sea, ready to do our bidding when we come to our full stature and can command them with wisdom and power. But it is an error, I think, to suppose of them that they are not moved by us now, for there is perpetual communication between the elementals in our being and their counterparts in nature. If we poison or infect them by our frenzies and passions, the distraught powers bring about catacylsms, earthquakes, and subsidences, and the evil humanity is shaken from the back of nature. . . . We ray our influences not only on each other but on Nature, which more slowly, but inevitably, operates her own justice. (I., p. 149.)

The soul of the world is not only without but also within us. "Since I was born," he says, "some wisdom, never sleeping though I slept, was in me, and cell by cell I was fashioned and woven together and over my making I had no control. We dwell in the house of the body, but its perfection and intricate life are the work of a wisdom that never relaxes dominion over a single cell. I believe that wisdom is within the soul to guide it." (I., p. 50.) As with individuals so with races:

> . . . the Earth-spirit throws itself into innumerable forms of

life. . . . For every race its own culture. Every great civilization, I think, has a deity behind it, or a divine shepherd who guided it on some plan in the cosmic imaginaton. (I., pp. 50/51.)

He believed that for every nation its own gods are best, these being native to the very earth; and he criticised the Christian religion and European culture because "they go back to Greek or Jew for their spiritual culture. So distant lands are made sacred, but not the air they breathe, the earth underfoot." He also believed—nationalist though he was—somewhat as Teilhard de Chardin—that the planetary spirit is compelling mankind towards co-operation and a world-wide order.

I believe this process will continue until humanity itself is so psychically knit together that, as a being, it will manifest some form of cosmic consciousness in which the individual will share. Our spiritual intuitions and the great religions of the world alike indicate some such goal as that to which this turbulent cavalcade of humanity is wending. (N. B., p. 159.)

If we refuse to co-operate in love, AE believed that we shall be compelled into co-operation by tyranny. In America above all, in such writers as Emerson, Whitman and Thoreau, AE saw the dawning of "something which might be spoken of as cosmic or planetary consciousness." (L. T., p. 321.)

(to be continued)

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Stranger on the Path

XAN

Starting with eyes and sight.

IT was about eighteen months ago that I suddenly knew that I was standing on the edge of a world not of this vibration. Not exactly there but peering through a thin veil, and understanding, through the guardian of the access where I stood, that The Veil was growing lacy, pierced with countless tiny holes through which Light could filter; holes made by the prayer groups gathered below, welcome signs that a material age was growing more spiritual. I knew this, although speech was not used in

communication. I asked the keeper of the gate if he knew of any relatives his side of The Veil. I heard of only one, "G." He was "practising to be a physician." I accepted this statement and its phraseology without surprise. I did not, at that time, come in touch with any other discarnate spirit than the keeper of the gate, but I was made aware that I should cover my own eyes with my own hands. "Why?"

"It will improve your sight," I was told.

I am not particularly worried about my sight, although I have worn spectacles for years, but I obediently raised my hands to my eyes, cupping them so that the palms were raised above the eyeballs and the middle fingers rested above the forehead, where I find the pineal gland is situated—my lack of medical knowledge is abysmal. Now I begin to wonder if this is the third eye of which I have read, but at the time I was simply aware of a deep blue light covering the whole area below my palms. It was most restful. I ran a finger round my closed eyes, and they were suffused with gold.

This has happened many times since and, as well as gaining some power of interior sight, my external one has improved and my spectacles have been lowered in power. Quite often, I do not use them.

For a time this was all, and then I found myself at a concert looking at the choir on the stage in front of me. One or two were edged neatly round the heads with auras. They were insubstantial, mainly greyish, occasionally rimmed with gold or blue or black. Looking carefully, I discerned an aura for every singer. It was a fascinating gimmick, and I grew into the habit, when I was unobserved, of searching for this aura round the heads of folk I met—all that was required was a calm, direct gaze, then my focus slipped, and there was the aura. Blinking shut it off at once, as it did physical sight.

I attended a meeting for the development of meditation. The leader was a woman of high spiritual gifts, and, as she sat talking to us, I indeed saw her aura, but not like any I had looked at before. The meeting was imbued with spirituality, everybody was uplifted, and my inner sight was sharpened. Around E. a golden halo rose high above her head; more gold down to her hips, with a hint of rose and green.

These were not nebulous colours, but bright, and only just translucent. It was disturbing, and I looked away from E. for comfort, to find none. My friends' customary auras had become larger, more solid, more continuous round their bodies. S. B., who usually carried the most delightful sweat pea blue topknot,

was strongly aura'd in brighter, richer blue. It all pressed upon me. I felt breathless. I was afraid. Then, to my relief, the lecture ended and all, except me, trooped into another room. I crept home.

The daffodils came with the Spring. I looked at them and marvelled, for flames of violet blue, two to three feet in extent, swept up from their petals. Once I went near and, asking silently that I might not disturb this wonder, held out my hands towards it. I felt nothing, but the violet-blue flames continued to rise.

Now, I realise that all flowers have their auras, and that, in some way, it is connected with our physical sight. Bright red throws sharp blue/green. Orange, a bluer-blue. The aura usually follows the shape of the flower. Freshly cut blooms throw brighter auras. Growing flowers are not so easy to see. So the colours are connected with the spectrum, with the shape of the flower, and with its life-cycle.

Now I see that all objects, even inanimate ones, have a thin bright line outside their physical shape. Above trees flows an aura of silver-gold. But, thankfully, I do not see all these things unless I deliberately look for them.

I wrote for help to a society that seemed fitted to advise me and put me in touch with others who had found this strange gift, but alas, after a lapse of some weeks, I merely received a list of books on the subject which I did not find helpful. They started where I had only just begun, and I wanted so much to *talk* with somebody who had had similar experiences.

Shortly after this I was reading the report of an engineering company—I mention the fact because I really was not then occupied with high ideas! I was bidden to pick up a pen and write, which I did, on the shiny back of the report. I wrote this:

"Spread out your hands. Look at your fingertips. My emanation comes to join your emanation. That can be used for healing."

It was initialled, and in a small neat handwriting that I had once known well. I had closed my eyes while writing, but the message was there, firmly centred on the shiny paper, each line level, each initial letter straight.

I looked at my outspread fingertips and saw, as the focus shifted, a light blue cloud issuing from them, about two inches in length.

So there I was, an agnostic lately given the wisdom to realise the falsity of her previous lack of spiritual conviction; an author who liked to probe, to dissect to distrust her own imagination. A Doubting Thomas indeed, set out on the Path of Life.

"When the student is ready, the master appears." How right that is! A woman who had for many years worked in the field of spiritual research and aid came to my small town for refreshment after an eye operation. I was asked to help her get about, as her sight was almost non-existent. This was the person I needed, the one who accepted all the strange things I had to tell, the one who could help me along the Path whereon I was a stranger. She listened, and she said to me "Put your hands over *my* eyes. Heal me!"

I raised my hands, and great heat flowed out of them. Power trembled in my fingertips. When my friend returned to her home, her sight was better than had been expected, but it still seemed impossible that I had helped her. Why me? I had no spiritual background. I still queried every strange happening. I was terribly afraid of making a fool of myself. I hated publicity.

Then a leg joint, scheduled for operation, was healed and this healing verified by an x-ray photograph. I began to know that the brother the other side of The Veil had indeed studied and could, through me, use the healing light that I could carry. Even Doubting Thomas had to quell those doubts, to accept that her eyes had indeed been opened to another sphere, and that I could be used by that sphere, and that its vibrations could pass through me.

There must be others in my position, and for these I have written this account. Please do not doubt. Be aware that you have been chosen to help a new age of understanding and love come into being. Use your new gifts as much as you can, and, because you have been chosen to carry something precious from one dimension to another, keep the vessel as pure as may be. Meditate, read, ponder.

Love must return to earth if we are to be saved, and we are links in that chain of Love.

Secret Designs

V. S.

ONE of the pleasures of growing old is said to be looking backward to happy memories, but if we look deeper there is far more than a sentimental view to be seen. The picture is rather like a fabric with a superficial pattern of events which is varied with the rhythm of the years. But if you hold the material another way, so that it catches a light that never was on sea or land, another design becomes visible, one which has a deeper meaning and significance, for it shows evidence of purpose.

In my own life one of the hidden designs revealed concerned health, probably the first essential for a successful start. I was a four-and-a-half pound baby and never very strong until about 35 years of age. However, I have been rescued many times from difficult situations when battling with accidents or ailments. In the first place there was an unusually clever nurse who soon overcame the initial handicap of my lack of weight. She had been found by a very special family medical man who gave me good fatherly advice from time to time as long as he remained in practice and, I firmly believe, still concerns himself with my well-being from the other side of life. More than a life-long friend, in fact. Nothing very supernatural in this sort of care, you may think, but this is only part of the more significant pattern, only the stem and tendrils which led ever and again to a kind of miraculous blossom full of light and colour.

The majority of the healing experiences which I had, occurred during the 1939-45 war, but there were two earlier manifestations. The first was on the eve of the last day of my Final Examination. During the whole of my undergraduate course I had rather poor health; pain and exhaustion mounted as the examination date drew near. I survived the first three days of my Finals without mishap; there was then a gap before the last papers were to be taken. On the eve of the last day I sat in our little morning-room which had temporarily become my study and, feeling that I could stuff no more facts into my head, fell into a day-dream. I had an imaginary conversation with a friend about classicism in English poetry: she thought the classical allusions in Francis Thompson's poems unfair to the general reader, who could not be expected to follow them all. In my mind I defended his use of them, and other English poets' also. And so to bed. The next morning I was seriously unwell and it was with difficulty that my mother persuaded me to try to make the journey to South Kensington from North London. It was the right counsel. When I entered the examination hall, just before the doors closed, and was given the question paper, I found that the chief and compulsory question was "Trace the relationship between Greek and English or Latin and English poetry." This was the whole subject of my imaginary argument of the previous evening, and I just put it all down on paper. From time to time I had rather a struggle to retain consciousness but eventually completed the paper. How the rest of the day passed I don't remember—the initial help must have carried me through hopefully, for the result was satisfactory.

Was the giving of this help justified and a fair advantage

over other candidates? Well, all that I wrote was out of my own head and I feel that the one who, I learned later, had been responsible for what was a telepathic experience between his world and mine, must have been aware of the use that would eventually be made of success. Had I failed, there were people ready to say that I should never have made the attempt, and I had not at that time the resources or the physical strength for another year's studies.

The second pre-war experience was of an entirely physical kind. I had some dental trouble which necessitated a series of extractions. After the last of these I was told to go to bed on reaching home, and it so happened that I was alone in the house. It was a pleasantly warm summer afternoon, but as I lay still I felt my feet and legs becoming more cold and numb, so that as far as my knees there was no feeling in them. This seemed rather curious: I remembered hearing that people who were going to die had this numb feeling creeping upwards! As I wondered what would happen next I suddenly felt what seemed to me to be two palms of hands placed against the soles of my feet. Gradually they warmed and life and feeling flowed back into them. There was nothing within my room or the bed which could have caused this sensation or the gentle change of temperature. How little we know of what is going on in the world outside our sphere of vision!

My job before, during and after the War was an arduous one and, at the end of a long day, after the journey home, I was generally exhausted. Now and then I would awake during the night to become aware that new strength was flowing through my body, as though I were being re-charged by means of some spiritual battery—what an unsuitable word to describe this gentle, life-giving experience! After a few moments I would drift off to sleep again and awake in the morning full of energy to tackle the day's work. One night there was a specially memorable experience. I had gone to bed so completely depleted that I thought "If anybody offered to shoot me, I couldn't move out of the way!" In the middle of the night I awoke to feel something like two fingers laid horizontally across my lips. Gently they opened my mouth and someone breathed three times into it. Again life flowed through my whole body and strength returned. Gratefully I fell asleep again. But there is no doubt whatever that in all these experiences I was fully awake and aware when they happened.

As with many other women the time came when I developed an alien lump in my body which it was decided was best removed

by surgery. The growth proved to be benign and I made a swift recovery. This was in the first year of the war. Four years passed without further trouble and then I became aware of a second lump. Circumstances were more difficult by this time: my mother was that much older for coping with a convalescent without domestic help; my work which had been classified as a reserved occupation was more demanding and I decided that I would be justified in asking for spiritual healing. My father had died before the outbreak of war and following his death my mother had unexpectedly developed trance mediumship. This was all part of the hidden design and of my longing since my student days to work in co-operation with the world invisible. Unless I reminded her afterwards of what she had been saying, my mother was unaware of her trance utterances, and I decided to ask for help if possible without her knowledge, to save her anxiety. I also asked the help of a small circle of friends with whom we used to meet once a month during the war as a group "for redemptive healing," connected with war troubles. I know that the medium working for that group had my name put on a Quaker list of those needing healing help, and so there were quite a few friends and Friends with my interests at heart. After one false start with someone who was only experimenting on the psychic and/or psychological level, my father controlled my mother at one of our Sunday evening sittings and told me that I must have faith that I would be healed as Christ healed when on earth. The following week some entity unknown to me controlled my mother and gave me much the same message as my father had done. I asked if I might know his name and he replied, "When I was on earth I was called Parish." This ashonished me, because I had never met W. T. Parish (who might be considered as the forerunner of Harry Edwards). I asked him, "But how did you find your way here?" He replied, "You wrote to me once." This was perfectly true: I had written on behalf of an old lady friend of mine who was going blind, and in token of my sincere belief in the world of spirit had sent him a poem. When I first discovered my second growth I had thought of aproaching Parish, but before I could do so he died. He had actually left this earth about three weeks before he spoke to me through my mother. There seemed to be great power in the room at that time, and I remember he held his hands together like a chalice (or as though he were holding one?). That was Sunday evening. It was spring or summer time, I know, for when I awoke the next morning about 6 a.m. the room was light, bright and warm with sunshine. I woke then because some presence came

into the room, a wonderfully beneficent one, and I opened my mouth to greet them. But I think I must have lost consciousness, for how long I don't know, because the breath was swept out of my body by a "rushing, mighty wind." I was only aware that my body was levitated horizontally three or four inches above the bed. When I came to myself that "lump" was gone and it never returned.

Again I wondered, why should I receive this help when so many more deserving cases are without it. Clearly I know that these happenings were not related to any personal merit of mine, and I believe they were connected with the hidden design—there was something I had to do before the end of this life for which health and strength were needed. Since the days of those happenings opportunities have come my way to write in journals and to speak to individuals and small groups about the inner spiritual life of man. My experience cannot be an isolated example and many of those who may read this article will surely remember similar events in their own lives and recognize hidden patterns. As the years pass they will see an undreamed of blossoming, a revelation of light and colour where the Spirit touches their lives.

Aftermath to an Experience of Death

JOSEPHINE WESTREN

ON the other side of life, through the door called Death, everything was so peaceful; there was no punctuated time, but limitless time. There was also no silence in the sense that silence is a cessation of sound—there was a living soundlessness as there is in a great forest. And the peace, the immense peace, was in myself and in the Voice that spoke to me, and in all I saw about me—but most of all in the quiet joy that filled me. And because of that great calm I learned more of my fellow men, and to understand in so many ways what makes men behave as they do; and with it came a wisdom that would previously have been beyond my ability to achieve.

When I came back, and opened my eyes on this earth-world again, first I lay and marvelled that I had with absolute certainty been to the other side of death—death being only the divide, and not a living state beyond it; and then, almost simultaneously, I was shocked at the multiple fragmentations of the earth world. Here everything is so fragmented—there are furniture, patterns, shapes, obligations, strivings, contrivances, everything broken up

into millions of this and that; everywhere one looks there are shapes upon shapes, with colours on the shapes, colours and shapes upon shelves, walls, floors, upon people, buildings, streets. Added to this there is sound upon sound, noises of every kind—and it made me feel swamped, as though a cacophany had been let loose about me, and a jumble of shapes, sizes and colours had been thrown about around me. And I lay and wondered how the inner spirit ever withstands such an onslaught upon it.

Then it was that I understood why we try to "get away from it all"—why people go for a walk when they're troubled, why town-dwellers go to the open beaches when they can and where they can gaze at the limitless sea and the great calm span of sky; or to the hills and heaths, or come to the heavenlike vistas of the New Forest where I live. It is the true spirit within them that needs the peace of heaven that they left before they returned to earth—and so, not understanding why they need it, they seek to return to the state of peace, that is the true environment of their inner selves. Judging by some accounts of the life immediately beyond death, it has many of the attributes of earth life—people play pianos, wear clothes, are apparently surrounded by the trappings of earth life; yet they speak always of this same indescribable peace, of beautiful colours, of a lightness of spirit. So obviously, although my own brief experience showed me none of this, because I was only just within the gate, the same peace and joy pervades what happens further on. But I cannot believe for one moment in the "bad" spirits, because all that my nature had been on earth, except for the pure child-like nature of my essential self, had left me; equally, I feel sure, "badness" must leave anyone who has passed over; his hell will have been here on earth, for as Jesus said, "Except ye be as little children ye cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven"—and by that I think he meant "do not" rather than "shall not," for I certainly found myself with the untrammelled spirit I had in childhood.

Always, on returning from the next world, there is the difficulty of words. No words here on earth can do more than approach remotely what one really means. Since my experience I have read the writings of many others who have found this same nearly insurmountable difficulty; and most difficult of all is to describe the living, lovely, quietly joyful life-force that is within us all, that is of heaven, that is of love, and that is our true nature. It is pure, contains only itself, absolutely true and absolutely free. It is with us, and in us, deep within for the most part, on earth; it is, therefore, the shining thread that runs through all life, here and hereafter. This is where words become almost

useless, in explaining why so much that is condemned on earth as wrong, is only man's striving to free within him in spite of the world's pressures, his almost submerged true self; and so to become more fully identified with the main stream uniting him with heaven. One can *feel* this main-stream within, it is a feeling, not a thought or a theory; it is—and here the words are not good enough—a yearning emotion but not emotion as we know it.

And because there is this longing to identify with the self that is still of heaven, people do things that become recognisable as attempts to re-unite with it. Once one understands this inner seeking this subconscious seeking, so much is made plain. It can be seen in the lonely old woman tending her window-box, or her cat, for both receive her love, and as she gives it she is identifying with heaven. In all that is creative it is to be recognised—artists and musicians are reaching out to touch and express the beauty that is of heaven, and in the creativity itself, the identifying, find ease, rather than in the finished painting or music they produce. I have experienced the truth of this. It is clearly showing in the eyes of children, who are still "trailing clouds of glory" for the world has not yet driven their identification with heaven deep within them. And in those born without reason or understanding, it waits, lying fallow, until they rejoin the life-stream of the spirit in the next world. It shows, too, in the innocent eyes of animals, who are filled with it all their lives.

It is shown in the non-violent hippy cults, in homosexuals and lesbians, in drug addicts and alcoholics, and in the suicides; because in the case of hippies they know of *something* within them, a longing for the "shining thing" that they are yet unable to understand, and a yearning that they are unable to ease in any other way. In their yearning they reach out to others in whom they recognise it also—the need for the simplicity of life-style, and the free, apparently disorganised giving and receiving of affection that expresses the main stream of heaven within them.

Homosexuals and lesbians are also at first, until they understand their need, seeking the same shining thing and then, through love, they find it. For the essence of love is neither masculine nor feminine; it is totally lovely, and it is totally itself. Of the seeking and finding, like to like, Plotinus wrote: "Since the soul's nature is what it is . . . when she sees something akin to herself, or even a vestige of kinship, she rejoices and flutters her wings, and receives it within her, and remembers her true self."

The sad ones, the defeated, the alcoholics, the drug addicts and the suicides have not even understood what it is they seek within themselves, nor are they able to recognise it in others. So the ache of yearning defeats them, and they try to escape from it. Each in their own way they obliterate the subconscious, unrecognised need for identification with the heaven-love. But they do not understand why they must do this, and until the whole world knows of the "God with us," the heaven within, they never will.

Once one knows, recognises, *feels,* the heaven-within in each person, one's understanding and compassion become infinite, because there awakes a psychic communication, a type of loving, between oneself and others; and it is this understanding and sympathetic thought, even though unspoken, that can get past the anger, indifference, pride, all the negative attributes of one's fellow travellers, and enable one to communicate with the spirit within them. The same is just as true in dealing with animals, whether wild or tame, and this too I have experienced. If all men were shown this truth, as they easily could be if there were enough messengers, there would be peace between men and between nations, for the dove of heaven would have descended upon the earth.

An Episode

ENID CASE

THIS episode involves a queer freak of memory. As a school-girl I had made a painting of a flower that was new to me. I labelled it as "Yellow flower in Mrs. Rushton's garden." As far as I remember I never noticed it again till I married twenty years later and found it in our Norfolk garden. It was a forsythia, and as far as I know quite scentless.

We lost our first baby (still-born) in 1942, and on January 18th, 1944, a premature girl, three months before time, was born unexpectedly, and died the next day.

After the first blow, my chief reaction was to give as little trouble as possible and, as it were, to get in the right position. I was nearly forty years old, so it was a great blow to my husband and myself. We each deeply loved each other, and assured each other of this.

The Vicar gave me Holy Communion. I did not care for him, and was not deeply religious but it seemed a necessary thing to

do. I had some visitors, and I think behaved very well to them. My instinct was to cause as little distress as possible.

I think it was on the third night after Jonquil's death that when I was asleep I found myself walking in an exhilarating place, hand in hand with someone who seemed in great harmony with me. There was a radiant joy, of a different kind (not degree) from anything I had experienced before or since, and a release or lightness that made me realise how heavy normal life is. I wondered what had happened to my sins and asked my companion about this. I didn't say "Heaven," but it wasn't earth. My companion said, "Oh, sin falls off like a husk." I realised this was so, but I am ashamed to say I immediately thought of someone I thought disagreeable, and said, "Even Lady —'s?" and my companion said, "Even Lady —'s."

We were walking along together with this wonderful feeling of expectancy. The place was somewhat shadowy to me, but obviously it led somewhere. Other people were going the same way, but all was a soft shadow. I suddenly saw in the distance, rather to the left a glimpse of some crowd of whitenesses. Something beyond anything I could stand. I think I felt it was endless, and I couldn't bear more than a flash; then it was over, and I felt myself going gently down with door after door closing after me (perhaps only two or three). Then I saw exactly the pictured yellow flower, and heard someone say "Heaven is fragrance."

I don't think I talked about this, even to my husband. He had had a wonderful dream of talking to Jonquil on a telephone.

Then my husband became ill, and I had to nurse him. It was a hard winter, with snow, and it was only after about three weeks that we went out for a walk together in the snow. In the sitting-room was a vase of forsythia that had come out early indoors, also some iris stylosa.

When we came back and opened the sitting-room door, the room was full of the strongest fragrance—a delightful exhilarating fragrance. We were astonished, and smelt the flowers to see where it came from. I think the iris stylosa had a faint scent, but it was the forsythia that was filling the room. My husband's brother came in and smelt it. We were all surprised, and felt we must have been stupid not to know that forsythia was scented.

For some reason I didn't connect it with the former episode, and it wasn't till the next year that I brought forsythia indoors, and there was no scent at all, that I connected the fragrant forsythia with the "Heaven is fragrance" of the episode.

I felt reluctant to talk about it and kept it to myself. I knew

I ought to try to let people know about it and tried three times. All were sceptical, and said it was a dream, or the fragrance was a chemical change (I expect it was!).

One uncle, a monk used to the supernatural, believed me, but said it was a personal experience and that I should keep it to myself—so I did.

(Four years later, against most expectations of specialists, we had a son and all was well.)

Spiritual Healing from the Healer's Viewpoint

LESLIE HARVEY

HEALERS are born and not made, for the healing gift is one that is inherent in each of us. Consequently no one can really be taught how to heal, merely how best to develop that which is to be found within his own real self. Because of this it can reasonably be said that no one person is any more capable than another of giving expression to the spark that is within him.

All that is needed to kindle this spark into a flame is compassion and understanding of those who are sick. Just how this is aroused depends upon the individual. For some it is ignited when they themselves are touched by the healing potential, whilst in others it grows from a natural warmth, a love of life, and a deep inner awareness of God. Whatever it is that brings us to this point we then begin to enter a field of which our own rather limited world allows us to see only a little.

Those who seek healing may be suffering from a physical ailment, from mental disharmony, or, of course, from spiritual discord. The healer therefore sets out to bring help to his patient on three distinct levels of consciousness. He seeks to ease bodily suffering, to calm the troubled mind, and, above all, to uplift the spirit. When he is seated before the one who is sick there is only one person in the world who matters to the healer at that moment—the patient. The healer-patient relationship is in many ways similar to that existing between the doctor and his patient or between the priest and his parishioner. How we as healers approach this will depend to a large extent upon our background, our view of life, and our own personal beliefs.

Like so many others before and since, the writer was a little perplexed, on first encountering spiritual healing, to find that

healings took place which often completely defied all logical explanation. The life we now live often serves to impede the growth of our real consciousness, and in spite of the great intellectual heights attained by man he has still barely scratched the surface and has caught only a glimpse of the enormous potential contained within the healing gift.

As healers we can do nothing. We do not heal and are merely funnels, channels or instruments who, like telephone exchanges, link the source with the one who is in need. That is all we are, nothing more and nothing less. What we have, however, to realise is that we are, at this moment in our journey of spiritual evolution, often bound by the confines of the material world.

We frequently talk of communicating, of blending with God or with some indefinable power. This is the essence of healing, but because of our present physical state we have often to begin by learning to communicate with each other. Unless healer and patient can successfully blend and allow their higher selves to mingle, a block or barrier to healing is sometimes seen to exist. The elimination of any obstacle to healing is therefore the first step that has to be taken. How this is achieved depends solely upon the patient with whom the healer is faced.

We have always to remember that we are all individuals and that no two people are alike. Some who come for healing want only to sit in silence and meditation, and when allowed to do so are able to consciously blend with the healer. Others come laden with worries, problems, fears and anxieties of all kinds. Before they can begin to relax, before they can begin to find a state of at-one-ment with the instrument of healing and with the God force itself, they have a need to unburden themselves. To help them do this is an essential part of the healer's work.

There was a time when to suggest that part of the healer's task is to help his patient psychologically was sufficient to bring a gasp of surprise or even horror from many a dedicated person. As healers we can, however, only really take an in-depth look at healing from the level of consciousness upon which we now live. At this moment we are human beings. Human beings with a soul, yes; but as man in his daily life is often only aware of a single level of existence, it is to this that we must first attune. As rapport between the healer and the one who is sick is established, the healer has then to extend and expand his own consciousness in whatever manner his personal beliefs dictate. Some seek to extend their minds to one level of existence, some to a personally defined source of healing, and others simply to the Godhead.

It is at this stage that spiritual healing really begins. Until this moment the healer's compassion for his patient has sparked off what the writer sees as magnetic healing, which in itself has little direct relationship with true spiritual healing. This spontaneous transfer of vital energy from one being to another can help the patient. It often eases the mind, relaxes and revitalises him, but that is all it does. As the patient begins to find harmony with the healer his function as a simple instrument then begins. As he expands his mind the healer must endeavour to efface his own ego, as only in this way can he offer the healing energies a clear channel. How the healing itself then progresses is beyond our control and we have no say in this.

Our patients recount all sorts of things. Some experience a physical sensation related to healing. Others do not consciously experience anything and yet they improve. This variable reaction to healing is often inexplicable. The writer believes that the healing energies are brought to our dimension in various forms. We know that healing has often to bring about a change within the physical body, and that however it affects our soul, however it affects our mind, matter has frequently to be changed in order for a cure to be effected.

We see this taking place in serious cases as well as in some not so serious but still painful conditions. To free a locked arthritic joint, for example, requires physical change. The healer cannot achieve this, and although he may not even touch the patient, the necessary adjustment is brought about. Because so many changes and adjustments are called for by different ailments, it is difficult to imagine the healing energies reaching mortal man in only one form or on only one wavelength.

The infinitely variable range of frequencies upon which the healing energies operate may account for some of the physical sensations experienced by patients. Some report feeling heat, others coldness, and yet others experience something akin to a mild electric current. It often happens, when a patient is being treated for more than one disease, that these sensations will change as each condition is treated in turn. This surely points to the intelligent rather than haphazard application of universal energy. It demonstrates that a form of energy which may calm the mind needs to be modified to free an arthritic joint or realign a slipped disc, and so the frequency of the healing potential fluctuates according to specific need.

This cannot yet be proven in scientific terms, but this view—tenable amongst healers and those who have benefited from healing—has been formulated upon the basis of experience. So

many aspects of healing are really only seen when we begin to exchange and compare experiences. Every moment, every hour, every part of our lives, in fact, is built upon the basis of the experiences from which we learn so much and of which we, in many ways, become the product.

The healer can no more afford to become emotionally involved with a patient than can the medical practitioner. The emotions do, however, play a part in the healing act, and few healers could deny feeling deeply saddened when brought face to face with human suffering, or suddenly elated when they see physical suffering or mental anguish relieved. It is natural that this should be so, for what are we, in fact, doing? As instruments of healing—however we personally define this—we are channelling a force that extends from the Godhead and which comes to man as love, it is as simple as that.

The mechanics of healing have undergone a great many changes in the last twenty to thirty years. The ways in which healing is applied by the healer have changed considerably. His approach has become more simple, and the writer believes that the more simply healing is channelled by the instrument the more effective it is likely to become.

There was a time when one witnessed exaggerated passes and movements of all sorts connected with healing. In common with others the writer reached a point where he was forced to ask himself if so many things that had become a part of healing were really necessary. The answer to this question is clearly "No," for as has been stressed, the healer's role is never anything more than that of an instrument. By bringing into the healing act any expression of what "we" think is necessary, we are to some extent impeding the flow of energy to the patient. After all, it is not the healer's purpose to prove that he is psychic, that he is clairvoyant or anything else. His purpose is merely to help the patient, and the more simply he can do this the more likely he is to be a useful channel of healing.

More people than at any other time are today turning to spiritual healing. Some come from orthodox religious backgrounds, whilst others hold unorthodox but equally valid religious attitudes. Even those who are devoid of all religious belief figure amongst those who today turn to spiritual healing as a last resort.

Whether it is deeply rooted faith or sheer desperation which brings those who are sick to the healer's door does not matter in the slightest. What is important is that many go away physically, mentally and spiritually refreshed, and in time come to realise that they do have a soul and have been touched by the God force.

So great is the impact that it can seldom be ignored, and in this way healing is beginning to level mankind as it brings to ever increasing numbers of people the realisation that man is not just so many pounds of flesh and bone, but that he is, above all, a spiritual being. The healer today appreciates that his patients represent a complete cross section of humanity. This widening interest accounts, in part at least, for many of the changes which have taken place in the mechanics of healing during the last few decades.

The enquirer asks many questions about healing. Some, of course, can be answered from personal experience, but others often seem unanswerable. One of the questions most frequently asked and sometimes the most difficult to answer is: "Why does healing sometimes fail?"

On many occasions the reason for an apparent failure is self evident. If the patient's mode of life has been the factor contributing to the illness, one tries to suggest that this be changed. Unless this is done healing cannot really succeed, as there can be no cure until the cause itself is removed. There are, of course, times when healing is requested at virtually the eleventh hour, and though help is sought the patient may, in fact, die. The sceptic's reaction to this is often: "So much for healing, it did not do him much good."

The writer seriously doubts the truth of this statement having known of a number of patients over the years who came into this category. Many healers are asked to intercede for someone who is literally at death's door, and in the terminal stages of a particularly painful illness. In many such cases healing cannot prolong physical life because it is already coming to an end. What it can and does do is to make the transition from one state of existence to another far more easy than it might otherwise have been, without pain and frequently without recourse to drugs. It is surely unrealistic to look upon this as a failure of healing. The purpose of healing is to touch every part of our total existence and not merely to heal the physical body. If it reaches out to us when earthly life is coming to an end and makes the passing easier, then this is surely a natural and logical part of the healing process. It is, in fact, helping man through a stage in his development and progression, for death is really an essential part of life.

The healer may encounter two patients suffering from seemingly identical illnesses. He sees one respond well to the healing effort whilst the other shows no apparent improvement. When faced with this situation the healer can usually only

speculate as to the reason for the apparent failure of healing to reach one of his patients.

On occasion it may happen that the cause of an ill condition is so deeply rooted within the individual that the healer can have no concept of this. There may also be truth in the often heard statement that there is within each of us a need to endure a certain amount of suffering. Whether we consider this to be karmic or simply the product of this life will depend upon our own personal philosophy, but whatever our outlook, it is true that it is often from suffering that we learn most.

To many people this is an unpalatable truth, but then truth—real truth that is—is not always pleasant. By looking back upon our own lives we frequently find that the moments of physical, mental and spiritual suffering are those which have taught us most. The need to learn which we all have highlights the reason why a person, not merely the physical presence, but the real person—the spirit—cannot be healed if it is not ready.

Provided the healer gives of his best and offers the healing potential an unimpeded channel, the patient can often be spiritually led to the point where his higher self can accept and respond to healing. The healer does not therefore even consider the possibility of failure as he ministers to those who are sick.

Healing opens a new door and offers a broader view of life to many. It is as the soul is uplifted and the mind opened to admit healing that we begin to see many of the wonderful effects brought about by spiritual healing.

President's Party Address

NOVEMBER, 1974

WHEN the body breaks down, often on a level at which medical skill cannot offer much help, the person facing this predicament will usually turn where he can, irrespective of his convictions and opinions, once his situation seems to him both desperate and baffling. This predicament is mysterious in its origins. Suddenly life lays a hand upon him from quite outside himself, and his pain and helplessness create a kind of philosophic urgency, whether or not the pains silently begin to point in an unmistakable way towards the final inevitable journey. When the patient asks himself: why has this happened to me, he is really asking the universe to answer him, and he wonders pretty anxiously whether the universe and what he has previously held

to be his philosophy are telling him the same thing. Or is the universe somewhat sharply contradicting his philosophy, telling him this does not hold water?

Life at this very difficult stage can suddenly become meaningless, or apparently meaningless. His illness is making at the very closest quarters a philosophical statement which may be very hard to interpret, because it is also requiring him to ask what part he may himself have played, perhaps unconsciously, in bringing this present predicament upon him. What must he do about it, not only in a daily and pragmatic way, but at every level of his being? And he has to face that sometimes the deeper levels remain silent, very possibly because for many years he has lost touch with them or perhaps has never been in real touch; has been or become a stranger to his deeper self. Some would say that through his illness his own secret self is talking to him, and others might say that through it God is talking to him.

This, or something like it, can be the situation when a patient decides to apply to the College for distant healing; very likely it is his first contact. Obviously a number of calls for help are less urgent than the sort I have been speaking of; the patient is discommoded but his life, in its total sense, is still perfectly manageable. What do we hope to do when his call is indeed desperate and total? The patient's first hope, of course, is for his symptoms to be removed, and he is pleased enough if this happens. It is not wise, however, to look on spiritual healing—when it operates on physical levels—as supplanting medical skills. Removal of the symptoms does not *necessarily* imply removal of the cause. Sometimes the symptoms disappear for good, sometimes they return. This is inescapable, alike in orthodox medicine and spiritual healing; it is a factor in the complex situation. If doctor, healer and the patient himself are only able to touch one part of the complex, then clearly the remainder will continue to operate, and probably show outwardly in a renewed or different outbreak in due course.

How can distant healing apply to what is often such a manifold problem? The philosophy behind our work is extremely simple, and the patient is in no way obliged to accept it if he does not wish to. We posit that the universe is filled with the power of God—and it does not really matter much what meaning one gives to that force—and that this power, which we visualise as light, is available at all times for everyone everywhere. Incidentally, accounts from those in the discarnate world speak frequently of encountering light within the very substance of more exalted beings they meet. As their consciousness grows,

so do they themselves become more aware of this light. Similarly here on earth, at much more humble levels, the patients can become aware of and tune themselves into this light. At the very least they can visualise it. We also posit, though perhaps in an implicit rather than in an explicit way—for to be too explicit can sometimes lead to becoming mealy-mouthed—that every man and woman, being God's creation, is inherently perfect, in the sense that an image of his or her perfection lies in the mind of God. The light which is part of the God-force helps them to realise just a little more of this perfection. Now sometimes they get well, sometimes they do not; what is important is that sometimes, quite often in fact, they find arising within them a decidedly different attitude of serenity about their ills. This leads to what I can best call a very marked shifting of the burden of their illness; they find sinews they had not known which remove the burden from that place within their mind and emotions where it had hitherto lain and had been so irksome. In short, they accept. A few get a remarkable remission, followed by a swift and painless transition. On some, unfortunately, the healing makes no mark and eventually, reluctantly, we have to allow these patients to leave the list. A real difficulty is that it has become very easy to believe that modern medicine acts objectively and independently of the patient's real nature; that it is the pill and not the patient that is the more powerful. Therefore, some similarly expect the healers to do all the work, whilst they sit back. But the essence of the method is to encourage the patients to re-attune themselves to the healing force in the cosmos; and in doing so, re-attuning, if they can, whatever defective quality within their own nature is akin to the illness and played a part in bringing it about. I do not think this necessarily takes place altogether at a conscious level, but it certainly involves readjustment somewhere in the psyche. Now I do not for a moment say that this simple concept deals with all the many problems behind human physical illness. A dedicated spiritual healer used to say that whatever rule of healing he or others set up, sooner or later he would find an exception to it. I am sure he was right.

Discarnate teachers are concerned, of course, with much more than healing of the body, which is only a specific area within the full process of reaching towards wholeness. When Cecil Collins exhibited here colour slides of his paintings, a striking one, "The Wounded Angel," showed an angel lying helpless on the ground, with shattered wing. This was the painter's symbol for part of man's spiritual situation. Our human

predicament, besides the glory of opportunity in one's present incarnation, involves of course losses brought over from former incarnations. Lack of wholeness is man's predicament, either because of a want of some quality or else an excess of it, which he has been born to put right; he is called upon to redress the balance. He is also involved in a deeper predicament. He is incomplete because, as occult teaching declares, only part of him, a segment of his total self, has been born on earth. His remaining part lies elsewhere, and he will find it eventually by rejoining his total self some considerable time after death. Meanwhile it is rather apart from, though not wholly dissociated from, this present incarnation. There are threads between the two.

Communication with the next world is most valuable for another very heartening aspect which arises. This is that a man is not only related to his own larger self, but he is also part of a group soul, part of a particular section of the company of heaven with whom his work and destiny will lie for many aeons ahead. He is one of a blessed band of brothers. So here he stands on earth in the small sphere of his personal self, as well as within the larger sphere of his total self, but he is also part of this still larger group soul, and beyond that part of the whole shining sea of life, and he seeks to find harmony as best he can with something of all these aspects.

Perhaps this seems to go rather a long way beyond one's personal particular predicament; these mysterious limitations of perception and of character which somehow we find ourselves landed with and which make us smaller than we sometimes feel we really are. The predicament, as I have said, partly arises from our own particular little packet of karma, the aftermath, the legacy of former narrowings of oneself when on earth before. But karma surely brings, along with those seeds from the past, the true possibility of releasing one's talents and of finding the wherewithal of character to transform them. Often, as is well known, a life situation, or crisis, arises, frequently in middle life, which also offers along with it the release of an inner energy which will help to resolve the crisis. Such a crisis is the inner world's way of saying: 'Quick, here is your opportunity; so find within you, already inherently there, all you need to transform your present situation."

A vivid personal encounter with one's inner world, and of course the subsequent strenuous working out by the self of what is revealed, leads one through the predicament. Hence the importance within the C.P.S. programmes, as we have developed them during the last couple of years, of the workshops in

transpersonal psychology, the meditations, the realisation group, which all aim to help men and women to become more readily in touch in a practical way with their own inner world.

In such a journey, essentially one does the work for oneself; one has to: because one originally created the problem, so basically one must resolve it. This does not, of course, preclude help; there can be the joy and the poetry of keys put into one's hand through the liberating insight of other persons. I think however that the spirit of our time is such that this help now less readily comes through those occult or overt organisations which claim authority. Unlike some organisations, the C.P.S. never claims any authority for itself. Nor does it wish its sensitives to claim any. Only two forms of authority are worth while; the authority which life itself demonstrates through what it does to one, whether we like it or not; and the authority of one's own inner self, which somewhere deep within knows the true situation, however long and subtle, as well as formidable, the task can sometimes be of finding it out and then resolving it.

One of the great difficulties is the numbing effect of the daily routine and the social conventions which so readily imprison us in our smaller selves. They form a refuge against the activity of the spirit. A kind of conspiracy of ease exists to keep us within the security of these smaller unchallenging selves. In a very interesting conversation recently, a priest of the Christian Community was saying that among the older generation, spiritual experience has so often been regarded as essentially private; one would no more dream of asking people how their soul is faring than one would ask them how their bank balance is faring. But now those young people who truly belong to the Aquarian Age are altering that; their outer freedom is likely to deepen in some of them in time to that much more difficult thing—inner freedom of relationship. Inner freedom is a most potent factor in spiritual health. It is also one of the keys to learning to be able to love all men, and not only the ones we believe, sometimes falsely, to be closest. Freedom in relationship means of course neither licence nor avoidance of obligation, but it does mean that no emotional debt is either created or owed by one person to the other. Life creates duties, certainly, in any relationship, but they can be met in a voluntary spirit.

Easier said than done, of course. No one who tries to win inner freedom is likely to find it without having a price to pay. In human relationships and attitudes, there is so frequently some recalcitrant core, some rock in oneself which will not give way. This falling short of wholeness, this form of self-imprisonment,

is often extremely hard even to perceive accurately. One might say one's temperament is also one's tragedy. One feels a lack, but it is far harder to find the source of that lack. It can take the form of some kind of resistance, of inability to move flexibly. How does one get down to this? In the College workshops some techniques are introduced to get behind these hard outer scales of resistance, techniques which have the great merit of giving opportunity to one's own inner self to show where one can change one's ground; the very thing, in all probability, which the inner self has for years been trying to tell the outer self. When one finds the freedom to be able to change one's ground, outer problems can begin to look different and far less formidable.

This often calls unexpectedly for a readiness to throw away a short-term advantage in favour of the long term. Willingness is a very real key indeed to the finding of wholeness; the point where willingness begins to wither away in one often forms a good clue to where the hidden rock can be found and chipped away.

Rudolf Steiner speaks of a force in the spiritual world, which is present also in one's private inner world, and he personifies this force under the name of Ahriman. Ahriman has many aspects; one of them is to pin people down into their past limitations and keep them there. We can acknowledge Ahriman, who brings good influences too, yet must refuse the slavery he attempts to produce.

The problem to be met can and often does lie not only at the psychological level, but at a spiritual level. One often gets the sense—and sometimes the mien and expression proclaim it—that some persons have lost their powers of inner manoeuvre. They are like the boxer pinned into his corner, and the opponent who has pinned them there is the Ahriman force. It is too late, many say, but this is not so; one is working very much on the tasks of this incarnation of course, but one can also work hard on what may be possible to bring to fruition only in a later incarnation, though obviously this does not excuse one from the present tasks of this life. In pursuing seemingly hopeless spiritual aims in the right way, one can be creating spiritual capital. "You can't take it with you," they say. Capital must always be expended—it is no good, as Francis Bacon said, unless it is spread around—but this moral capital one gradually builds up may be expended in terms of service, partly in this life, but the remainder in the next. But there needs to be the essential willingness to expend.

I have spoken of the return from physical illness to

wholeness, and the journey from karmic temperamental imprisonment to the wholeness of inner freedom. Wholeness too, of course, is world wholeness, the healing of nature against pollution and exploitation, and healing of the exploitation of man by man.

Obituaries

CONSTANCE SITWELL

At the end of last summer there passed from the College scene one of its most gifted and colourful personalities, Mrs. Constance Sitwell, a relative by marriage of the famous Sitwell family, and an author in her own right of many delightful books.

Mrs. Sitwell joined the London Spiritualist Alliance in 1937, and in 1943 she was elected President, succeeding Miss Lind-af-Hageby. She remained President until 1947 when she stepped down because she felt, during that very difficult time, the Society should have a business man to cope with the many and varied problems which were then arising. When Mr. Harry Pickup, the business man who succeeded her, resigned to go abroad, Mrs. Sitwell was re-elected, having acted as Vice-President during Mr. Pickup's year of office. Subsequently, in 1949, she proposed Mr. Edward Tillett (Managing Director of the *Yorkshire Evening Post*) for the position of President, having once again in mind the especial needs of the Society. She herself once more acted as Vice-President, which position she held until 1961. Brigadier R. C. Firebrace, C.B.E., then took over the Presidency and Mrs. Sitwell remained a member of the Council until 1968, thus serving continuously for 31 years.

In addition to her wise guidance at Council Meetings, when very often an apt word from her put matters on the right road, she presided at the many delightful functions held from time to time in the College rooms. On one such occasion when a former Prime Minister of Canada, the late Mr. McKenzie King, accepted an invitation to meet the Council, the Staff and a few members, Mrs. Sitwell, in a gown of white and gold brocade, was a most striking figure, the acme of dignity and graciousness, as she stood to welcome the Prime Minister, then moved about the Lecture Room introducing him to all who were present.

Throughout the many years of her association with the College she gave many lectures, each and every one stamped with her special quality of original thought; she had, more than most people, the gift of lighting up a subject enabling her audience to

see it from a new angle, presenting fresh aspects for their consideration. She was an authority on that great medium, founder of the London Spiritualist Alliance, William Stainton Moses ("M.A.Oxon.") and more than once spoke on his many-sided mediumistic gifts. She could describe an event of days gone by in such a way as to make it live again for her listeners.

This quality, as it were, of painting a picture in words is particularly evident in her books—"Smile At Time," "Flowers and Elephants," and "Bright Morning." The anthology she compiled on life after death, entitled "Seek Paradise," is a bedside book for those who know the anguish of the loss of someone dear to them.

When we talked at luncheon, as we often did, she eagerly discussed meeting friends again for she had so many and in her book, "Conversations with Six Friends," she writes of talks with some for whom she had a special affection and whom she hoped to meet again in the life to come. Amongst these were "A.E." (George Russell) and Douglas Fawcett. In this booklet also her descriptive power and great delight in the beauties of the countryside shine forth.

She was a great reader and took an especial delight in the College Library with its wide selection of books, old and new, on all Psychical Research, Parapsychology, Spiritualism and allied subjects, although she felt, and repeatedly emphasised, that it was in the older books that the gems and pearls were to be found.

The College has been blessed with many distinguished members of Council but in the passing of Constance Sitwell, a great lady of an epoch that is ending, has left us.

* * * *

A friend writes: For many years a member of the Society for Psychical Research, Mrs. Sitwell had been both President and Vice-President and counted among her friends and admirers many of the distinguished thinkers about extra-sensory perception in Europe. Tender hearted but not sentimental, amused and amusing as a companion, helpful to the needy and the distressed, Constance Sitwell's example was always comforting to think of. Can there be a nobler epitaph?

BRIGADIER R. C. FIREBRACE, C.B.E.

Brigadier Firebrace, a former President of the College of Psychic Studies for thirteen years, died at his home on November 10th last year. With his passing the College has in one year lost a second oustanding personality from its ranks,

one who will be sorely missed by all who knew him well, as well as by the many who perhaps knew him less well but who experienced much help in their studies of the paranormal, and indeed much personal kindness in their troubles.

The Brigadier was a gunner in the Royal Artillery; he served throughout the 1914-18 war, was Military Attaché in Riga from 1931 to 1935 and during the second world war was Chief of Intelligence in Edinburgh with particular charge of the Russians domiciled here in Britain, his knowledge of the Russian language standing him, and the country, in good stead. He was, in fact, a gifted linguist, speaking French, German, Russian and Hindustani fluently.

For the College, it was as a Member of Council and later as President that his detailed knowledge and experience of all forms of mediumship, as also his understanding and interpretation of the philosophy of the subject proved invaluable. Above all perhaps it was his sound commonsense (Solomon's wisdom?) which over the years kept the Society in the van of all work to do with Extrasensory Perception. He possessed a great sense of humour, very necessary in the study of psychic work, and great tact in handling people and difficult situations, a gift especially appreciated by fellow members of Council during the many arduous years through which the College had to pass.

He also possessed to a great degree the ability to mix well with all and sundry; indeed, he could, as Kipling wrote: "Walk with kings, nor lose the common touch," so that he was a popular and much sought after figure in the Movement. He drew to the College a great variety of men and women in many walks of life who looked forward to hear him lecture not only on the different aspects of Psychic Research but on his own personal experiences with physical and mental mediums. More than once he was asked to give an account of the direct voice circle held in Riga at which he received undoubted evidence of communication from the Other World which convinced him of the reality of the survival of the individual. He had evidence of the genuineness of physical mediumship when sitting with Mrs. Helen Duncan and later with Alec Harris. The evidence he received throughout his years of experiment left no doubt in his mind that communication with those who have died is possible, but in a letter to me, in 1973, he wrote: "I remain as firmly convinced of survival and communication as I ever was, but do see difficulty in producing that final absolute proof which would convince scientists."

He piloted the change of name of the Society from the London Spiritualist Alliance to the College of Psychic Science

(now the College of Psychic Studies) and was the inspiration behind the inauguration of week-end conferences which had hitherto not been a part of the society's curriculum. Here again his genial presence made everyone feel welcome.

In addition to his work as President of the College, he had several other interests, being the first and, until his death, the sole President of the Survival Joint Research Committee under whose auspices he instituted the James-John experiment, the account of which was written up by the present President of the College, Mr. Paul Beard, in the C.P.S. Paper No. 6.

Astrology was another subject in which he took a keen interest. He was at one time President of the Astrological Association lecturing in this country and also in Germany and until the last supervising and editing the journal *Spica,* to which after his retirement he devoted most of his time.

Foreseeing the wind of change, which he felt would necessitate a new approach to the many problems surrounding all psychic studies he began to prepare the way for his successor. After so long a term in office he felt strongly that a younger man should shoulder the responsibility to carry the Society forward into the new age which was dawning. He had twice before tried to resign, and for one year did give up the Presidentship, but was persuaded—indeed almost coerced by fellow members of the Council—to take on the work again. In 1966, however, he felt the time had definitely come to stand down and this he did. So passes from the psychic scene one "who never turned his back, but marched breast forward." R. Y.

LETTERS

Dear Sir,

I am hoping to make an anthology of scentings—para-normal scents after a death. I would be very grateful if your readers could send me examples, either from their own experience or from their reading.

Yours sincerely,

ENID CASE (MRS.),

Red Rock,

Brampford Speke, Exeter.

Book Reviews

A Geography of Consciousness, by William Arkle. Introduction by Colin Wilson. (Neville Spearman, £2.75.)

Letter From A Father, by William Arkle. (Obtainable from the author at Backwell Hill House, Backwell, Bristol BS19 3DB. 30p including postage.)

As we move into the Aquarian Age, so much "water of the spirit" is poured upon us in different idioms that we need a comprehensive vessel to contain it. The first principle on which to begin to build such a structure reminds me of a suggestion once made by Gildas: "If you would endeavour to come nearer to one of the greatest mysteries of all time, meditate upon man's love for the Creator, and the Creator's love for man."

William Arkle has the courage to give us just this. He begins at the alpha-point: the Creator's longing that we shall become real—that we shall "home in" on our true Self. The motive behind all creation is this divine longing, not for worship (which can be a substitute for love), certainly not for placation, nor even for service in any servile sense; but for a more mature relationship which has grown, beyond even the experience of bliss-consciousness, to that of divine integrity and of friendship based on the quality of deep affection. Such feeling-communion with our divine parents and our brothers and sisters goes far beyond any form of knowledge, cleverness, enlightenment or power. For example, in the crucial chapter on Will, he shows that, as we mature by penetration into ever deeper realities of the Self, the true will "achieves command by being more fully what it is. Thus the 'sound' of the quality of its individual being mingles more loudly with the creative sound of God."

How can he know? In a long and helpful introduction both to the book and to the author Colin Wilson places William Arkle among the half-dozen most remarkable men whom he has ever met. I would agree. He is a true mystic and therefore also practical, having been an engineer; a deep, precise and exacting thinker; and mainly a painter and composer, interpreting his perceptions of the infinitely subtle quality of creative love in pictures and music. So, although he uses all of himself in attempting to understand divine consciousness, his chief way is that of "in-feeling"—an instrument of research and communication which, perhaps, until now we have not valued sufficiently.

A Geography of Consciousness is a most clearly and concisely expressed, though demanding, map of the psyche and its

communication with the universe. The idiom is largely that of physical science, using the image of vectors to measure degrees of balance between the inherent male and female principles, with the "child" as the third vector between them which extends as man evolves his ability to use his potential fields of awareness. A series of "bodies of communication" responds to appropriate levels of matter-consciousness, the highest being that of the Christ consciousness. But true relation between them has been crippled by our establishment of false circuits so that we have become limited robots, trapped in mechanical responses and hence stifled in deadly boredom, since the true excitement of life, experienced by young children, has been filtered out. Man is composed of a hierarchy of entities, each functioning at its proper level, so that when true circuits are restored all can work in harmony. The way to restore harmony is to use the principle of induction whereby (according to the analogy of electronics) a higher frequency induces corresponding change in the lower fields. Then we become able progressively to hear what the universes—nature, people, events—are *really* saying; we cease to react to the environment as resistant, hostile, lifeless matter, but begin to respond to the true "magic" of life.

In the second part of the book these principles are applied to all aspects of human experience, among which are philosophy, religion (and the concept of sin), justice, education, astrology, beauty (including sexual relationship), and finally the atomic field. The archetypal pattern of the Family (father, mother and child) operates throughout, and is seen to be inherent in the most fundamental particles of matter-consciousness. It is at the level of the photon structure that we find the key to the process of transformation and communication between the frequencies; here is the primal "word."

"Seek," he concludes, "to understand the nature of the love that brought you forth. This is not interested in power or glory or even perfect behaviour, but has something to do with the response that only you can make because there is none other like you."

Letter From A Father is a 10,000 word booklet on the same theme but written directly from that quality of infinite acceptance, wisdom and loving compassion which we glimpse when we can touch our higher Selves. It is expressed personally, with beautiful simplicity and no jargon or specific terminology—a remarkable feat considering that it includes in a total and meaningful pattern all the basic truths of the ageless wisdom. The personal approach of the West and the impersonal approach of the East are regarded

as complementary; the existence and work of the "other children" (evolutions), the nature of time, the incarnation and second coming of Christ—all these find their place in a consistent and satisfying framework. Neither does the *Letter* balk any of the difficult issues such as the Fall, suffering, error, the present world ordeal, and the supreme importance of this hard physical incarnation (the farthest-out experience from the Father) in the total training scheme. For the earth is understood as a schoolroom experience; and true parental love, with freedom and the self-discipline which freedom implies, as the means by which eventually we may become friends and co-creators. (As a psychotherapist, having worked with many "fatherless children" resulting from two world wars, I welcome this statement of the father-principle which is so much needed in the present world to give us its essential significance of identity and purpose.)

This booklet is easy to read, yet also profound; it grows on one. The more scientifically-minded readers may like to start with the book, then—with more open hearts—read the *Letter*. Those approaching from personal feeling may prefer the other way round. Each complements the other. William Arkle's writings are challenging and very "stretching"; they will not be the way for everyone, especially the lazy-minded; but those to whose condition they speak, and who have also seen his paintings and heard his music, will recognise that his unique contribution is absolutely fundamental for understanding the New Age.

MARY SWAINSON.

The Wheel of Eternity. Helen Greaves. (Neville Spearman, £2.50.)

Yet again, Helen Greaves has given us a very worthwhile book, and one that adds a third dimension to her previous *Testimony of Light*. In these pages, not only is further teaching brought from a higher sphere, but the writer is herself involved in the drama of those who, although they have indeed passed from this life, are still tied to it by bonds of hatred and unhappiness.

Helen Greaves treats her own great gift of extra-sensory perception with simplicity and acceptance, both when she is translating the unhappiness of the two souls still earthbound, and when she is conveying great wisdom from higher Beings who are intent on not only bringing salvation to The Maid and The Mistress but to all those among us here who have eyes to read and hearts to listen. The warning that much caution and wisdom is needed as man makes his first advance towards the Spiritual Planes, as his mind stretches out into exploration of the unseen etheric world, is timely.

The Wheel of Eternity can be read as an enjoyable tale; it

can be read as further teachings for this new age; it can be read for its deep insight into the twin themes of repentance and forgiveness. However it is read, it is a valuable addition to the bookshelves of all those interested in spiritual and psychic knowledge. HILDA BODEN.

The Romeo Error, by Lyall Watson. (Hodder & Stoughton, £3.25.)

This book has been extensively reviewed in the daily press, but most of these reviews concentrate on the sensational side issues that people are sometimes buried before they are quite dead. This gives a false impression of what is, in fact, a serious and important book that goes further than any previously published in bridging the gap between orthodoxy in science and medicine and the paraphysical.

Lyall Watson has a Ph.D. in the borderline territory between biology and anthropology, and was for a time working under Desmond Morris at the London Zoo. He is now Director of Biologic of London. Thus his scientific background is sound.

He starts building his bridge from orthodoxy to unorthodoxy at the molecular biology end, and gives a simple account of the current scene. He explains how vague is the line of demarcation between living and non-living substance. This leads on to the postulate of an organising field, the bio-field, and he presents arguments for this in a temperate and factual way unlikely to ruffle the calm of academics, even those of the utmost respectability who aspire to a Chair or aim even higher at a Nobel Prize.

He consolidates the exposition with a wealth of references, many of impeccable origin and all available to the reader willing to take a little trouble to search them out. Some of these references are as recent as December, 1973.

At this point—the end of Part One—he begins to take off. Part Two, "The Mind," contains much that will be thought controversial, and most of it will be unacceptable to the Skinner school of behavioural psychology. But, again, the greater part is founded on published work—fully referenced—on psychosomatics and philosophical doctrines that deal with the mind-brain relationship.

Part Three, "Soul," will be the most significant and valuable part of the book to those who have graduated beyond comfortable and simple disbelief in anything not captured within the straight waistcoat of orthodoxy.

He draws attention to the seeming identity of the biofield—

a field that can now be instrumentally detected in the conventional laboratory—and the etheric body familiar to all who know anything of the paranormal. Then, with great courage, he goes on to explore concepts of "bodies" beyond the physical and etheric, extracting significant passages from the vast literature of the East and West over the last three millenia.

Some extracts from his last chapter, and from his short "Conclusion," will give a better indication than any paraphrase of what this book is all about. (Page 222-3.)

> "Reality is only a description and, if there are other realities, then there must be other descriptions. George Meek felt as I did after seeing the healers at work and tried to explain the scientific dilemma in which he found himself. "Twentieth Century Man is so physically and materialistically oriented that he is totally incapable of thinking of himself in terms of his own individual etheric, astral, mental and causal or spiritual bodies. Even a very well educated patient is totally incapable of visualising himself and all living matter as a complex interlocking series of scintillating and pulsating energy fields" I would say that the problem is especially acute for the educated person, because he has been exposed for that much longer to th specific interpretations of reality that we in the West have learned to make in common, and to accept as exclusive fact."

Page 223:

> "The visual evidence of high-frequency apparatus; the efficacy of acupuncture; the description of the aura as seen by sensitive people, and the corroboration of this description in eastern philosophy; the diagnostic ability of those who lack medical training and the usual electronic aids; the prevalence and accuracy of out-of-body experiences; the reality of telepathy and its relationship to the energy described as bioplasma; the proof of psychokinesis under controlled conditions; and now the repeatable macroscopic materialization of living tissue—all these point directly to the conclusion that the body must operate on at least one other level beyond what we know, and have minutely described, as the physical and somatic system."

In his two-page Conclusion he refers to the frustrations that seem always to bedevil the serious researcher into the paraphysical. He ends:

> ". . . it begins to look as though the obstructions are set up deliberately—either to thwart us altogether, or to programme our access to new information so that we do not travel too far or too fast. . . . I do not know the answer, but I am beginning

to learn that the builder of this barrier is not necessarily always benign. I will go on with the search for a new way to gain the understanding we need, but I must admit that right now on the edge of this unexpected chasm, I am a little afraid."

This book is well worth getting hold of by any intelligent person who is brave enough to venture beyond the parish pump; and it is essential reading for those studying the vast field still ignored or derided by orthodoxy. KELVIN SPENCER.

The Seeker and the Finding. A Woman's Search for Inner Truth, by Margery Eyre (Thorson's Publishers Ltd., £3.25).

This is the book of a deeply religious woman and unusual in more ways than one, because a spiritual inner voice asserted itself as the result of psychiatric treatment by a Jungian psychologist. The teaching follows on that given in a previous book, *The Revealing Light,* and is a record of personal experience during a search for God and for His Will for an individual life. The search was crowned with success and the record answers in its own mystical or supranormal way the criticism that concrete proof is required for the acceptance of messages from the World Invisible as authentic. Whether the messages' origin is the Collective Unconscious or the Real Self or discarnate entities or from all three sources is not of vital importance—"There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit"—and it is the spiritual quality of that which is received that matters. No statement in this book is without significance.

The author states that it is written because she wants to share the great joy which became hers through experience. "The fruits of the Spirit are . . . joy . . ."—it sounds right. In her search for a fuller understanding the writer cast her net wide through contacts with other people, attending meetings and services of different descriptions and reading the literature of different faiths. It was because of excessive fatigue that she sought the help of a Jungian psychiatrist, and then her own inner voice re-declared itself in wise and authoritative tones. She developed a technique of listening and recording. Her first mentor gave his name as Melchior and revealed that he had a long-standing relationship with his pupil. Instruction was given gradually and gently and was quite practical, asserting that the right time for this important activity—the search for God—was the best hour of the day. The pupil sat with pen and paper, and after prayer wrote down exactly what she heard (in mental clairaudience). The teaching came along a few words at a time. Presently another messenger manifested himself in brightness, standing at

the foot of the pupil's bed and telling her of a task which lay ahead of her under Melchior's instruction. The teaching which followed and continued during the rest of her life is contained in this book. At another time the writer was aware of the presence of Christ: He explained to her how man is able to write what He wishes to impart; as ever, it is love which makes the communication possible. Margery's feeling of inadequacy was natural, He told her, but she was being led through a process of growth, with the gift of hope which spurs everyone on in their spiritual evolution. To bring to others this hope and comfort is the object of Margery Eyre's book.

The teacher Melchior is evidently someone with whom she had a past and continuing link which helped both to prepare themselves to work together in this life, the inspirer raising himself to "divine heights where I know as I am known." They opened up a way between their two states of consciousness, and with her advance in the spiritual life the whole personality of the pupil changes. It is through this communion that progress is made in realization, or direct knowledge of the nature of God the Father. Side by side with this mystical instruction goes quite practcal advice on the overcoming of human failings which would hamper their work. The advice to "stretch out" (mentally and imaginatively) is one which probably we all need in our search for understanding of other states of being. Some may find difficulty in accepting the high rank of Melchior: one must remember there are hierarchies, as there are galaxies, of "thousands who at His bidding speed" and that every one of these spiritual beings will have the grace of humility to bring them within range of human souls. Some idea of the multiplicity of their activites is suggested.

After a while Melchior goes away "to higher spheres" and is succeeded by Ictheor, said to be Melchior with another, more highly evolved, personality. This is a kind of transformation not easily understood, and there are sayings too which are difficult: "Evil is unrealized God"—the lack of goodness must be recognized and the need for it supplied. From time to time other teachers or counsellors indicated their presence, among them Ireon whom Margery recognized as her own inner self. She is taught a good deal about the ways in which the Divine Principle manifests itself in lower orders, and how they in turn relate to man, assisting in his spiritual unfoldment. The teaching can be astringent: Margery is told to face all evil with poise and equanimity; earth darkness can become a stimulant. The present illumination of the earth is compared with its past darkness. The

teachers must be seeing a vision out of earth-time, one feels, for those of us who have lived through two wars and their consequences can hardly imagine a deeper darkness. Ictheon stresses that man volunteered to face the darkness and that conditions have been given him for exerting his prowess: as the soul struggles it grows. It is acknowledged that in the working out of the Divine Purposes free spirits made mistakes and caused great suffering—the design failed. Yet the means are provided for the working through of errors until the Pattern is shown in its perfection. And each man's task forms part of the whole design. A statement by the Master about present religious observance is revealing: he would have means of worship laid aside for a time, in order that people may be mentally out-of-doors. This will break down barriers of prejudice and habit. The gifts of His servants give joy to God, Margery is told, and one recalls Traherne: "He is from eternity full of want. . . . He wanted angels and men, Images, Companions. . . . Infinite wants satisfied produce infinite Joys." (Centuries I, 42, 44.)

She is assured that, in spite of any inaccuracy of wording, spiritual truth carries its value in itself and conveys truth as it makes contact with the reader—this is a way of absorbing knowledge with which mystics are familiar and may reassure those who are perplexed by differing translations of biblical passages.

By the end of Part I, called "Realization," Margery has reached a stage in her journey: she says, "My work is to know, and in this knowing there is peace." This is her expression of the ancient oracle, "Man, know Thyself."

In a preliminary acknowledgement Margery's family thank Elizabeth Gaythorpe for her skill and hard work in selecting and editing the original scripts. It is obvious that this was an important piece of work, for the lessons not only hang together coherently but present a pattern of steady spiritual progress, showing that unity of purpose which is the mark of teaching from a high source. Mrs. Gaythorpe has shown herself an inspired interpreter of this person and so has put into our hands an excellent text book of enlightment, both for the individual and for groups of students—that is, for those who are prepared to put its advice into practice. One has the feeling that to-day people who read many books remain unchanged by them. Do they read in the right way? Undoubtedly this kind of work should be studied in conjunction with meditation.

In reading these pages one is conscious of having already absorbed intuitively much the the teachers conveyed to their

pupil; there is a clarity of expression about all that is said or thought to her, a welcome and refreshing absence of woolly vagueness, even about things which are particularly difficult to translate into earthly terms. This is especially true of the attempts made to describe and explain precisely the workings and manifestations of influence from other spheres, the nature of other orders of beings, their manner of communion with humankind, their inter-relationships and the underlying purpose of their invasion of our world, which can be seen as exemplifying Teilhard de Chardin's divinisation of matter.

V. S. STAFF.

Riddle of the Future—A Modern Study of Precognition. Andrew MacKenzie, with a preface by Robert Thouless, Ph.D., Sc.D. (Arthur Barker, £2.95.)

This is the fifth analysis of (mainly spontaneous) psychic phenomena by a journalist who is also an S.P.R. councillor. It contains new cases, often investigated by the author, and some older incidents. Many of the perplexities of precognition are brought out by example in a clear, non-technical way. The references in the text and bibliography provide a good entrance to the debate about precognition from Cicero to Koestler, although Arthur Osborn's *The Future Is Now* is absent.

A chapter is devoted to the experiences of an SPR member, Mrs. Eva Hellström of Sweden, who records her dreams and visions in a diary and some apparent fulfiments are supported by signed statements of witnesses. Already familiar to *Light* readers will be Sir Victor Goddard's "Pre-view of a Wartime Airfield," in Summer 1966 issue. A brief look at predictions of a new world order in the cross-correspondences communicated by sensitves earlier this century is somewhat disappointing, for there is no mention of the many "New Age" prophecies that have flowed from more occult sources. Although really prominent only in the last decade, their prehistory would make a valuable study.

In precognition cases two particular types are frequent—the foreseeing of disasters affecting large numbers, and the more personal awareness of events to come in one's own life that may be quite banal. Among the latter, and resurrected here, is the Gordon Davis case in which a medium described a house as that of her communicator when the communicator was not only alive but did not move into the house till later. This is one of several old cases which should be given a 10 year moratorium on retelling; incidently, Conan Shaw's critique (1967) is not mentioned.

The chapter on animal psi mentions foreign experiments on

mice with electric shocks. Such barbarous pastimes, quite rightly, would not be licensed in this country.

However, this is the best book on precognition since Martin Ebon's *Prophecy In Our Time,* and a fine example of traditional British psychical research.

LESLIE PRICE.

What Am I Living For? By Arthur W. Osborn. (Turnstone Books, 1974. £1.95.)

This author has already made notable contributions to psychic studies; his pre-war survey, *The Superphysical* (recently reprinted), influenced Raynor Johnson, and in *The Future Is Now* he offered a valuable theory of precognition that deserves more attention from parapsychologists. He should be distinguished from the late Arthur Osborne, the disciple of Ramana Maharshi.

Like Raynor Johnson, Osborn is a believer in survival, rebirth and karma. He pays tribute to his late wife "a woman of outstanding gifts and spiritual insights. I am indebted to her beyond expression" (she had flashbacks of a previous life together). He resembles a number of other writers of the older generation in presenting an intellectual analysis of the human situation with prefatory quotations from great thinkers. The need to go beyond this is explicitly recognized. "The seers of Vedanta," he notes, "were wise to avoid definitions of their transcendental insights." Though sympathetic to this philosophy he does not, like Dr. Johnson in his last book. place any special emphasis on finding a living master.

Perhaps the most interesting chapter is "A character sketch" of a seeker with whom College members will find much in common. Mr. Osborn tells us that his taste was not to produce an autobiography, though there is of course such material in the book. I believe that in fact just such an account from this pioneer of forward-looking psychic studies would be useful, and I hope that if he puts pen to paper again he will produce this, modesty notwithstanding!

LESLIE PRICE.

Research in Parapsychology 1973. Ed. W. G. Roll, *et al.* (U.S.A.: Scarecrow Press Inc., 1974. £4.80.)

This book contains abstracts and papers from the 16th annual convention of the Parapsychological Association held at the University of Virginia in 1973.

It is impossible to summarise in a few lines the contents of this publication, the subject matter of which covers almost the whole field of present day experimental psychical research.

Short yet fascinating accounts, in rather technical language, are given of current investigations into such diverse subjects as dream telepathy, Kirlian photography, psychokinetic effects upon static objects, reincarnation, etc.

It is clear that much of the sophisticated gadgetry and methods of the modern physiological researcher have been adopted by parapsychologists—the electroencephalogram, R.E.M. monitoring, computers, randomisers, and sensory deprivation, to mention a few. To what benefit this will be in the long run remains to be seen. The accounts are inevitably brief, possibly too brief for critical appraisal.

Perhaps of particular interest to readers of this journal will be a fairly comprehensive account of studies on "Altered States of Consciousness." To the would-be researcher and others similarly interested the book is worthwhile reading.

PETER C. HALLSON.

The Link, Matthew Manning. (Colin Smythe, £3.50.)

Matthew Manning, an 18-year-old, suffered in his school days many violent poltergeist incidents in his vicinity. Later he produced drawings in the style of Picasso, Dürer and Beardsley, and letters claiming to be from Stafford Cripps and Bertrand Russell; he converses with apparently earth-bound persons who formerly lived in his house: a discarnate doctor, Thomas Penn, diagnoses but does not offer cures; Matthew has also produced the Geller effect. He treats these many experiences in a sensible and level-headed way, much to his credit, and he appears to be a careful witness.

Poltergeist phenomena tend to stop when he turns to other psychic activities. The drawings are as obviously in the style claimed as are Rosemary Brown's musical compositions in the style of the claimed composers. The Picasso artist is said by Matthew to work in quite a different way from the Beardsley one. Some pictures are copies of, or reminiscent of, earth originals. The drawings leave an empty effect upon the reader. The letter from Stafford Cripps bears evidential details, but is meaningless in content; the Bertrand Russell one is meaningless uplift. Arabic scripts, on the other hand, seem veridical. A number of Thomas Penn's diagnoses appear correct; the patient's birth-date helps his accuracy.

Matthew has been subjected to examination by high-grade psychic researchers in Canada and the U.S.A.

What is to be made of this untidy rag-bag of psychic events? Obviously his future is more important than his past, but it would

not be surprising if his gifts were to leave him altogether. One has to ask whether all the publicity, including a T.V. appearance and the publishing of this book, are likely to help his gift or hinder it. Nobody could object to his being examined by experts, but general publicity is another matter. In my view, his best course now is to drop all public scrutiny and retire into privacy for two or three years where his gift can best develop in calm into whatever is to be its most appropriate form. Sensitives need silence, inner peace and freedom from distraction.

Responsible discarnate intelligences may appear, ready to take a serious and sustained interest in him. Though there is undoubtedly room for more than one opinion, if his sponsors wish to concern themselves with serious mediumship they assume a grave responsibility if they deliver him up to further public curiosity. Maybe Matthew himself will be strong enough to turn his back on such distractions. P. B.

Moment of Truth

THROUGH the use of a medium I was talking to a friend who has passed over. Suddenly I was informed that someone else wished to speak to me. At once I said "No, not now, I'm too busy." However, the request became insistent and I reluctantly gave way and said "Yes—who is it?" It is a somewhat tall man, heavily built, with a very fine face. He says he will not give a name until he has given a sign by which he should be clearly recognised—this did not bring me any comfort. The medium continued, "He is now walking towards you, right hand outstretched and his little finger is crooked." In a flash I knew that it was my father and I was so excited I put out my right hand with my little finger crooked. Then my father said, "If I had known *then* what I *now know*, I would have had but one message to give from my beloved pulpit—*Keep to the open road, keep to the open road,* and you will find what you are seeking, my son." Then he left and I have never heard from him again. May I explain, my father was for 28 years Vicar of St. Paul's, Knightsbridge. For some unexplainable reason when I was seeing my father alone and when I left him we always crooked our little fingers together, i.e., which made the sign of the Cross. At what age this originated I do not remember. Incidentally, my father married twice, and I was his seventh son. This incident, to me at any rate, was absolute proof that my father was in the Spirit World and very much alive. MAJOR OLIVER G. VILLIERS.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Shrines of Psychic Power, Florence E. Pettit. Thorsons, £3.50. Mrs. Pettit describes her pilgrimage of spiritual enquiry into the occult world.

A World in Harmony, I. W. Ratsey. Universal World Harmony. A 70-page pamphlet for the "army of goodwill." It provides widely chosen miscellaneous material for thought along New Age lines.

Willie Speaks Out: The Psychic World of Abraham Lincoln, Elliott V. Fleckles. Minnesota, Llewellyn Publications, $7.95. Mr. Fleckles, a College member, has assembled in narrative form innumerable references to Lincoln's work, character and psychic investigations, and supports this with many general quotations from well-known psychical students and researchers. Lavishly illustrated.

This Holyest Erthe, Oliver Reiser. Perennial Books, £2.50. Professor Reiser discusses the many rational, occult and spiritual speculations which have grown up around Glastonbury and the Maltwood Zodiac.

Ghosts: The Illustrated History, Peter Haining. Sidgwick & Jackson, £3.75. An amusing coffee-table book concerned with well known incidents of ghosts and materialisations.

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