

MY LIFE
AS A
SEARCH FOR THE MEANING
OF MEDIUMSHIP

BY
EILEEN J. GARRETT

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Part One

**EARLY CHILDHOOD MEMORIES—
LEARNING TO LIVE IN TWO WORLDS**

Chapter I

THE FARMHOUSE—MY AUNT AND UNCLE

MY earliest recollections began in a farmhouse in Ireland. Many memories rush in, from the time when I was probably three years old. It is difficult, therefore, to give them sequence. Images of the house and garden melt into each other. I can not tell where one leaves off and the other begins. There was a long, rambling, stone house, and each succeeding generation had added another wing to it, I was told. Roses and honeysuckle covered its walls, and peeped through its windows. Beyond the garden was the farm yard, its sheds crowded with cattle, and its barns full of hay and fodder. The lane leading to our farm, I remember, was abloom with hawthorn and crabapple; this was the boundary, beyond which I was forbidden to go alone. From the lane, a gate opened into a paddock, through which the horses and the cows came and went with an army of farm hands.

My uncle bred dogs; terriers and collies. Their kennels were at the bottom of the garden, and I was allowed to go there when I liked. To terriers I never became attached; they were just dogs. The collies were different; there was one, my greatest friend, a shaggy, golden haired dog, named Ida. Her chest was white and silken and her eyes twinkled with kindness and understanding. She and her family were my only friends, and I loved them more than anything else in the world.

I must have ridden a horse before I can remember. I do not recall beginning to ride, but that is not strange as children learn at such an early age in Ireland. At four, when I went to school, I was quite at home on a horse, as I lived in County Meath, which was then the second most important hunting county in Ireland. At that time, the Court of England and the nobility of the continent, always came to Ireland for the hunting and shooting seasons. Their meets for the fox hunting were held about a half-mile from our house, so that they rode over our farm almost daily. Sometimes I held the paddock gates open for their horses to pass through, and often I was lifted to the saddle by these passing huntsmen. I loved these horses and the bright red hunting coats of the riders, but rebelled against being petted by strangers. Their crude caresses always frightened me; I resisted their approaches in the only way I knew, fighting furiously with teeth and nails to free myself from their rough hands. The shock of these early experiences made me from that time on, fearful and suspicious of everybody. After that I shrank more than ever from human contact, and was only truly happy when I was alone. In retrospect there is no doubt now in my mind, that these very early experiences affected my attitude to all human relationships and set up a definite barrier that continues to this day, between myself and other people.

My aunt always appeared to me as a lovely and statuesque creature, even when she was cross. To me she always seemed cold and distant. I remember running up to her, as a small child, when she was gay with my uncle and others and trying to get her to turn my way and share her laughter with me; but her firm hands would take hold of my shoulders and turn me quietly aside. She never pushed me from her roughly, but simply removed my fingers from her hands and turned away. I think of her still as a tall and unbending woman, gowned in a crisp black taffeta dress, whose rustling always warned me of her approach. Her glasses, which she wore on a black silk cord, seemed also a part of her presence, and froze me, when her cold hands did not. She had tawny hair, dressed

high in a twisted knot. When she scolded me, and that happened every day, I did not mind so much if I could take refuge in gazing at her coils of red hair which I always longed to touch.

I loved my uncle with a deep devotion. I was happy when I could walk for hours behind him as he strolled; that was my earliest memory of him. He was never cross with me; though he did not always answer when I plied him with questions, he often replied to my remarks with an assurance that I was probably right. I loved and admired my uncle. He was kind of eye and ever cheerful; dignified in bearing, he had white hair and grey eyes and a grey beard; and the rifle that he carried on his shoulder was as much a part of his personality as the cough that shook him mornings and evenings. Photographs of him, taken in middle age, definitely connected him with my remote conception of God. I first learned to see the outside world through his eyes, and because he taught me that nothing in life existed to hurt me, I knew no fear of the woods or the animals or the dark. I looked forward to those nights when he allowed me to accompany him to the woods in search of poachers, and I thrilled with excitement when he taught me to hold his rifle. I would have died rather than let him know that its heaviness was too much for me. His word was law to me and it never entered my head to disobey him.

My room was located at the top of a winding staircase. It was more than home to me, and it knew all my secrets. The rest of the building was only "the house." The wall of my room sloped on one side; it seemed to lean over, to look at the roses growing against it, which reached upwards to the thatch where the swallows had their nests. Underneath my windows the garden borders grew blue and yellow until they reached the kitchen garden and the apple trees. The house was two storied, thatched and rambling. It seemed to want to hide itself in the roses which grew around it. To my room, I told everything I felt, talking aloud. There were pictures on the walls; those depicting spring I loved the best.

My chest of drawers told me stories, as I touched its wood caressingly. A little old lady would visit this chest; she was tired and frail and never spoke. I could not converse with her, as I had been taught that I must never address my elders until they spoke to me. I never found out anything else about the little old lady. When I spoke to my aunt about her, she dismissed me with the suggestion that I was the victim of a too lively imagination. An oval mirror stood on the chest; into this glass I never looked without first breathing on it; I liked to see the inverted bits of the room reflected on the mirror's misty surface. This made me feel that I was, for the moment, living in a new and different house. I do not recall the other objects of the room, except the two small and inconspicuous photographs that stood side by side upon the chest. Once I heard someone say of them "poor Anthony and Anna;" thereafter, the two names remained etched in my memory, and to everything that stood side by side, in pairs,—trees in the woods, plants in the garden, little hills and even dogs and rabbits, I gave the names of "Anthony" and "Anna." When, at ten years of age, it was explained to me that Anthony and Anna had been the names of my dead parents, I was glad for them, that I had called so many things I loved by their names; I felt that I had, in some way, given them life through the things I loved. It may seem strange that my early life contains no association with parents, nor any memory of feeling their loss. They were never mentioned to me, and I do not remember ever asking, why I did not possess parents as other children. Only some years later, before my confirmation, I was given their few belongings and told the story of their tragic end.

Within my own room I could extend the nebulous, cobwebby part of me, that had no space for its full expansion elsewhere. Breathing beyond my fingers and above my head, I hugged myself with happiness. This protection gained in my room must have been the beginning of my ability to draw within and live alone with myself. The time came when

I could use this process to shut out the voice of my aunt. I remember finding that I could watch her lips move but hear no sound of the words she spoke. This then must have been the beginnings of that separation of personality which later led to the state known as trance.

From my earliest memory I have been able, by lying quite still with my head in the crook of my arm, to reach out and touch the flowers and the sky. I have also, in this way, sensed the breath of a distant bush, the flesh of a far-off flower, or the sap of some remote tree. The falling rain could make my body feel as the grass did under its weight, and I knew the sense of the damp, just as the leaves knew it. The air around sustained and fed me as though I had received food and drink. However deeply, as a child, I might feel the need of tears, if my head were cupped in the crook of my arm, I quickly found the peace to banish my hurt in the pulse of the living world without. I can, to this day, by lying thus within myself, know "oneness" with all Light and Life.

Chapter II

"THE CHILDREN"

"THE Children" came. There were two little girls and a boy. I first saw them framed in the doorway; they were strange to me, as were all children; I looked at them intently and longed to play with them but I was not allowed to mix with other children. I must, I suppose, have turned away and promptly forgotten all about them. I believe that I first met "The Children," some time before I went to school, at about four years old. Out-of-doors next day, I saw them again. They stood, as children will, intent on looking; I joined them and after that they came to see me daily. Sometimes they stayed all day, sometimes but a little while, but no day passed of which they were not a part. When I looked for "The Children," I had to seek them out-of-doors; sometimes they would come within, but I grew to know that they were unhappy inside the house. Until I was thirteen, they remained in touch with me, coming and going. I regarded them as "My Children." From the moment they came, toys lost their meaning for me. Like the growing things around me, which I loved, I loved "The Children." Other people came and went, I saw them; they interested me for a moment, and when they left I was glad; not so with "The Children;" anything that interrupted my life with them made me restless; they became as much a part of it as the sunshine, the flowers, the rain and the wind. The living things around me that I loved began

to change; the animals grew up, the flowers died, the garden altered; but "The Children" never changed. I dreaded, lest I should lose them, when school began, but they assured me that school had no terrors for them, and they promised to remain with me. So the days went on, "The Children" and I talked and laughed and played together and were very happy.

When I told my aunt and uncle of "The Children," they were obviously annoyed with me and again accused me of lying. They ridiculed the whole idea of the existence of these playmates and they asked me where they came from, what were their names, and where I had met them. My aunt did not believe me when I told her that I had met them out-of-doors. I begged her to come and see them for herself, but she replied, "Now do be quiet about those children of yours. You are making it all up; there are no such children, and God will surely punish you for telling such lies." Daily I appealed to her, "Please, Aunt, come today and see them now." I tried to tell her more about them, how there were two girls and one boy and that one girl was older than I. She asked me how I knew all this. "Do you speak to them or touch them?" I stood abashed at her doubts. "If ever you try, you will discover that they are not real at all. You are only imagining these children."

"The Children" laughed when I told them how my aunt doubted their existence. "We are wiser than she," they seemed to say. I never doubted the reality of "My Children," or the fact that we spoke in ways that no grown-up understood. I touched them and found that they were soft and warm, even as I. There was one way in which they differed from other people. I saw the form of ordinary humans surrounded by a nimbus of light, but the form of "The Children" consisted entirely of this light. My aunt was so annoyed with my tales about them that I ceased trying to explain to her that "The Children" were still mine. I continued to tell my uncle and he smiled and said "Maybe so."

Gradually I began to suspect that everything that my aunt told me was not true. As I came to know "The Chil-

dren" better, they taught me not to believe much of what any grownup said or did; they gave me the courage to disobey and face the consequences of saying "No." They taught me to watch people, and especially to study my aunt. I began to see her face change in moods of anger or doubt or fear; I noticed that she had none of the placidity of "The Children." They taught me also how to listen to my aunt's voice and to note all its changes and its moods; watching her as we did together, I grew less fearful of her, and by the time I went to school, I knew no grown-up ever quite spoke the truth. Even my uncle, whom I loved, and who always listened to me, I began to trust no longer, with my stories of "The Children;" and when he asked me sometimes jokingly about them, I would hasten away, rather than answer. "The Children" had become my responsibility, and had to be protected at all costs, from the doubts of others. They shared all my days, and often my nights, with me. When they appeared again, after I had gone to bed and asked me to join them, I never hesitated to do so and never worried about the consequences of our adventures; I always went with them, even though going brought punishment in its wake; no threat of further thrashings could prevent our escapades together.

In order to be with "The Children," I grew secretive and wary in my actions by day and was always ready to go to bed at twilight. Such good behaviour often brought my aunt hurrying to my room suspicious lest I should have some hidden plan; she watched me constantly, wondering, I suppose, why bed should seem so desirable to me whilst it was yet day. Often when she came I pretended to be asleep. Later, when "The Children" arrived, I slipped through the window and joined them in the garden, either under the moon, or in the starlight, or in the deep darkness of an un-illuminated night. Often my aunt and uncle caught me in the garden, hours after they thought I was fast asleep in bed. Punishment was meted out, and I was taken promptly to my room. My aunt would ask me, "But why must you do this? It is certainly easier to ask permission to remain up and play in the garden,

than to go to bed whilst it is yet light, and then get up again without your proper clothing. You must surely want to die." At first, I would tell her through my tears that "The Children" had come for me, and I had to go. This only angered her and brought me further punishment. I learned that silence, which she called sullenness, was my only defense against her. Thus an insurmountable barrier grew up between us, which I no longer tried to remove.

When "The Children" came, I never saw them approach, and I never saw them go away. I might look up and find them there, or, quite suddenly, they would be gone. I wanted to follow them in the early days when they left me, but they shuddered and said "No." After that, I never asked to go with them any more. If I had known where they went, I would have told my aunt, and then she could have seen them. "The Children" annoyed me when they refused to climb trees with me, or row across the river or paddle in the brook. Evidently they did not like the water much, though they never said so. They disapproved of my tree-climbing; they liked to look at the trees and live with them, but told me that trees were meant to be left intact, and not disturbed by the tree-climbing of any of us. All else in my life they shared; they loved everything that grew and flowered, and they opened up my sense of beauty. They shared my enthusiasm for the garden and the fields; every stone had a story, every hill in the neighborhood an adventure for us. Trees and shrubs became our friends. They showed me where the first violets bloomed, where the primrose grew thickest, and the cowslip flowered in greatest profusion. They knew where the finest blackberries grew and took me mushrooming before the dawn. They found out where the wrens and robins built their nests, and led me forth to look at the bats, hidden from the light of day in the roof of the barn. When the puppies came, they were the first to know and when the lambs were born, they hurried me outdoors to visit them.

In later years when I spoke of "The Children" to those who knew something of my childhood, I was often asked,

"Did these playmates of your childhood resemble any actual children you had known?" and to this I have often replied, "No." Before I went to school, when "My Children" first came to me, I knew no other children; I saw the village youngsters at a distance, but was never allowed to play with them, and there were no others in our neighborhood. Other people, trying to understand the quality of these childhood companions, would ask me, "Did those children seem completely real to you, or were they perhaps fairies?" To me, "My Children" were in no way fairy-like in appearance, judging of what I learned later about fairies; for at the time, when "The Children" first appeared, I was only four, and I had never heard any stories about fairies, from either my aunt or uncle, before I went to school. It was not until years later, that the old people of the countryside regaled me with tales of brownies and fairies.

I have also been asked to tell how "The Children" communicated with me when we met. "Did they use words?" is often asked. I can only answer by saying that I conversed with the children as I did with everything that was alive; for it seemed that I knew what the flowers and the trees were saying without the use of words. So it seemed to me that "The Children" and I also communicated our meanings to each other without the use of words. Even today, words have not the value to me that others place on them. I can, in a flash, by sensing, communicate to another all my thoughts and wishes, as well as perceive those of others, without uttering a single word. The inadequacy of words, to express emotions, thoughts and feelings has, from time to time, created a barrier between me and others, and even made it seem impossible for me to explain myself and my method of functioning to most other people.

As a child I deeply resented the fact that no grown-up believed anything I said. When I expressed dislike of people from their touch or smell, I was always reprimanded by my aunt. When I said someone hurt me who had in reality only stroked by hair or touched my face, I told the truth; but the

horror produced on my aunt's face by such statements made me realize that she considered that I had committed a misdemeanour; I was bewildered by this treatment. I was constantly tearful and wondered why no one believed me when I described exactly what I saw and felt. I could not understand why no one seemed to like me. My only peace came from being alone; no wonder my room became my haven of safety, and "My Children" and the growing things, my only companions.

It must have been this early misunderstanding of my perceptions that threw me into a state, where observation became my only means of self-expression. I soon discovered that there could be no exchange for me in understanding with other people, since no one ever admitted that I was right and I could not see things except in my own way. It was not until many years later that I found out that what went on around me became visible to me by a type of sensing that people then termed supernatural but which even today is regarded as supernormal. It can, therefore, be seen why I was not more in harmony with the world in which I grew up. No one could bridge this gap, since no one else near me ever knew my world; and I was quite as unable to live in theirs. Small wonder, therefore, that my aunt saw in me only a sullen child with a wild imagination whose only outlet seemed to be lying, disobedience and cruelty. It was not until I was twenty-three that I met and talked with Edward Carpenter, who first helped me so that I became aware of the meaning and functioning of my supernormal nature.

Chapter III

GOING TO SCHOOL AND THE "SURROUNDS" OF LIVING ORGANISMS

I WAS scarcely four when adults would remark hopefully to me, "You'll soon be able to go to school." From this tone, in which they spoke, it seemed as though it must be a dark place, surrounded by high walls, where my liberty would be suppressed, and some form of punishment would surely be meted out to me. School sounded like a distinctly unpleasant place. Only when my uncle spoke of it did the prospect seem interesting and exciting, something to which I could look forward.

When I finally went to school at four, I was much relieved to find that its sunny rooms were full of pictures and maps and books. The teacher was kindly, but such numbers of children gathered in one place, overwhelmed me. I had, up to that time, only known my family and the people on the farm. Going to school brought me a bewildering sea of faces, and a long three mile journey each day between home and school. At first, I was driven there with a neighbor's child; I enjoyed the drive but disliked the child. She talked incessantly about her clothes, her hair ribbons and her lace pinafore. One day, in anger, I pulled off both her ribbon and pinafore; that was my first act of disgrace. I was punished by my teacher and my aunt, and then had this atrocious child

held up to me as a model of all the virtues that I did not possess. I could not bear to ride with her any more and succeeded in getting my aunt's permission to walk alone to school so as to avoid the sight of this child on the road. I chose a roundabout and much longer way; for the seven years I remained at school, so deep was my dislike of her that I would never again use the shorter road.

School made me neither happy nor unhappy. I always knew that the children and teachers lied to each other as well as to me. It gave me a secret pleasure to sense this, and to know that they were not aware that I could see what went on within them. The younger children relied on me for everything. I had to take them to the wash rooms, do their lessons for them, and cheat for them with the older girls and the teachers. The little ones bored me with their endless demands, but I never had the heart to say "No" to any of them. They knew so well how to play on my weakness, and in consequence, I could never get a chance to finish my own lessons. I preferred to take my punishment silently from the teacher, for neglecting my work, rather than explain how I had really been spending my time.

I had not been long at the school when I realized that the other girls and I were very far apart. They saw and understood nothing as I did. They only knew what had been taught or told them and never thought out anything for themselves. They depended entirely upon the final authority of grown-ups; their pretense of accepting whatever opinions the teacher expressed, and their inability to have their own point of view sickened me.

The contrast between the way my schoolmates and I dealt with life, confused me; I saw people, not merely as physical bodies, since for me, each person was set within a nebulous egg-shaped covering of his own. This *surround* as I call it, for want of a better name, might consist of transparent changing colours, or sometimes become dense and dull in character. The state of these coverings changed according to the variation in people's moods. Because, since childhood,

I had always been used to seeing such *surrounds* encircling every living plant, animal and person, I paid little attention to the actual body contained within each of these envelopments. I tried to talk to the girls at school about these mist-like *surrounds* which I saw, but they did not know what I meant. All my life it had been difficult for me to believe that others did not see as I did, these formations enveloping each living organism.

As a child, I knew that the character of people depended on their *surrounds*. By the quality of the light and colour they gave forth, I could judge their personality. Some people moved in grey shadows and some in glowing lights. For me, the important thing about anyone I met, was to see and feel the quality of these *surrounds*. By their colour and their tone, I knew whether people were sick or well. This was equally true for me, of plants and of animals; I knew, according to the condition of their *envelopes*, when the vitality of trees and flowers was high or low. While the girls at school were not aware of such matters, I was sure that the animals understood them. I noticed how animals behaved towards each other, and with people and I could tell that they sensed these *surrounds*. As a mouse reacts to the presence of a hawk before it sees its form, so did I know that all animals reacted to their enemies and friends, by means of these enveloping forms. It was difficult for me to understand what other people meant by personality; for to me personality was a blending of the light nimbus, which surrounds each form, with its physical body. It was the colour and movement of these *surrounds* of living things, and not the physical body, which gave me complete understanding of their being.

I was often called a liar by my schoolmates and teachers for telling them what I really saw when it was something not evident to them. I was deeply hurt and baffled by these accusations because I knew that I was telling them the truth.

As the months went by, I became convinced that it was useless to speak of what I saw. I was forced to live in my own world, alone, and I came to accept this as inevitable. I

learned to become apparently receptive to the ideas of those at home and at school; thus I gained a reputation for being an amenable and silent child. Actually I gave up none of my own views, for I was positive that things were truly as I saw them, but I had now learned that it was useless to try to discuss "my world" any longer with other people. The old gypsy I came to know when I was ten, was the only person in my life who ever understood what I *sensed* and *saw*. That remains true even to this day. Since other people dwelt in a world so separate from mine, I had to learn to deal in my own solitary way, with what I alone, saw and I became at times quite unhappy and fearful over this. The impacts which I saw taking place in the *surrounds* of people as they met and reacted to each other's thoughts and emotions, constantly disturbed me. I saw how people's conflicts rocked them without their understanding why and gradually I became aware that people were thus the unconscious victims of each other's moods. This made me withdraw as much as possible from the pain of human impacts and seek more and more to be alone. After the turmoil of each school day this need grew stronger. I would return to the quietness of my own room and the garden and "My Unseen Children." Bitter experience had gradually taught me not to speak of "My Children" to any adults; they did not believe in their existence, and only laughed at me for making up such stories.

Chapter IV

I DISCOVER THE DANCE OF THE LIGHT GLOBULES

I HAVE often been asked how I saw forms in light and movement. I first became aware of movement in light and colour before I was five years old. I grew conscious of it by lying still on my bed and looking into the shadows. I began then, to see globules of light bursting at intervals within the beams of sunlight. When I knew them better, I discovered them moving in any kind of light; they swirled around each other, enlarging and bursting as bubbles do, when they give way one to the other; and just as bubbles reflect colour, so also did the bursting globules have colour within them. These light balls presented themselves in so many shapes and sizes that my head ached from trying to see them all moving simultaneously in many directions. They were always egg-shaped and not quite round. Their movements were like the steps of a dance, weaving a well regulated pattern as they swirled.

My room became a haven to which I fled to shake off the sense of being too close to other children. I felt, as a child, hurt and oppressed by any close contact with others; so much so that I struggled violently to free myself if anyone caressed me. Lying in my room and merely breathing, I became aware of the movement in and around the room. Instead of empty space, I found that the air was full of singing sounds, and my globules danced like midget stars weaving

in and out and around each other in ordered ways. From that time on no space that was empty existed for me; I seemed to feel the weight and movement of a condensed area without sensing either its weight or heaviness. Soon I began to move within myself. It is difficult to explain my meaning. If I try to describe how I entered into this state I can only say that I felt myself drawn into it. I seemed to be split up as though divided into little pieces and each piece was located in a different place.

When I say that I know a tree or a flower or even a rock, this same thing that I have been trying to describe happens to me, and I then experience a flowing part of me which goes out towards the plant and yet remains myself. As the years developed, this mechanism became for me, more conscious and usable. I found that at will, I was able to project myself or some aspect of myself into the personalities of people and things. This I could even do with persons that were unknown to me, living perhaps, in some distant house or country. This ability to project a fluid part of myself, consciously and without fear, began when I was very young as a game with myself and much later this developed into what has now become recognized as an aspect of my supernormal sensing.

In the early days at school I tried to tell some of my companions that there was no such thing as a space that was empty. I spoke of how the bright globules of light danced and filled all space. But they, as was the case with my aunt, did not understand. Their scornful smiles silenced me and made me realize that to them, all space seemed empty. But even as a child of five I knew it packed with infinite variety of form and movement. It was to be many years before the experiments of modern chemists and physicists helped to interpret for the world what my supernormal sensing had already begun to register for me.

Chapter V

WHY NAMES HAVE MEANT LITTLE TO ME

I HAVE never really wanted to hear names when a new person approached me. As an animal must know by sense the appearance and smell of objects, I too sense and know a person; never by the physical appearance but by the taste, smell and touch of their *surrounds* expanding beyond their physical selves. Even today do I clearly sense the *shapes* that encompass every person, plant and living form. As a child, I resented the touch or feeling of these *surrounds* in people, though not in animals or plants. I have asked myself in late years what was the quality in the human *surrounds* which I disliked. In retrospect, I am sure that I judged people in my childish way by reacting to them by some process of taste or smell.

I began then to study and watch these *surrounds* which enveloped all those I met, and saw how they fought and interchanged; as people's moods shifted, their *surrounds* would struggle with each other and when the tone of a conversation changed, these nebulous forms would expand, contract and change their colour and shape according to the tone and quality of the words spoken. After a while I never listened to what people said when they addressed me or paid attention to what they told each other. I saw their conversations shaped in space in flowing colours which were sometimes bright and shining, but more often showed in deep and sullen

shades. Within these colours I perceived breaks in the mass of the *surrounds* and in the breaks, silver lines appeared, fine as the threads of cobwebs; these delicate lines would move back and forth as though breathing gently to themselves.

As a child these *shapes* and *surrounds* were for me, more important than the creature they enveloped and they became a source of constant interest. I talked of them and their movement constantly. I watched them in and out of season. When I spoke to my aunt and uncle of these nebulous *surrounds* and told them how their impact hurt me or gave me pleasure, they looked at me in shocked amazement, became cross and said, "You will be punished the next time you say these things."

I never understood at that time that *shapes* and *surrounds* were not visible to everyone else. It was only many years later, after my marriage, that I really found out that others did not see such forms. Before I went to school, at four, I had already learned to rely on my own perception of things and ask few questions since no one would answer them; but I never quite understood why I must not ask questions about the things I wanted to know. This did not make me unhappy; I simply learned to hug my world of shapes and colours, shadows, sounds and movements to myself. I loved more than ever the moments of my silent day when I might live with them alone.

Chapter VI

TESTING GOD

I HAD no fear of anything as a child; but of God I had at times great fear. When my aunt first spoke of Him as being ready to punish me, I thought of someone who would some day suddenly descend on me and I should be no more. Since He never showed Himself, I grew less fearful and even began to wonder how I could force Him to appear. I did such things as my childish imagination could invent to anger Him and believed that then surely He would come. No breaking of china, no stealing of sweets or other childish pranks of mine ever brought Him forth. In a rage one day at what seemed to me unjust punishment, I wondered what terrible thing I could do to make God finally appear. Taking the Bible I tore one or two of its pages and hurled it against the farther wall of the room, calling on Him to come forth and punish me. I waited for what seemed like hours, in terror, not daring to look up or move. When He did not appear I had at first a sense of relief, but afterwards my fear of this Avenging One began to diminish and my belief in all that was told me by my aunt and others was considerably shaken. I was however, to test His Presence once again before I finally shook myself free of my childish fear.

At about eight or nine I became aware of problems in religion beyond those ideas I had been taught at home. There, the ever-present God was spoken of, One whose only mission

seemed to be to punish me. At the Low Church Sunday School this image was again made vivid in its dreary teaching of the Catechism and Bible lessons. Near Dublin, where I lived, I went to the National School where the preponderance of children were Roman Catholic; in Ireland no other religion is taught in the government schools, and so quite spontaneously I absorbed its prayer and ritual. The music, the ceremonies and even the sing-song way in which the Catholic children intoned their prayers, fascinated me. I, as a Protestant, was expected to leave the room during the recitation of the Catechism or while the children prayed as the Angelus was rung. This I did not always do for it gave me peace, to think of a God who could be approached by way of the Chapel, the Virgin and the Holy Saints, and the kindly old parish priests. It brought me rest and comfort to find myself in the warmth of the Chapel, with its lighted altar and its incense. The intoning of the service gave me a feeling of devotion and quiet which I experienced neither at home nor in my own church. My happiness, however, was interrupted by my classmates, all Catholics, pointing out to me that I, the only Protestant in the class, was committing mortal sin by attending Chapel. Mortal sin was a term that to them brought eternal damnation, but for me it had no meaning. So I continued, whenever possible, to creep into the Chapel.

This religious peace was rudely shattered by my aunt, when I asked her permission to see my classmates confirmed. The kindly priest had already told me that I could watch the ceremony from the gallery where I would be unobserved by the others. This I joyfully told my aunt, believing she would let me go. She seemed shocked that I should on any occasion desire to visit the Chapel and emphatically refused her consent. In doing so she expressed the hope that as a good Protestant I had never in the past entered the Chapel. I am afraid that I hurt her deeply when I confessed that the friendly Chapel was more to my liking than her forbidding

church. She forbade me ever to enter it again or have anything to do with the Catholic religion; but as the school stood in the Chapel yard I continued to visit it secretly.

The effect of imbibing the two religions at one time became a little overwhelming. At home the fearsome and forbidding God of the Protestant Church and my aunt's interpretation of His Avenging Wrath awaiting me; at school, within easy reach, was the consoling presence of the Virgin and the Child. These two religious attitudes were, in my mind, worlds apart; they had not the least relation to each other at that time or since.

Chapter VII

THE "VISION" OF MY AUNT LEON AND THE DEATH OF THE DUCKS

BETWEEN the conflicts of home and school, religious and otherwise, these mixed emotions and resentments of mine grew greater, making me at times, more tearful and unhappy. Until that time, however, I could somehow deal with life as it came, and although the school children and others wearied me, I had learned to keep my own counsel and managed to become better liked by my school companions. The situation at home did not change. I was never, in my own mind, a part of the household; I belonged more to the world that grew and took its living outside the house; if this house and all in it had folded up and gone away one day I might have been astonished, but like a cat which dwells with its own surroundings more than with its owner, I always felt that the house and its occupants were only incidental to my own existence. My real life was lived alone or close to the animals and the growing things around the farm. The fact that no one took notice of what I said or did ceased soon to cause me much bewilderment; but something happened to me at this time which frightened me and shook the foundations of my world for the time being.

I was sitting lazily on the porch at home, turning over the leaves of my school-book when, looking up suddenly, I

saw my favourite Aunt Leon approach me. I had only seen her a few times in my life because she lived with her family some twenty miles away. I knew that the aunt I lived with cared for her sister, Leon, very much and had been worried of late about her health. Often I had heard mentioned in the household that Aunt Leon had not been as well as usual. I had not been to visit her for several months, so I was naturally pleased when I saw that she had come to see us like this. I noticed, as I got up to greet her how very tired she looked and fearing that she was really ill, I reached out to take her hand and help her to walk indoors. I shall always be sure that she said to me, "I must go away now and take baby with me." I waited to hear no more and fled within the house to fetch my other aunt to help Leon. She looked most astonished as I pulled her out of her chair and told her to come quickly to see Aunt Leon. She hurried outside with me. When we reached the door I saw that my Aunt Leon was gone. I went into the garden and down the lane in search of her but she was nowhere to be found.

When I returned my aunt questioned me closely as to how her sister had looked and how she had been dressed. Every detail of her weary expression and of her clothes was stamped clearly on my brain and I described them minutely. The baby that I had seen interested me most of all. Carefully I had observed the little bundle, clasped to Aunt Leon's heart; I had wanted to look at it more closely, but I had not dared ask my aunt, since she seemed so tired. My story told, I was full of questions as to what could have been happening to Aunt Leon. My aunt did not seem to believe anything that I described and told me that I had been cruel to play such a practical joke on her. In vain I assured her that I had really told her exactly what I had seen. She doubted my sincerity and questioned me closely as to what I had previously heard in the household about my Aunt Leon's new baby. I told her I had heard nothing but she chided me for eaves-dropping about things that I was not supposed to hear. I had overheard nothing about my aunt's new baby but she

did not believe me and told me that I was wicked to have concocted such a story and that she must severely punish me for having done so. I took my whipping silently as I always did; but this time her fury against me was not easily appeased.

That night I cried myself to sleep and in the morning I awakened with an aching head. My body felt heavy as a stone. I recalled the scene of the evening before when my Aunt Leon had visited with her baby. It stood out so clearly that I knew I could never have made up such a story. My tears fell afresh and my heart ached as never before. At that moment a cold hate of the aunt with whom I lived was born in me and remained until she died. I spent the day wondering how I could hurt her most deeply, so as to revenge myself for all that she had made me suffer. Fear of her left me forever, as I knew that I had become indifferent to her opinion of me. The opportunity I sought in which to hurt her presented itself on that very afternoon.

I was too ill in the morning to be sent to school, so I was allowed to remain in bed until the middle of the day. In the afternoon I went into the garden to lie quietly in the shade. There I played by the stream and went idly to see if there were ducks floating on the lake beyond. I saw the baby ducklings which I sought, talking to themselves on the water; I watched them dipping here and there and gaily swimming in small circles. I knew in a flash that they were the means of my revenge. My aunt loved her ducks and would be deeply hurt if they came to any harm. Bending over the water at the edge of the shore I caught each baby bird as it passed close by me, and in quick succession I held each one under the water until I had drowned the entire brood. Then I laid the dead ducks in the grass beside me and was immediately overcome with a terrible dread of my aunt's wrath. I began to think, as I wondered, how she would punish me, that now surely God must come and His punishment would be greater than any my aunt might visit upon me. I remained rooted to the spot, frozen with fear, waiting for

God's wrath to fall. I felt that my life would surely be wiped out after this last grave wrongdoing. The very intensity of my fear produced a strange state of suspended quiet, in which I waited.

In this condition I looked at the ducks lying limp on the grass beside me and almost hoped they might still be alive. But at this moment something really startling did begin to happen. The ducks were quiet but there was a movement going on all around them. I saw, curling up from each little body a grey smoke-like substance, rising in spiral form. This fluid stuff began to move and curl as it rose and gradually I saw it take on new shape as it moved away from the bodies of these little dead ducks. Fear had now given way to amazement in the face of this spectacle. I was joyful because I knew in that moment that the ducks were "coming alive" again. I had forgotten about their dead bodies lying limp below and waited, with tense expectancy, to see them take on new shape and run away.

I do not know how long I stayed, gripped in fearful fascination. I only know that the punishment which must surely follow my wrongdoing, would never prevent me from trying to find out how the ducks had "escaped" me in that strange way. I began to wonder whether all other creatures also had this same fashion of escaping from life, as did these ducks. The only way to find out for certain was to begin to kill something else and watch what followed. All thoughts of revenge on my aunt had now faded from my mind. The only important thing for me now was to discover whether or not death brought forth new life; and if this were true, what kind of life did death produce?

For two weeks crows and little rabbits became the victims of my search for knowledge. Then, of a sudden, came a terrible revulsion against myself for all this killing that I had done. The startling truth now came to me in a flash. I had seen enough to know by then, that I had killed nothing at all, but only had changed its form. As a result of knowing this, I asked my uncle not to take me with him hunting

any more. I became sick from that time on, at thought of the creatures that died. Anger shook me when I thought of those who killed any living thing. A mouse caught in a trap made me suffer, and a cold rage now turned me against the dogs whenever they hunted little animals. The sight of the cat stalking a bird became unbearable. The farm hands were now my enemies when they were brutal to the animals. Every night I shed tears for all the living things which were daily killed, and I wept bitterly for those ducklings which I had drowned.

After I had drowned the little ducks my uncle had come upon the scene. He looked down at the dead ducks, then at me. I found his presence a relief. There was no anger in his voice or face, he just said, "You had better come with me and see your aunt." When we found my aunt, my uncle said to her, "You had better go to the pond and see what has happened to your ducks." She looked at my uncle and then at me, coldly, and went towards the pond as he suggested. My uncle and I stood still awaiting her return and I did not even think of the moment that would follow. When she returned, he slipped away and left me with her alone. Strangely enough, for the first time in my life she did not punish me with a thrashing. She told me that I was such a wicked child that I must be sent away from home. I was no longer fit to live in her house. She spoke then at length of God and His hurt and His wrath at my wrongdoing. I was relieved to hear that I should be sent away even though I did not know where; and I did not believe a word of it when she said that God would punish me.

"Go," said my aunt, "go to your room and don't let me see you again tonight; and ask God to forgive you." I was sent to bed without supper. I did not care about the food or anything she had said. I could only feel relief that I would be leaving her very soon.

An hour later my aunt appeared in my room and woke me from a sound sleep. She sat down beside me on the bed in a kinder mood than of an hour before. Abruptly she

told me that she had just had news of my Aunt Leon's death while giving birth to her baby and that the little one had died also. Before I could say anything, my aunt said to me, "Don't ever speak again of the things that you *see* for they might come true." Then she left the room as abruptly as she entered it. When she went away I was thoroughly frightened. In every corner of the room I seemed to see my Aunt Leon and her baby, just as I had seen them in the vision of the previous day. I shook with fear through the night but recovered next morning to adjust to this new fact which I had learnt—that a baby was born from the mother. I had never been told how a baby was born until that moment, when my aunt spoke to me of Aunt Leon's death, and its cause. The excitement of this new discovery about babies banished my sadness at Aunt Leon's death and considerably lessened the shock that my prevision of her dying had caused me.

Chapter VIII

I SEARCH FOR THE MEANING OF DEATH AND LIVE IN MY OWN LITTLE WORLD

THE vision of my Aunt Leon and the manner of her dying were all things which needed some explanation. My repeated questions to those around me brought no helpful answer. I was wise enough not to ask questions at school; I knew that these things, however they might appear to me, were not within the range of my schoolmates' understanding. I went to the old people around the farm and questioned them as to what they knew about the process of dying; they could tell me little. I told them of my own experience in seeing things that "came alive" again, after their death, but they shook their heads and said nothing, as though the whole matter was too much for them. One old woman assured me that I had been bewitched by the fairies who lived in the valleys and the glens and had so been made to see things which fairy-people, but no human beings ever saw. I believed all that I heard about the fairies, and made up my mind to see and find them for myself. I had been told where they lived in the valley near the lonely thorn trees or where the spring water jutted from the earth. I sought for them in every wood and glen, morning and evening. I was so obsessed with the need of finding them that although I went to school, it was

an effort for me to remain awake there or take any interest in my lessons.

I never found the fairies. Although "My Children" came and seemed sympathetic to my search, they never quite knew what I was looking for and so could not help me to find them. What finally made me give up seeking for the little people was my next new and exciting discovery about life. Whilst I had been waiting so still and quiet for the fairies to appear, I began to distinguish new sounds and new areas of light around me and throughout the woods. I became aware that everything had its own song and sound. With my back to a tree or stone, I could hear the tones come from them and vibrate through my own self. With my head on the grass I could hear the sounds from within the earth like a gentle murmur passing through the roots of the grass. I began to be able to distinguish the song of the grass from that of the insects beneath the sod. Around each tree, even to its tiniest leaf, I noticed a *surround* that seemed to breathe and move gently. I realized that this nebulous veil I saw about all growing things was of the same order as those that I had seen around people. These *surrounds* were like cradles in which every animate creature or growing plant breathed and was sustained. I knew that these enveloping forms gave them health and protection to live and grow. Their substance seemed to emanate from within and yet had a life of its own from without which, if destroyed or crushed, would cause death to the more solid living form which it enveloped and sustained.

Lying thus in the grass and watching every moment in the fields lest I should miss the "little people," I observed how the living trees and shrubs and flowers drew their air and colour from the dancing globules of light which filled, what people know as space. Such globules I had first seen, long before, in my room and I knew that the entire atmosphere was made up of these little dancing balls of light. Now, for the first time I discovered that these little whirling forms had within them colour-substance which was eagerly sucked in

by the *surround* of every plant and animal. This, I realized, was the way in which the plants received their colour and their odour. I was definitely certain that this was so, for under the midday sun I saw the globules drawn back from the flowers by the intense heat of the sun and then absorbed by its rays. In the early morning, and more particularly in the twilight, the light-substance of the globules was stronger and danced more swiftly toward the *surround* of all living forms. They seemed glad at such times to give themselves and their fluid-substance back to living things, as though they would thus make up for their midday lack of vitality.

When the sun had gone and twilight had ended, I saw the light globules intensify and grow stronger. Deeper colour-substance living within these balls became more vivid as they played in the dark. Now they gave themselves so intensely to the flowers that the perfume of the blossoms grew stronger and their petals more vigorous; the over-blown rose revived for a moment and the drooping plants lifted their leaves erect again. I knew that the night air whatever it contained, charged and recharged all living things with new and strange vitality. I realized that the plants and flowers knew this too. I watched them feed themselves upon this strange night force, and even hold this invigorating substance greedily within the base of their bloom and the curl of their leaves.

I also saw the globules dance in the moonlight in a slower and more premeditated rhythm. I knew that the influence of the moon's rays on the light-balls was far different from those of the sun. In the moonlight the little balls grew strong like glass; their blue colour gave way to violet and deep purple tones; they took on the light and colour of night. As I watched the globules respond to the moon, I too felt the effect of its light on my body. Under the influence of the moon I threw off my clothes to let the light-substance of the globules touch direct upon my body. When I returned to my room from the garden and the night, I opened the window wide and invited the globules to come and share

with me my sleep. I felt the melody of the dark and the moonlight caught up and held in the dance of these little balls of light.

I shared my new discoveries with none but "The Children." They nodded their heads; I was sure they understood. Apart from "The Children," I now needed no companionship; I lived in my own little world. I had only time, apart from them, for the sounds and the colours and the movements of this new Universe.

Chapter IX

THE COMING OF THE GYPSIES

WHEN I was ten the gypsies came with their caravan and animals. I remembered them vaguely, from other years, but on this occasion I saw them with new interest. For the first time, my uncle allowed me to go with him when he went out to show them where they might camp on his property.

That first night I was impressed by the strange difference of the gypsies to any of us. I wondered at their brilliant kerchiefs, their gleaming bracelets and heavy earrings, which even the men wore. I was intrigued by their sullen faces and their downcast eyes which darted at one obliquely instead of looking straight into one's eyes. The two solemn gypsy babies interested me, even more than the women who carried them; so silent and still were these infants that they might not, I thought, have been alive. I lingered with my uncle, watching every move as the gypsies prepared their camp for the night.

Early next morning, before the household was awake, I slipped away to the gypsy camp alone. They were cooking their breakfast over a bright fire and barely looked up as I approached. A very old woman whom I had not seen the night before addressed me and bade me seat myself beside her; a man moved to make room for me. I instinctively knew that the old crone liked me and that she ruled the

family. The rest of the gypsies ignored me but that did not matter, for I knew that she was my friend. So I sat quietly and looked her up and down; though she was dirty and unkempt I did not mind. I noticed that the gypsy men hardly spoke to the women, unless to demand something, and in a language which I did not understand. My first visit to the gypsies was suddenly brought to an end by the appearance of my uncle. He took me home and warned me not to see too much of them.

I had waited impatiently all next day for the twilight hour when my uncle said that I might approach the gypsy camp. In the evening I went back to them and talked with the old woman. I found her strangely sympathetic and from the way she looked at me, rather than by anything she said, I knew that I had found in her someone, at last, with whom I could talk and who would understand me. The other gypsies interested me less, although I liked to watch them and hear them speak. I was fascinated by the dark sullen heads of the two young men, bending over sheets of tin which they made into cans and cooking utensils; and I loved to watch their brown fingers lacing the red willow canes into chairs and garden seats, or cutting up leather to make laces for their shoes; so easily did their fingers work they might have been working with magic. The babies I could examine to my heart's content; they were most disappointing, since they hardly moved and never cried. The two young women seemed tired and unhappy, they had no authority of their own in the camp. They quarrelled amongst themselves in harsh and angry voices. When the women argued with each other, the old man whom they addressed as the "Old One," bade them keep quiet; otherwise he hardly looked up from the fire or spoke. He and the younger gypsies however, regarded the old woman with respect. Her voice brought them all to a strained attention; even the young men looked up attentively when she addressed them. It was easy to see that her word was law to the entire camp. I found that the late evening was the best time to visit the gypsies, when

they gathered before the fire and rested. As I approached them they would make room there for me. If no word of greeting was spoken it made no difference; their eye contained a welcome and that was enough.

The old woman's appearance was not prepossessing; she always looked like a bundle of rags to which there was neither beginning nor end. But her deeply furrowed face was kind and her dark eyes were merry and young. In time I had told her everything that had happened to me and all that I secretly thought and felt and experienced. As I spoke to her I watched her face for signs of disbelief; but there were none, so then I knew that I could tell her of my visions and of "The Children." She listened with interest to all I had to say, remarking, "Do not be unhappy if others don't believe you. It is not given to everyone to know and see such things; not all my people can see that way, though we are born of a mighty race to whom God gave direct knowledge," she said.

"Years ago, in the dim beyond, our peoples talked direct with God; we have been wandering over the face of the Earth longer than man remembers, and we have forgotten the methods of our Fathers. I was born with the 'seeing eye' and have the power to heal and to kill. The things you see and hear are therefore not strange to me. I have seen and heard beyond man's understanding ever since I could talk and walk."

She told me then of her childhood in Poland and of her first unhappy marriage in Spain. She slipped back to tales of her youthful beauty which she said had always brought great good to her tribe, in presents and privileges in whatever country they had wandered. Her stories of the killing of her rivals interested me most. When the moon was at the full she said that she buried with special incantations a wheaten sheaf, three feet deep, to represent her adversary. For three weeks she waited; each night she worked the spell. After that her rivals always wilted, grew sick and died in great pain. She told stories of bewitching cows so that they fell sick

and gave no milk when a farmer refused her people food or shelter. And she would put curses, she told me, by sign, on the gates and doors of those who drove her away from their farms.

It became a regular thing for me to visit the old woman every day. She allowed me to accompany her when she went to reconnoitre for the tribe. With unerring eye she always went to the most prosperous farms and cottages. A well-filled hen-roost made her chuckle with delight; she would remark, "to night my soup will be good." We would often go to the fields together to gather herbs for her seasoning and ingredients for her potions and ointment. She taught me strange names for all the flowers and told me the stories of these names. She showed me all the plants she used for her concoctions and told me which ones healed and which would kill. At first she went with me on these trips but afterwards she sent me out alone to reconnoitre for her food and gather the leaves and roots for her mysterious brews. Although I loved to wander with her by day, I waited with impatience for the night to come when, unknown to the household, I would leave my bed and cross the garden to slip down to the camp and take my usual place beside the old woman at the fire. In the wavering light, strange shadows flickered across their faces; the old man played wild gypsy songs on a violin, which he had made himself. The women rocked and crooned to the babies; then, tapping their heels to the sharpened notes of the music, the men sometimes broke into song.

The strange atmosphere, the weird shapes in the dark, and the wild music all stirred me deeply. It was like my first taste of heaven. I used to ask the old woman never to go away, but if she had to leave I begged her to take me with her; but she shook her head and said, "No, you mustn't think of it." My aunt's threat of sending me away from home was often repeated and this life of the gypsies seemed to be a perfect way out of my troubles.

One night the old woman drew a black box from the folds of her tattered shawl and showed me her treasures of

gold and silver, strange coins and amulets gleamed in the dark, each, she said, possessing mystic powers. From the bottom drawer of the box she drew forth a packet of Tarot cards, greasy and torn; she began to tell me then the meaning of the symbols. The old man looked up in protest as though to stop her but she answered his disapproval by saying, "This is a 'knowing one' who has come amongst us." He accepted her statement and she went on telling me the story of the cards. She taught me also to lay them out and read them for myself whilst she made sand pictures and mysterious signs. She afterwards showed me how to make the sand pictures and even to read their meaning. But, she warned me that I must never tell my family what she had shown me, as this would surely arouse my uncle's disapproval of her tribe.

One night when I was sitting close beside her, one of the young gypsies came in, later than usual, bringing with him a young girl who looked about thirteen to me. She seemed very frightened. The young gypsy approached the older man and spoke with him in angry tones. Then he pushed the girl away from him; whilst he spoke to the woman, she crouched trembling by the fire. One of the young women then arose and grudgingly gave her a drink. I was consumed with curiosity to know what was happening, and asked the old woman to tell me. She refused to answer and told me to go home. The next day when I returned she was as kind as usual and said, "Tonight there will be a wedding, and you must come and join us." This surprised me, as I felt that the youngest woman of the tribe was already the gypsy man's wife; she had, I noted, looked hurt and angry and perhaps jealous, the night before, at the sight of the other girl.

That evening when I reached the camp there was an air of excitement and expectancy; the women were still cooking a pot of food over the fire, the men were drinking together and the old man was playing softly on his violin. Tonight the old woman did not seem to notice my presence; she was getting things out of the boxes, jewelry and bright coloured

shawls, in preparation for the wedding. Everyone looked gayer than ever before in their special vivid shawls and kerchiefs. The bride had lost her frightened look of the previous night and now seemed bright and happy. She was wrapped, by the old woman, in a brilliant red shawl, leaving her shoulders bare in gypsy fashion; she had no jewels and her long black hair hung straight across her shoulders. The other young woman, whom I believed was already the gypsy's wife, sat weeping quietly by herself. The rest of the camp was gay and joyful. By the old woman's side was a small table containing coloured cups and strange instruments. I could make out a small dagger lying beside them on the table.

To begin the ceremony they took the pot off the fire and the old woman ladled some of its contents into the coloured cups for each of the gypsies. They drank this solemnly in silence and the rest of the pot was then taken and buried in the earth by the old woman, without a word. Then the old man built a fire of twigs and carefully sprinkled the sticks with powders. Before setting the fire alight, he took the right wrist of the young gypsy and bound it to the left wrist of the girl. After that the old man lit the fire and took the dagger from the table and quickly pierced the wrists of both with a sudden thrust and blood spurted forth. I saw the old man reach for a piece of linen to bind their wrists together, but the sight of this blood made me sick and I fled from the camp in terror.

Next morning, when I went back, the gypsies had broken camp and gone away. I was sad at losing the old woman; I felt I should never see her again. The stories she told me remained with me and my enthusiasm to possess my own herb garden grew out of my contact with her. I remember the amusement in my uncle's face when that patch of garden, which he had set aside for me, became a lurking ground for strange weeds and herbs that I had come to love and cultivate. I never saw these wild weeds as intruders; to me, because of the old gypsy woman, they were always the treasured healers of the garden. Day by day, as I dug

my plot of ground and watched the growing things develop, I loved it more deeply. Every moment in which I could escape the house, I lived with my strange herbs and flowers.

I was amply rewarded, for I began to discover how the plants and blossoms received their perfume and their colour. I saw the process whereby growing things receive their colour through light, and I knew, without being told, that there was indeed, an hidden and healing strength in my colour world. I began to pretend that I too, as with the flowers, could draw colour from the light; and now I have, strange to relate, come to know that it is truly possible for me to do so. I was quite certain that among my myriad flowers and plants, each had a personality of its own. And just as I knew them, I felt that they knew me. I became aware of all the struggles which went on amongst the growing things in the garden, and sensed all their loves and their joys and sorrows.

The life of the garden became an amazing world in which an actual drama was lived out in my presence; therefore my responsibility to love and help the garden grew. Now I began to dislike cutting off the growth of the flowers as much as I did the killing of animals; for I was certain plants suffered as much as other living creatures when they were separated from their stalks. Whenever any flowers were cut in the garden, I would try to comfort them through sympathy for their pain. But then I began to make a marvelous discovery; I found that my beloved flowers were able to develop a different process of breathing in their new environment and so survive the first shock of being separated from their parent roots. It comforted me to know that all plucked flowers could survive in this way. I would be up with the dawn to watch the opening of the flower cups, and at night I would slip away secretly, to surprise the flowers as they went to sleep or wakened for the night. I came to know also, the way that the midday sun would absorb the perfume and steal the colour from the flowers, and how they

waited for the going down of the sun, so that they might revive. Already I had begun to watch closely and understand the initial processes of growth and change in my little world.

Part Two
ADOLESCENCE—
THE RESPONSIBILITY OF GROWING UP

Chapter X

I AM SENT AWAY TO BOARDING SCHOOL

I DO not know how long I might have continued living in my own discoveries, now silent and no longer speaking of anything which concerned me, if my teacher had not noticed my weariness, and that lessons were interrupted by headaches and coughing. She drew my aunt's attention to my run-down condition, and it was discovered that I was on the verge of a complete collapse from bronchial catarrh and measles. After that siege, I was never again a completely healthy child. A series of illnesses followed which left me subject to bronchitis. Only many years later did I realize that I had at this time, developed tuberculosis, a family inheritance, to which most of my mother's family had been susceptible. When my teacher drew my aunt's attention to this weakened condition, my aunt became kinder towards me and took me to task for not having told her myself that I was suffering.

When I recovered from this illness, my aunt decided that I must now go away to boarding school because she was unable to control my reckless habits of running out of doors inadequately clothed at all hours of the day and night. It gave me no feeling of sadness to say farewell either to my aunt or the day school. I only worried as to how my "Unseen Children" would take my departure and whether they would follow me. The necessity of leaving my room and the gar-

den gave me the greatest unhappiness; I felt that somehow I was being parted from something which I should never know again. I regretted too, losing the happy associations with my uncle; he had not been well for some months and I sensed that we would never have such companionship together again. I dreaded the prospect of boarding school because I was sure I should be confined indoors a great part of each day. I was never happy in a house without a garden; a house without a garden was inconceivable to me. I had seen city houses and shuddered at the prospect of ever having to live in one. To be happy I had to be related to all growing things; it was the only way in which I felt secure and complete. In spite of my reluctance at leaving home, I parted from my aunt without regret.

The new school made no great appeal to me. Situated in Dublin within an old square, the house was a cheerful and friendly three-storied Regency building. The Principal was a shadowy creature who had little to say at any time; she did not impress me when I was brought to her on my arrival; I am not even sure that she saw me. I suppose a new girl meant little to her anyway; she seemed more concerned with her sheet of figures than her pupils. Her two sisters, both dressed in black were present; they spoke in hushed tones and took charge of the running of the establishment. They seemed gentle when they took me to my room.

There were sixty girls, ranging from ten to sixteen, in the school. This was a strict Protestant establishment, chosen by my aunt to help me overcome and forget the Roman Catholic teachings. I shared a dormitory with five others; although these girls were older than I, I felt immediately that I would have no trouble in handling them. I was flattered that the older girls took me up, treating me as one of their own age, and making me their confidante. They liked my recklessness and my ability to enter into all kinds of pranks which upset the law and order of the school.

My knowledge of Biblical lore helped me much at first; the fact that I could now recite from the Bible, as well as give

the catechism and most of the book of Common Prayer, impressed my new teachers. I had no difficulties with such studies as English, History and Mathematics. But troubles began immediately with French, German and Music. The same teacher taught me French and German. I knew from the first that she disliked me and I felt the same way about her. I found her perfunctory and slack in her teaching. I was never willing to curry favour with her as some of the others did. When she gave me dry grammar rules to learn by heart, I would ask her to give me examples of how to use them. She would become angry and say "You are not far enough advanced for that, as yet."

I cannot absorb information unless I hear it first and see it written down. I could learn things by writing and re-writing, but never by repeating them by rote. My insistence on trying to understand and learn in my own way, was misunderstood and mistakenly attributed to impertinence. My antagonism to this teacher caused me to create fresh disturbance whenever I could. She assumed therefore, that every sign of disorder in the classroom was caused by me, and so she punished me for every misdemeanour in our group. There was an open feud between us and as it grew deeper it became impossible for me to learn or absorb anything from her. Due to the resistance she set up in me, I have never, to this day, been able to learn any foreign language.

Music I loved until I began to study it at school. I was discouraged and scolded there because I sang off key. When the teacher asked me to sing or play scales, I tried to place additional half-tones between the usual whole notes. I was reprimanded for this. I could not make her understand that I heard the finer intervals of sound between the ordinary notes of the scale. I felt those tones ought to have some location on the piano keyboard before me.

Again and again she would say, "Listen to this," while she played over the scale and then would add "There are no other notes to be heard." As she played those never-ending scales, I would hear each note split and become two tones, the

note she played and the half note below it. We came to an impasse over this; she refused to teach me any longer, saying that I was a willful and disobedient child and would not listen to any scales. I was hurt and vexed with the teacher when she said that I could not hear. I knew that I heard what she heard and much more besides. Once in trying to defend myself I told her that I heard sounds not only with my ears, but felt them pass through my spine and vibrate at the knees. Her answer was "You can lie and fool other people, but not me." That was the last time she taught me. Again I was forced back into my own world of listening and seeing which no one understood or believed in. It was twenty years before I obtained objective confirmation that my hearing and seeing as a child, was bound up with my actual clairaudient and clairvoyant faculties.

The moment came when I could not fight any longer against the misunderstandings and accusations of the teachers. I lay awake, weeping at nights over my failure to adjust myself to the point of view which met me at school. Naturally curious and eager to learn, I wanted passionately to understand music and languages. I felt now that my spirit was breaking. I was conscientiously telling my teachers the truth of what I saw and heard and felt; they would not believe me.

The break-down in my health soon followed in the wake of my despair; I had to be taken home. I developed bronchial pneumonia which later gave way to whooping cough and I was weak and sickly for many months. This return home was a merciful release from my nights of agony and my days of frustration at school. One day when I was recovering, I overheard the doctor telling my aunt that it was a miracle I had not died. I had shown, he said, no will to live. I knew he was right. I was exhausted, a child fighting against a world that had never understood the truth of any of my experiences.

I went back to school when I recovered. My attitude had changed. I would, as far as I was able, carry through

the outer forms of school requirements without active resistance. I hated the idea, but saw no other way out. Everyone at school seemed glad to see me; the teachers were kinder in their treatment, but still objected to what they termed by incorrigible behaviour. They did not change my point of view; I withdrew and gave up trying to study or work for I could not carry the full school program, because I had not yet regained my normal health. The doctor had insisted that my illness was due to cramming and overwork and at last the teachers were solicitous and allowed me special privileges, which made me the envy of all my schoolmates.

Chapter XI

MY UNCLE'S DEATH AND MY "VISION" OF HIM

WHEN I was recovering at home from bronchial pneumonia, the doctor made frequent calls on my uncle, who was visibly tired and coughed a great deal. Suddenly, one day, my aunt called me to my uncle's room. She was obviously upset, a state I had never known her in before. I entered the room and stood looking down at him. He was still, barely breathing. I knew he was dying, and once again the fascination of death was upon me. He looked at me with what seemed to be a troubled gaze, essayed to speak, but no words came. I touched his hands gently—they were cold. I could think of nothing to say, and could only remember how often I had clutched his hand before, to steady myself in our walks in the woods and fields. Although we had not walked together since I had been at school, I now felt a terrific need for his presence. I cannot say that I was upset emotionally, but that I felt terribly empty as though a hole had been made in my head and my brain seemed to be slipping away. How long I lived in this sensation, I do not know. When my uncle died events for some time had no meaning for me. The loss of my uncle through these days preceding his burial was a deep pain. To look ahead was to feel his loss more keenly. I could not bear to contemplate life with my aunt without him; I realized how vastly important to my life there he had been.

He alone had made it bearable, interpreting my needs and wishes to my aunt when I could not.

Through these days no one expressed sympathy with my aunt, without turning to me and saying, "Now you must be a comfort to your aunt." I, who had never known the meaning of being comforted was now expected to comfort another.

I did not go near my uncle's room after he died. From my observations of what happened at death I was sure he was not there any more. In my own mind I was certain he had tired of living and escaped his body. So surely did I believe this that on the day arranged for his funeral, I went to the garden where he liked to sit in the sun and spoke aloud to him, saying, I at least understood why he had gone away. It never occurred to me to doubt that he had heard me. When the time came for the body to be removed from the house I refused to go to the cemetery. On the Sunday following his funeral I was given a spray of flowers to place on his grave. I carried them to the churchyard but resenting the idea that his body should want them, I threw them out of sight over the churchyard wall. I never could bear to approach his grave nor the grave of anyone I have loved.

A few weeks after my uncle died, I was sitting in my own room in the twilight feeling very restless and depressed. I had not been allowed out that day because my chest was troubling me. As I was waiting for the lamps to be brought in, the door opened quietly. There in the lamp light of the hallway I saw my dear uncle, standing clearly before me. I was surprised how well he looked for in the weeks before his death he had seemed feeble and worn. Now he appeared as before, erect and strong. I was overcome with joy at seeing him again and he showed himself happy to be back with me.

He spoke to me and asked that I obey the wishes of my aunt, whenever possible. He said he appreciated the difficulties of my present life with her, and predicted that in two years time I should be free to leave her and go to London. Then, before I had time to ask any questions the door closed

quietly and he was gone. My first impulse was to run after him but I found myself rooted to the spot. Gradually it dawned on me that he had gone and I could no longer reach him. Suddenly I collapsed in a chair and tried to understand what had happened. By the time the lamps were lit, I had begun to ask myself whether I dared tell anyone of this experience. As the night came on I began to feel at peace, knowing definitely for the first time that death was truly a "coming alive" again, in some place beyond my ordinary seeing.

At first I felt strangely exhilarated by my uncle's unexpected visit; but later, came a sense of terrible emptiness at his going. The conviction grew deep within me that my uncle knew my needs and would continue to care for me, with the same understanding as he had shown before his death. It never occurred to me that I had seen a ghost, or that anything strange had taken place. I simply explained the appearance of my uncle to myself by my knowing that all things went "out there," and that he too shared that fate. Never again did my uncle visit me. Nevertheless I continued to believe that he was still close to me and ready to hear whenever I spoke. This knowledge comforted me. Who would understand this experience of my uncle's return? It was not, I knew, to be shared with anybody.

Chapter XII

I PURSUE THE MEANING OF DEATH

THAT spring, my delight in the isolation of my room and the garden was rudely broken by the homecoming of my cousin Ann. She had always been a mystery and I had never given much thought to her brief visits. But now, my aunt informed me Ann had been ordered by the doctor to take a long rest and give up her work.

Since my uncle's death my aunt had lost her grip on life and her health had broken down. So now I heard that I was to be turned out of my beloved room which contained all the secrets of my life; I had to gather myself up and leave this refuge from whence I could, at night or dawn, slip out into the garden and escape into the fields for untold hours; precious hours that had been my very own to be lived with the things I knew and loved. A room upstairs, which had been my uncle's study now became mine. It was pleasant and sunny and the roses peeped in at the windows. Under other circumstances I might have loved that room which in retrospect, appears to have been a charming haven for any child; but my longing for the freedom of the garden made my new room take on for me the air of a prison. It was true that this room also faced the garden, but as I was now so high above it, I felt myself miles away from the growing green things which I loved.

Ann's homecoming was a source of joy to my aunt, but to me it was a catastrophe. I never grew accustomed to her. She had been undergoing cures abroad for two or three years and that was why I had not seen her for a long time. My aunt, realizing that Ann's condition was hopeless, had brought her home. That autumn she died suddenly. Since I had scarcely known her, her death did not touch me. It was the second death of a human being I had known, but it disturbed me less than that of my uncle; certainly less than that of the little animals that I had killed.

Within a few hours after my cousin's death, I asked for permission to visit her room. I tip-toed in and remained quiet, lost in wonderment at where the personality of Ann might now have gone. Again, as with the little ducks, I saw, rising above Ann's body, a curling, shadowy grey substance. When I entered the room it was already gathering itself with slow movement, into a spiral shape which finally disappeared into the atmosphere above her head. I was most interested to discover that this process of separation took, with the human body, hours longer than when the shadowy substance separated from the bodies of the little ducks.

While I had been able to escape attending my uncle's funeral, I was forced to be present at Ann's. The same dread of such lugubrious ceremonies was upon me now, as when my uncle died. I was repelled by the groups of mourners and the obvious satisfaction they derived from their black clothes and their short lived grief. The minister began the burial service with solemnity, but before it was half over he was hurrying it unceremoniously to a close. I moved quietly to the edge of the grave as he spoke and looked in to watch them lower the coffin. My head swam, and I felt suddenly sick. I caught hold of my aunt's arm and begged her permission to go home, but she would not let me go.

A sudden sense of indignation overwhelmed me at the false mourning of my aunt and those around her, about the rightful and inevitable process of death. I knew that in the animal world, there came a clean, natural departure from the

physical form, at the moment of dying. This whole dreary set-up of funeral ceremony, I was convinced, had no relation to the truly simple changes which occurred to all creatures, at the moment, which human beings call death. This rhythmic transformation which I had watched, again and again, with all living creatures, gave me no sense of finality, but rather of a continuous and rhythmic movement toward fresh adventure. In living close to the animal and plant worlds, I had come to understand that there seemed little difference between birth and death, to any living creatures excepting the human. How much unnecessary and hopeless misery might have been spared to man had he observed as I had the true nature of birth and death. I knew both of these processes of change to be joyful and equally creative. Why, since the balance of the whole universe is kept so perfectly by Infinite Direction, must man alone, of all living creatures, fear for his place in the scheme of things, and be so lost and frightened in facing what he calls death?

After Ann's passing, my aunt's attitude underwent a change. She became gentle with me and punished me less. If she did so, it no longer took a physical form. She would set me sections of the Bible to learn by heart; but this was no real punishment, as I enjoyed that immensely. I then took the Bible, as do many others, to be literally true. God became a reality to me and I grew fond of this "Invisible Old Man of the Skies," as I called Him. I took keen pleasure in His ability to know what all His People were up to. I loved the idea that He was always causing wars, and tearing peoples asunder. This idea of continual punishment came so close to my own life at home that I began to put my aunt in the same category as God. Sometimes, however, I thought He overdid the punishment of His People, and as I read more of the Bible I felt less sympathy with His severe measures. Gradually I found my sympathies shifting altogether from the thundering God of Genesis to the serene beauty of the Psalms.

Chapter XIII

I APPROACH THE MYSTERY OF CONFIRMATION

MY uncle had expected me to be confirmed in the English Established Church and the school was preparing me for this, before his death. I was looking forward to the ceremony with anticipation; although I had never obtained my aunt's permission to attend a similar service in the Catholic church, I had, some years before, gone to the chapel and secretly watched the confirmation of my Catholic schoolmates.

These girls were not more than eight or nine years old; before the ceremony they seemed awed and impressed by the service in which they were about to participate. I was disappointed, when I tried to question them, to find that they understood very little of the actual meaning of this Sacrament they were about to undergo. So, feeling that I had to see it for myself in order to more completely understand it in spite of my aunt's command, I hid myself secretly in the gallery of the chapel. In that position I was far enough from the altar to be impressed by both the mystery and the beauty of the ritual of the Confirmation Mass. After it was over I talked to the children who had been confirmed and expected that those who had participated in the service would be even more deeply moved than I. This was not so; they had not been stirred at all by this experience, although they were

pleasantly excited by their new white dresses, their wreaths of flowers and filmy veils, and they felt the importance of making their first communion on the coming Sunday.

When I was twelve years old I came home from boarding school to be confirmed myself, in the Church of England. In spite of the slight impression confirmation had made on those Catholic children whom I had watched go through this ceremony some years before, I felt sure that something deep and profound must be about to happen to me, through my own experience, or my uncle would never have placed such emphasis upon it.

The day came at last. I was full of expectancy. That morning I re-read my catechism, to be very sure that I understood the importance of that Sacrament in which I was about to participate. With half a dozen other girls I knelt by the communion rail, full of hope and deeply moved by the expectation of being transformed into a graver and more responsible person. My first shock came when I looked up and saw the Bishop. He was a gross, red faced, heavy handed man. I knew immediately that he could not be the means of bringing me the deep and mystical experience for which I was hoping. I tried to curb and deny this impression to myself, but it was useless. I watched, out of the corner of my eye, as his coarse hands gave grudging benediction, and I really dreaded the moment when he would finally move up the line of children and touch my head. The memory of the Catholic confirmation I had witnessed flashed back into my mind. I could see again the kindly Catholic prelate placing his hands with gentle blessing on the heads of my schoolmates. I could still remember how deeply moved I had then been, by the mystical setting and the harmonious chanting and intoning of the priests. Here, in this church there was neither beauty nor true emotion; everything was hurried, perfunctory and cold.

When my confirmation was over, I went home and straightway sought the end of the garden, where my uncle used to love to sit. I spoke aloud to him, knowing that he

would hear me. I said, "I am so sorry, I'm afraid I have disappointed you. My confirmation has not changed anything in my life, as I had hoped. How can I take on new life and responsibility when I do not understand the pledges I made to renounce 'The Devil and all his Works and the Lusts of the Flesh'?" I tried to explain to this uncle who had died that all this talk of the Devil and temptations of the flesh meant nothing at all to me. Until now I had never been on speaking terms with the Devil and his works, so how then could I renounce them. I was heartbroken and wept and through my tears I sobbed to my uncle, "If you had only been here you would have helped me to understand."

That evening I asked my aunt why I had gone through the confirmation service without emotion or change of spirit. Her answer to me was, "I suppose you hardened your heart against God." That left me bereft of any hope to understand. I wept the night away in my bed, more utterly alone and at sea than I had ever been before. That was the end of all my hope of spiritual regeneration.

Chapter XIV

I TAKE MY FIRST COMMUNION

AFTER recovering from the disillusion of my confirmation, a faint hope came to me that in my first communion I might still experience the rebirth of myself, which I had missed in the previous ceremony. I went to the early morning communion service on Sunday, again hoping that at this moment I should feel the Presence of the Host. The whispered words, "Take this and eat," accompanied by the participation in the ritual of Bread and Wine, brought me no sense of a Potent Presence. I left the communion rail, realizing again that this minister of God who was a sickly man, was no adequate representative of God's Grace on Earth. I knew in a flash that whoever God was, he was not to blame for the perfunctory and empty interpretation of His Words and Works, given by those consecrated as His ministers in the Church. I had come to realize that these men of God, spoke of Him in the same tone of voice as they enquired about the weather and their next meal.

After my first communion, since I was still forced to go to church by my aunt, I developed a different attitude. I listened and watched critically, finding fault with the readings of the texts by the minister, and I took special glee in noticing how often the old fellow repeated the same sermons. The nobility of our countryside came to church, and sat apart from the crowd below. They paid for their pews in the

galleries, which were for only the titled families. I watched a certain baronet look down from his height and count his retinue of servants in the pews reserved for them in the aisle below. If any of them had dared to miss a service, I knew that they would be reprimanded. As the baronet sat down in his seat, I could see him run his finger around the hymn books on the stands, looking for dust with his chamois-gloved hand. This he did each Sunday and woe to the verger if any dust were found. I knew the verger would never have a chance to listen to the Word of God without interruption. He was kept too busy regulating the furnace, to keep the temperature of the church bearable.

Often his Lordship arrived early, in search of trouble, and when his pew was not in order, would even interrupt the bell-ringing of the verger and roundly abuse him with such words as, "What the b—— hell does this mean, leaving these dead flowers under the memorial window of my family?" This happened so regularly that it became for me, part of the Sunday ritual. The old baronet had often threatened me with corporal punishment, if I did not curtsy suitably when he appeared.

Our family pew was in the rear of the church, near the font. From there I had a full view of the local community coming in Sunday attire to worship God. The more prosperous ones sat in front in their spruce clothes, the poorer ones were lined up behind them, dressed in their faded black. Sometimes I tried to imagine what would happen if one poor woman, more daring than the rest, should come to service with a vivid poppy in her hat or dressed in some unexpected and brilliant colour. I wondered too, if all this dull monotony of our Sunday service gave God any pleasure. There were moments when I had an unholy wish that God would really come and manifest His Presence to this dozing congregation. How startled and afraid they would then be, to find that he did actually exist. This then was the way I imagined the drama of God being played, each Sunday morning, when I was forced against my will, to attend church services.

Chapter XV

I MEET MY FIRST BOY FRIEND

AFTER first communion I went back to school feeling that something should have happened to me even if I felt no change. I therefore, began to pretend to know a great deal more than I really did. On my return to school the older girls began to take me into their confidence at night in the dormitory. Commenting on my new grown-up-ness, they began to tell me of their budding romances. Most of these opened with the exchange of notes with boys in a nearby school. As in most Irish boarding schools of that day, we went out in the afternoons in our dark uniforms, always walking two by two in what we called a "crocodile." Accompanied by two teachers who conducted the promenade, the tallest girls were at the front, the shortest ones at the rear. Although I was fairly tall, I often manoeuvred to walk with one of the smaller girls, so as to be at the end of the line. This was a strategic position; there I was beyond the direct supervision of the teacher's eyes and was free to pass messages for the other girls to a waiting scout from the boys' school. He in turn would carry these missives to the boys they were meant for. I enjoyed winning the approval of the older girls for the way that I transmitted their letters. But I never had any personal interest in all this exchange of messages.

Contact or communication between school boys and girls is absolutely prohibited in Ireland, either during or after

classes. But as soon as a girl leaves school she is expected to settle down and marry. In Ireland of that day, there was little chance of a girl having a professional career; marriage was the only solution for most of them. This strained and repressed attitude towards normal companionships between growing boys and girls resulted in an hysterical undercurrent of secret manoeuvring. This atmosphere both repelled and excited me. The favourite places for exchanging confidences were the dormitories at night and during church service on Sundays. At church the boys and girls were under one roof together, for morning and evening services.

In church I gradually became aware of a strikingly tall, good-looking young man who watched me on successive Sundays as I came and went from church. When he caught me looking up he smiled at me and I smiled back. A few weeks later, one of the older girls for whom I constantly delivered notes, came to me with a very mysterious air and confided to me that several of the girls had been in the habit of escaping from school at night, for secret meetings with the boys from a neighboring school. She said she had been instructed to bring me along to meet someone who wanted to know me. But she gave me no details. This was the first I knew of the secret meetings. I was very thrilled at the prospect of the adventure and went with her that evening when she escaped to meet her special friend. I was pleasantly surprised to find that the boy who wanted to know me was the admirer who had smiled at me so often in church. He was older than most of the school boys and was studying medicine at Trinity; his home was in the Argentine. Our first meeting was easy and natural. He apologised for the necessity of meeting me in this secret way but knew no other means of getting in touch with me. He was under the impression, from seeing me at church, that I was a good deal older than I really was, and he was quite concerned when he realized that I was less than thirteen and that he was already twenty-four.

Chapter XVI

I AM EXPELLED FROM SCHOOL

AFTER this meeting I went back to my dormitory pleasantly excited but with an uncomfortable feeling that the whole escapade was wrong and that I had not only failed myself, but that I had exposed myself to justifiable reprimand, should my secret rendezvous be discovered. Accustomed as I was to punishment, I had, nevertheless, been comforted by knowing that up to that time I had not acted wrongly, according to my own standards. Now I knew that I had not only broken the law of the school, but that I had entered into something which gave me an uncomfortable sense of guilt. When I expressed this, next day, to the girl who had been my companion, she said: "Don't be silly! Everyone else breaks out of school to meet the boys, why shouldn't we?"

This answer did not make me feel any less guilty. But the days went by and I began to feel less troubled and even hoped that I might again accompany her to meet our boys. I had no longer any qualms about going.

When we met again, my South American friend was as happy to see me as I was to be with him. We walked into the Park and sat down on a bench. As we sat beside each other, he took hold of my hands and explained to me quite seriously, what the inevitable outcome of these meetings might be. For the first time, I heard the explanation of the meaning of sex, and he, being a medical student almost twice my age,

stressed his own sense of responsibility about our conduct. He told me that he was surprised to find that I was only thirteen; my appearance and bearing had given him the impression that I was much older. He told me that if he had known I was so young, he would never have sent me the message to meet him. He warned me too, that my maturity while still such a child, might lead me into situations with other boys for which I was not prepared. He was astonished to find that I had no sex knowledge of myself, instilled, either at home or at school, and he directed my reading on this subject for the future.

I had listened eagerly to all he had to say. Whilst I had observed the process of life and death in nature and the sex process in animals, I had never thought of any of these principles as having any practical relation to my own life. On the way home, as we walked together, it occurred to me that the happiness I felt in the nearness and companionship of this new friend, was perhaps connected with what the catechism called, "The sinful lusts of the flesh." Weighed down by this thought, I went back to school with a depressing sense of the responsibility of growing up and feeling that it was not going to be such a pleasant adventure after all.

I went back to the appointed place to meet my school chum, so that we might return to the dormitory together. She was not there and I hurried back only to find that she had reached school before me; some of the girls were bending over her bed as she wept brokenheartedly. They tried in vain to still her sobs. All I could find out from these frightened girls was that "something terrible had happened." I guessed that what had occurred to her was probably the "tragic consequences" my friend had already warned me about. I went to bed very disturbed, dreading the approach of morning. When the Principal sent for me, my schoolmate was already there in her office. Frightened at her bitter experience, she had gone to the Head of the School, not only to confess what had occurred to her and to me the night before, but also to expose the whole system, by which the girls in school escaped

at night, to meet their boy friends outside. My share in the whole sorry business seemed grave, for I had been with her. So, I too, was forced to tell all I knew and freely admitted my responsibility in disgracing the good name of the school. I felt myself to be an outcast and a sinner. I did not know how the other girls felt.

Next day I was expelled from school and sent home in disgrace. There, I had to face the anger and condemnation of my aunt. When I reached home, she met me at the station. Her greetings were abrupt and cold. Neither of us spoke a word during the drive home, but when we reached the house she told me to go to my room where I would get my tea, and as soon as I had finished it I was to come downstairs and give her some explanation of my unfortunate conduct at school. As I came in to see my aunt, I felt relieved that, at last, this was to be the end of my misery. Any punishment I felt would seem a welcome relief after the confusion of the last few days. When I saw her I decided not to beat about the bush, but to tell her the truth about everything that had happened. As I explained how the adventure began, she pressed me to continue, saying, "What did the young man talk to you about?" When I told her that he had explained to me the true meaning of sex, and helped me to understand what risks there were for a girl out in the world alone without this understanding, she interrupted to say, "Aren't you ashamed of your sinful and venial behaviour?" I answered that while I was sorry for breaking the school rules, I had no sense of personal shame or disgrace for what I had done. I was eager to get through with her and take my punishment so that I might again be alone and at peace with myself. My interview ended with her final words, "Now go to your bed, and by morning I will have decided what to do with you and I will tell you about your parents."

I guessed by the tone of her voice that tomorrow's disclosures about my parents, who had died when I was an

infant, would be far from pleasant. So many events had crowded themselves into the last few days that I went to bed troubled and confused, and slept little.

Chapter XVII

I HEAR, AT LAST, THE STORY OF MY DEAD PARENTS

NEXT morning my aunt was distant and cold and made me feel afresh, the enormity of my conduct. Without any explanation, she handed me two photographs of a young woman, whom I recognised as the "Anna" belonging to "Anthony." In a vague way I had thought of these two people as being my father and mother, without attaching importance to what such a relationship implied. Handing me the two pictures, my aunt said, "This was your mother as a girl, and at the time of her marriage. I prayed when she died that you might die too, and be spared her inheritance, for it was a bad one. Your mother was like my own child. She was the youngest of a family of thirteen, of which I was the oldest. Your grandmother's health failed after your mother's birth, so I became for a time, responsible for the family, especially for her, a growing babe. I loved her as though she were by own child. She was very unlike the other children in the family, and had a wayward and independent nature like you. She loved the pleasant and artistic things of life and did not fit into the rigid family tradition.

Your grandmother, a French woman, loved this last child very dearly and gave permission for her to be educated abroad, even though this was bitterly opposed by other members of the family. She went to school in Belgium and later on was allowed to visit our mother's relatives and friends in France

and Algiers. On one of these trips to Algiers, she met a young Spaniard and corresponded with him. When it was found that she was taking his attentions seriously and considering him as a suitor, our parents forbade the correspondence. He was a Roman Catholic and besides he had neither position nor money. Our parents would never consent to your mother marrying someone who was not of her own faith; she was strictly raised, as we all were, in the Presbyterian Church. Our parents had hoped that she would marry a man of her own faith, well-known to them both, a young clergyman who had been devoted to your mother, even as a child. She seemed to conform to their point of view for her future, and to have given up the young Spaniard as a suitor. The preparations went on in the family for her impending marriage to the clergyman but on the eve of the ceremony, she disappeared without giving any explanation as to where she was going.

"I was convinced that she had gone to her Spaniard. I had never been wholly deceived into believing from her acquiescent demeanour, as did the rest of the family, that she had given him up. Our father and mother spent days of anxiety trying to discover her whereabouts; then came a letter telling them only that she was in Paris, whither she had gone to marry her Spaniard. The family, outraged by your mother's marriage to a man who was a stranger to her faith and one who had nothing to offer her in either position or wealth, forbade her even to communicate with any member of our family again, and nothing more was heard of her for four months.

"Then came a letter to our mother telling her that she was to have a child. She was unhappy and afraid to be alone and asked permission to return to Ireland and have her child in her home. Her parents would not receive her, but I, who had recently married, told her to come to me. She came with her husband.

"From the first, I did not like him. He bitterly resented the attitude of the family towards him." My aunt turned to me and explained, "You see, he had no right to be resentful.

He had neither position nor money when he married your mother, and besides that, he was a Roman Catholic. I could not bear to have him in the house; there could never be any peace between us. He found a position as private secretary which took him away from my home; then, as soon as he had enough money, he took a little cottage not far from us where your mother went to live until you were born.

"During all this time before your birth, your mother was very unhappy, because her parents still refused to receive her. Under these circumstances, I gave her all the love I had, but this was not enough to give her peace. She grew sick and unhappy before your birth and she was made miserable by your father's hate of her family. He was moody and resentful and therefore, he often became irritable with her. I might have been sorry for him then, but I could never forgive him for having taken her away from our Church and home. He soon became bitterly jealous of my influence over her.

"You were born to her with great difficulty. She hoped that your coming would be the means of bringing about that reconciliation with the family for which she still longed. But I told her, when she was up again, that our mother and father would never forgive her. I knew, too well, that for them, the barriers of religion could never be dropped. Your father could never be accepted in our family.

"The next day I saw your mother's lifeless body being lifted from the well in the garden. After that I could never bear to see your father again. I then insisted that you must be brought up by me in our religion, but I gave in to your uncle later and allowed you to become a member of the Established Church to which he belonged. Your father had hoped to take you away and have you brought up by his sister. This, our family would not allow. Six weeks after your mother's death, your father shot himself in the office of his employer. Later, I had your name changed from Vancho to that of your uncle.

"I have told you today the story of your parents, to show you how easy it is for the child of two such tempera-

mental people to sin. You see how your mother and father were punished for their wrongdoing. The laws of God cannot be set aside. Don't forget you have their blood in your veins. I have prayed often, that this heritage might not come out in your behaviour. Already you show a tendency to looseness. Your mother too, was wayward and headstrong. Never forget how she gave way to the desires of the flesh with a foreigner and a Catholic who had nothing to offer her and was in no way her equal. The lust that overcame your mother ended in shame and disgrace to our family. Beware that your own seeking for knowledge may not be a cloak for a desire to fall away from spiritual grace. Unless you can turn to God and your Church and admit your sins, it will be too late to seek redemption. I feel it is not possible to send you to a boarding school again, but if you are at home and go daily to school, under my personal supervision you may learn to conduct yourself properly."

The tragedy of my parents' deaths failed to bring home to me the moral that my aunt had hoped to point out. I saw only in their sad story the injustice and intolerance of the family which had really caused their deaths; sympathy and understanding might have helped them to live. I could discover no sin in the love and marriage of my parents. Since already I took neither the Protestant nor Roman Catholic religions very seriously, I failed completely to see the enormity of my mother's crime in marrying a Catholic. I knew that I would feel that it was horrible for any two people in the world, whether close to me or not, to be prevented from doing what they really wanted. This revelation of my parents' history did not make them seem any more real than they had been before. What remained with me was an intense hatred of my aunt's intolerance, and a recognition that she had, that day, put an even greater barrier between us and our understanding of each other.

My increasing unhappiness made me seek "My Children" more than ever. They had visited me less often at boarding school and I hoped, now, that I was back again, that we would

recapture our happy times together. But to my disappointment, they came less often. At about thirteen, "My Children" went away as suddenly as they had come, when I was four. Since then, I have often wondered why when I seemed to need them most, they ceased to come.

Chapter XVIII

FROM CHURCH TO POLITICS—MY ARRIVAL IN LONDON

NOW that I was living at home again, formal religion had to be taken up in my aunt's household. This forced me to ask myself, again, whether the Protestant or Catholic Church could give me the spiritual comfort which I sought from religion. To find this out, I went to the services of both churches. Now, however, neither of them gave me anything. In my childish way I believed I had already found out too much about the limitations of those responsible for the destiny and teaching of both religions.

I had heard the Catholic children prepare for Confession and was shocked to find that for them the Confessional was no means of spiritual release, but a place where perfunctory peccadillos could be recited each week to the priest. I therefore, came to the conclusion that Confession, to which that Church attaches so much importance, was for most of my schoolmates merely an empty formula. Yet even today, I know that if I had to go to church, I would prefer contact with the mystery and emotional fervour of the Catholic Church, to the cold formalism of the Church of England.

Unfortunately at a very early age, I came unexpectedly upon the mockery of the principle of celibacy amongst the clergy. I knew of more than one unhappy boy who had been

drawn into illicit relationships by his own pastor. It was unfortunate for me that these experiences came my way at an age where I was seeking from the church, that peace which was denied me at home. I now only went to church to satisfy my aunt, and keep up an appearance of devotion for her sake. At thirteen, an age when most children are only beginning to think seriously about the meaning of religion, I was already finished with what had become for me, the empty forms of both the Protestant and Catholic churches.

As with most Irish children, I grew up in an atmosphere in which politics were alive and really important. The history of Ireland became a living thing, which did not begin and end with the text-book. Sunday mornings, after mass was over, political meetings were held in the National School. The country people from far and near attended. Their very obvious interest and sincerity had always attracted me, but I had never been allowed to go to these meetings when I was younger. Now that I was at home again and more mature, I made up my mind to investigate the local political scene for myself. I would start out to go to church on Sunday mornings, to appease my aunt, but instead of entering, I would continue on to the village schoolhouse to attend a political meeting.

Men of the position and standing of Joe Devlin and John Redmond sometimes came to lead these meetings; there were lesser speakers also, whose sincerity and enthusiasm marked them for future honours; amongst these was Jim Larkin. Their oratory was superb. I was deeply stirred by such use of language, as I had never heard before. Whilst I found myself moved by the music of their words, I became aware, for the first time, of the vibrations that words make in space. The intensity of feeling released through the sounds of the voice projected a moving energy into space, which became visible to me in the form of undulating lines. As I looked at these rhythmic currents, produced by sound, I began to wonder whether the beginnings of music had not risen for early man, through his perception of these charged lines in

space. I became lost in the magic of my own contemplation and I do not know whether the music of the speaker's voice, or the emanating lines from his speech fascinated me most. I recognized that the speaker's words, with their deep sincerity born of his emotion, constituted in the truest sense of the word, a deep prayer for Ireland's freedom. I knew that the quality of these words would draw from the Living Breath, a true response, just as I knew that my own prayers would always be answered from that same Source.

Whilst I loved the sincerity and earnestness of these Home Rule Leaders, I sensed limitations in the attitude of some of them. The violent tactics of a Jim Larkin, driving the cattle and the horses off the estates of the landowners, sometimes causing them to be maimed, upset my ideals of how Home Rule should be won. Although I accepted such political methods as temporarily inevitable, it caused me, later, to lose sympathy with many of the Leaders of the Home Rule movement; though I never lost faith in the dream of a free Ireland.

During this period, I had many altercations with my aunt over my devotion to the "Rebel Cause," as she called it. She had been raised as a Conservative, and could only accept Sovereign Rule as being right and necessary for Ireland. Not even on the subject of politics, did we have a meeting ground.

I continued to go to the day school which my aunt had found near us for me; and there I made great efforts to conform to school routine and I curbed as far as I was able, my adventurous impulses and my rebellion against authority. I was successful, and I became a favourite with the teachers. But this time I remained aloof from my schoolmates. Though I was always glad to have a word of approval, I no longer needed companionship because I had become so deeply attuned to living in a world of my own.

The power to *sense* and *see* the *surrounds* of living things, and my growing capacity to visualize forms and sounds in space, kept me absorbed. I no longer needed to speak to anyone of these things which I knew. Nor was I convinced

of their meaning and reality to me, and I had no hope any longer, of winning understanding from others.

At fifteen, I had another serious break-down in health and spent the winter in bed; the latent tuberculosis which was a family heritage became active. In the spring, the doctor said I could make no permanent recovery in the Irish climate, so he advised my aunt to send me to the drier atmosphere of the south of England. She found a school to her liking there where I was to go, after the Easter holidays. In the meantime I was to visit for a while, a friend of the family in London.

I was inwardly excited about leaving my aunt and no thought of what she felt about all this entered my mind; in fact I never believed she felt anything, so little emotion did she ever show me. To say farewell to the farm-people never occurred to me, but for days before I went, I spent hours taking leave of the trees and the flowers and little brooks which I loved, and all the hidden places in the woods which knew me, as well as "The Children." The night before leaving home, I felt a terrific conviction that I should never be happy again in the same way, nor ever see these things again with the same eyes. I wept for all the bushes and blossoms and birds which I loved, without knowing exactly why I wept; a cold, vague discomfort possessed me. Had I felt, at that moment, that my aunt would have listened to my appeal and allowed me to remain at home, I would have asked her that boon; but I knew, from long experience, that this would be a useless request. Still feeling sad at going away from all the living things I loved, I went to the garden and there faced quietly the knowledge that the future turmoil of my life would make this kind of peace impossible again. So, gravely, I took leave of my childhood and the world of living force there, which was so intimately bound up with my whole being.

I bade a formal farewell to my aunt. She exhorted me to curb my temperament and remember to keep up my religious training. Her son, whom I had but rarely met or seen,

took me to the boat; he told me that I was very like my mother and promised to send me some old pictures of her. He spoke a good deal about my father, of his family background in Spain and of his tragic death. I had always, in the past, felt glad that I had no parents, when I heard other children talking of how much they feared them. Now, for the first time I wished, as he spoke of my mother and father, with warmth and understanding, that I might have known those two who were my parents.

When my cousin spoke of my parents, he retold much of what my aunt had already said, but he gave the story a sympathy and understanding that she had withheld. He made me comprehend something of my father's deep sensitivity and tragic nature, and that he had been torn with grief and bewilderment at my mother's death. He also told me how deeply hurt my aunt had been, when my mother decided to live independently, and how she had grown to positively dislike and disapprove of her before her death.

My arrival in London thrilled me. Whilst I have never yet quite understood the English temperament, I gave my heart at once to that great city. I went to live with a cousin of my aunt. I went to school for a short while with her daughter, who was soon to be married. For the first time I was thrown into adult society, and was pleasantly surprised to enjoy it, and immensely pleased to find myself treated as a mature person. These people, to my astonishment, listened to my views and ideas as though they had importance. They commented on how much I had lived and experienced, to know so much of life at sixteen. I had the novel experience of being constantly in demand with everyone I met. Then I knew, that all the hardships and misunderstandings at home had not been in vain; I realized that through these conflicts I had become an individual and that I could deal more easily because of them with this large new world that I met in London. They laughed at the idea of a girl of my maturity continuing at boarding school; I began to agree with them, and I asked my new friends how I could avoid it.

Part Three

**DISCOVERING THE MEANING OF
MARRIAGE, CHILDREN AND A CAREER**

Chapter XIX

LIFE IN LONDON

ONE night, a small dinner party was given by this friend of the aunt with whom I lived; it was to celebrate the impending marriage of my cousin. The man who sat next to me at dinner was a dark, merry, blue-eyed person, whom everyone seemed to like. In our talk he plied me with questions and was amused to hear of my coming to England to go to school, and to find out that this was my first dinner party. Turning to my hostess, he commented, "This child is delicious; before she goes to school you must let me take her around and show her London. You know," he said, laughingly, "I'm fond of educating the young." She replied, "We are all so busy getting ready for the wedding, it will be a great treat for her to have you."

So it was settled that he would call for me a day or two later. He took me to all the places a child should go; the Tower of London, St. Paul's Cathedral, Westminster, and all the museums, until my head whirled. I told him I was stifled with buildings, and asked where I could see some gardens, so then he took me to St. James Park and Kew. He found some time every day, to take me around; when he was too busy to take time off to explore the city, he would at least take me out to luncheon. Gradually I began to accept him as part of my daily life and to feel that this pleasant companionship would go on forever. I had from the first day, called him by

his Christian name, Clive; now the household I lived in began, good-naturedly to tease me about the way that I had taken possession of him. He had become the confidant of my misgivings, about going to a new boarding school; to my anxiety he always replied, "Don't worry. When the time comes, we'll find a way out." This remark, though vague, quieted me for the moment; I was satisfied, as always, to live in the "now," and let the events of the next hours take care of themselves; in this mood I enjoyed every moment with Clive and put school out of my thoughts.

The wedding of the daughter of the house happened ten days before I was to leave for school. It made a deep emotional impression upon me, because I regarded marriage as one of the most serious sacraments of the Church. I prepared myself for her wedding day by reading the ritual of the marriage ceremony as laid down in the Book of Common Prayer; I went to the wedding in an exalted state of mind, expecting to see some powerful transformation take place in both the beings of the bride and the groom. I expected this experience to be so overwhelming that the bride would probably be unable to participate in the reception. My feelings towards this wedding ceremony were altogether mystical; I seemed to be participating at some other such ceremony which had happened to me, long before, that had since been forgotten. I felt somehow the necessity of some spilling of blood; perhaps I was unconsciously remembering what I had seen as a child at the gypsy wedding.

I was disappointed to see the bride appear at the reception in a gay and nonchalant mood; I was still immersed in the mystery of the marriage ceremony and expected her to be in the same state and I was shocked to find that after the service, there had occurred no change whatever in her state of being; the lofty and impressive meaning of the ceremony had passed her by; she responded so carelessly to the toasts of the guests, and consumed so much champagne, that it shocked

me. That day, the marriage ceremony as I knew it in the Book of Common Prayer, had lost for me, something of its sacred beauty, due to the irreverent behaviour in my young eyes of the bride and the groom and their wedding guests.

Chapter XX

MY WEDDING

NEXT day Clive came as usual to take me out. I told him that I had expected the bride to be transformed by the ceremony and that I was disappointed when she took it all so casually as an every-day matter. He laughed at me and enquired whether I would not like a wedding of my own some day. "Yes," I responded, but "some day" seemed a long way off to my sixteen years.

Clive stayed to dinner that evening; the conversation turned to the wedding of the previous day. Suddenly Clive turned to the family and said "Eileen said today that she would marry me." My hostess indignantly turned on him and said, "Clive, don't be silly. You have been turning the kid's head. She has been brought up very strictly, and I am responsible for her while she stays in London. You have no right to joke with her about such serious matters." I was hurt by his words and thought that he was teasing me for having taken the wedding too seriously; but he turned to me and said, "I'm serious. You are going to marry me, aren't you?" I remained silent. My hostess asked him, "Are you out of your mind, Clive, or have you been drinking, to make such a proposal. She is only a child." I was hurt and humiliated by the turn of the conversation and left them all hurriedly to go to my room.

The next day my hostess spoke with me before I went out to keep a luncheon appointment with Clive; she was obviously worried by the further conversation which had taken place after I had gone to bed. She said very kindly, "Go out to lunch with him, my dear, but don't take him too seriously. Your aunt would never hear of such a thing as this marriage, and I would be held responsible."

At lunch, Clive was more in earnest than I had ever seen him before. He turned to me and said, "Eileen, I am very serious about this proposal. I do love you and I want to marry you." I was flattered, and I must confess that in my young ignorance I saw in this proposal a means of avoiding the new boarding school. After lunch the storm broke when I told my Aunt's cousin, that I had said "Yes" to Clive's proposal. When she asked me why, and realized that I saw in it a means of escaping school, she was terribly upset and sent word, post-haste, to my aunt, who ordered me to come straight home to Ireland. I showed my aunt's letter to Clive; he was angry and pointed out to me that if I went home now, my aunt would make my life more unbearable for me than ever before.

I must say I was still capable of being frightened by her disapproval, but her negative attitude roused my fighting spirit. Now, for the first time, this marriage seemed really necessary and important to me; with a newly summoned bravado I was now determined to marry Clive, however much my friends and family opposed. When later that day I heard that my aunt had already started her son toward London to fetch me home, I was more determined than ever to go through with my marriage.

I moved to the home of one of Clive's friends and he then applied for a special license so as to marry me as soon as possible. When my cousin arrived from Ireland, instead of opposing the wedding as I had expected, he furthered our plans for two reasons: first of all because he immediately liked Clive and became fast friends with him; and then he told him that knowing that I was a strange child, he feared that

another tragedy such as that of my father and mother might occur in the family; he declared that he would not stand in the way of the marriage. Within a few days I was married without the approval of either my aunt or my London friends.

Chapter XXI

AFTER MARRIAGE I LIVE DIVIDED WITHIN MYSELF

I WAS married at eleven o'clock in the morning, and at four we were leaving London for Paris on our wedding trip. After luncheon, when I was alone for a moment, I was for the first time able to realize the terrific step I had taken. I was about to move into a new life with a complete stranger, who, from now on, as my husband, would have control over me and my life. I wished in that moment of acute realization that I could rush back to my home in Ireland; I at least knew the measure of my aunt's severity; but of this strange man to whom I had so suddenly bound myself, I knew nothing. Abject fear for the future and what it contained swept over me.

My honeymoon was a miserable experience. I found myself daily rebelling against the thing I had done and I would have made any sacrifice if I could have found some way of being relieved of my new relationship.

I was still undeveloped and quite ignorant of what marriage meant. I did not really care for my husband until after the birth of our first child. The house where we settled in London on our return had been newly built and I could plant my own garden. In spite of other restrictions it was a great joy to me to have this house. Since I had been well trained by my aunt to be an efficient housewife, I was eager to show my husband how successfully I could cook and sew and take

care of our home. He reminded me that he had supplied me with competent maids to take care of the house and that he felt that his wife should be well-dressed and charming and entertain in style. He expected me to be ready, whenever he came home, to adjust myself to his wishes and interests. If, he said, he had wanted a housekeeper, he would have married one! I was terribly disappointed but I had already learned that arguing with him was of no avail. I knew then that he was going to do the thinking for us both and that what I wanted did not matter to him at all; he told me more than once during that first year, that I was too young to have a mind of my own.

During this period, my mother-in-law helped me to understand the willful and difficult nature of her son; she taught me the importance of adhering to social customs, and she gave me a sense of the dignity of my new position as her son's wife. She often bridged the differences between us by making him realize that I had too much mind and energy to be left without any definite activity of my own and she helped me to realize that her son was not the self-sufficient male that I had imagined him to be, but a limited human being like myself with needs which must be considered. Gradually I began to accept my mother-in-law as a friend; I could tell her my innermost thoughts, and I was happily surprised that she cared to listen. She came to see me every day and we frequently went on expeditions together and soon became close companions. As our friendship grew, she often entreated me to speak to my husband as frankly as I did to her. She did not understand why I could not talk more freely to Clive.

On our return from our wedding trip, my husband had spoken very seriously to me of the necessity for abandoning my way of *visioning*. He told me that other people did not *sense* and *see* such things and that if others heard me speak in that way they would surely consider me unbalanced. He insisted that if I continued such ways of *perceiving* that it would surely lead to insanity; he reminded me that I had probably inherited such unhealthy tendencies from my mother

and my father. The coldness of his tone and the emphasis of his words brought home to me very definitely that the world of adult normal people did not *sense* and *see* as I did.

I took his words literally and believed that I was surely headed for madness. I accepted what he said when he told me that the things I saw had no reality for others; I was sorry if they did not exist for others but I knew that they were more real than ever for me. Nevertheless his words gave me a great shock, for until that moment, I never truly believed what had been told me at home and by my childhood play-mates that other people did not perceive in the same way as I. A surface part of me now accepted this fact, but the inner "me" heard a voice, saying, "But this is not true."

From that moment I became aware of living in two separate worlds. In one I was the gay, superficial and accepting wife; in the other, I was the sensitive, observant, truly active personality, belonging only to myself. Into the second world no one else ever had a chance to enter, my husband least of all. As the division between my two states of mind grew, I chose again to draw in and live with myself alone, as I had done when a child. This now made it easy for me to deal with both my husband and my friends; when I lived in this separated state no one was really able to reach me and they could no longer cause me either hurt or confusion. If this were madness then I had no more fear of it, because in this state alone was I truly peaceful and happy.

I must have been married about four months when I knew that I was going to have a child. I was intensely happy at the prospect; I felt that while I had been outside looking in at life previously, now I was participating actively in its creation. Giving life was something that I understood; I had so often sat with the animals and helped their young to be born. Now I could identify myself with this miracle of birth. I was going to have a male child, I knew, full of power and rude with health; and even in that first ecstasy, my wish was to give birth to my baby quite alone and have it take place in the open night under the stars. I would have

none of the conventional way of treating my pregnancy; I was, to myself, a young animal about to bear her young.

This exaltation of carrying my child, opened me again to the rhythm of living things, a state which I had rarely experienced, since I had been living in London. Now I walked in colour in which my child was also bathed. I went away from people and sought the open fields and woods; again I was at home with the trees and the living earth; again I ceased to be "me" and became a vessel through which the stream of life rushed on, torrential and inevitable. My clothes were a hindrance to the caress of the energies which came to me from the living day and night; again I was folded in the voice of the wind and the rain and the sun; I threw off my clothes and crept into the garden to sleep. I resented the nurse, chosen to help me through my labours; I was unwilling to have periods of rest imposed upon me and I became irritable, if anybody tried to interfere with my mode of living.

My husband had little interest in becoming a father; this suited me because I already felt that the child belonged to no one but myself. But our relations had now become strained. I learned with a shock from his cousin, that a mistress, who was in his life before he married me, had never really been out of it. His cousin showed me one of my husband's letters in which he wrote of me: "I am tired of her virginity and ignorance." The unhappiness of this revelation hurt and crushed me and my first impulse was to run away, but then, I still accepted the formal teaching of the Church, to which I had seemed to have so little relation, that "whom God hath put together, let no man put asunder." Now loneliness drove me into a deeper identification with the baby I was carrying.

My son came quickly, a little before he was expected. I was able, therefore, to bear him alone. I had no fear for him or myself, although I was wracked with pain. The exhaustion which came after this effort gave me a reaction from which I nearly died. Although I was grateful to my husband for his kindness to me during the months of pregnancy, now I

was very little concerned as to what he did with his life. I was relieved to be excused from dressing up and entertaining tired men and ugly women at his table. I lived for the child and was bored with the community which made up our neighbours and associates.

Living away from people with the baby as my only absorbing interest, the world of nature opened to me again. I lived in a state of bliss, bordering on exaltation. This frightened my husband and I could not make him understand that I was living again, as I had in childhood, in an intimate contact with all living things. My state worried him and he again begged me not to speak to anyone of my *sensings* or *inner* experiences. Suddenly it came to me that all the depths of misunderstanding I had lived through with my husband, as well as earlier with my aunt and teachers, arose from the fact that this contact with all living forces which flowed through me was not perceptible to them, or to anyone else I knew. Maybe, I thought, that difference between me and other people is the borderline between sanity and madness. I felt there was absolutely no one to understand or help me; I was forced back to living in this world of my own true being, quite alone; but never afraid.

Chapter XXII

MY SONS AND THE GROWING DRAMA OF "VISION"

MY son grew in loveliness. I wanted to take care of him myself, but I soon realized that I had not recovered my strength sufficiently to look after him alone. Life slipped by in the household fairly easily, until my boy was five months old. Then, one afternoon when I had the child out in his perambulator, he became fractious and irritable; I stopped a moment to change his position and lifted him up and shook him impatiently. As I put him back more comfortably I heard, to my surprise, a faint sigh over my shoulder, then I heard my name called distinctly and a voice, cold and admonishing, warned me that I must not lose my temper with the child as he would not be with me much longer.

I turned my head around, in the direction of the voice, but there was no one to be seen. The voice was not that of anyone I had known; it was cold and dispassionate. I was sick and frightened at these words of warning and brooded over them for days. As my son thrived and grew, I began to suspect that I had been a victim of my own imagination; but I worried if this boy showed the least sign of not being well.

The following year my second child was born. I had none of the same intense feeling about this child, either during pregnancy or after his birth. He came quietly, a wide-eyed baby. As soon as I had recovered, I began to have a

sense that he would not be with me long; I was very depressed without knowing exactly why. The memory of the warning which I had received about my first son's death grew in intensity. No matter how much I tried to forget it, I was unable to do so. My concern for both the children and my own low state of health now worried me so much that I decided to tell my husband. I felt that I could no longer bear the weight of my depression alone; I told him of the warnings which I had received about both children and of my fear that they might come true.

He tried to be sympathetic, but he assured me that I was a victim of my own imaginings, due entirely to my nervous and depressed state. He sent me to a doctor who gave me a tonic and suggested that I needed some outside activity which would take my mind off myself and my children. He also advised a change of climate; I refused to take his advice, my home and children meant too much to me, and I was unwilling to leave them. I knew that I was not really sick nor in need of a change of climate; I was only afraid that my ever growing depression registered a tragic truth about the coming loss of my children.

I took the doctor's advice, however, about redirecting my energies beyond the limits of household and children. I joined a woman's club and tried to take an active part in the local charities. It all seemed to me a waste of time and futile; I would much prefer to read in the quiet of my room than kill the hours of the day in social make-believe. Also there was growing within me a deep sense, that before long, marriage would not fill my life. My increasing sense of my rightful independence, this growing force, would not permit me to submit much longer to the authority of a domineering husband and the restrictions of the life I was living. I had as yet, no definite sense of how or when my married life would alter, but I knew quite definitely that beyond myself, a process of change had already begun to work upon me from outside, in the Universe. I had learnt that it was not necessary to act oneself, in order that things might happen.

All one had to do was to voice one's necessity with faith and conviction, to the Living Breath; that, in its own good time and measure, would do the rest.

About this time, my husband noticed that I had seemingly not recovered from my depression and anxiety about the children and he took me to see a psychiatrist. All that this physician had to suggest was a re-adjustment between my husband and myself in our marriage relations. A few days after this visit my oldest boy, now two years old, fell suddenly ill. For several days the doctors were unable to diagnose his condition; they hinted at infantile paralysis and within a few days brain fever had set in. Within a week he was dead. Meningitis, they decided, was the cause of his going. Five months later the second boy died of the same dread disease.

Now I was childless; all my courage and fortitude left me. For many months I was nervously ill and shaken at the loss of my two children but I could not grieve for them in the conventional sense of the word, for I knew by now, that the drama of dying led to other states of living. Again I had seen the nebulous personality of my son wind itself upwards and float away from the form of his body, while I held him in my arms. It was, to me, as though unseen fingers were weaving a silken thread. The movement of this floating substance, curled and floated rhythmically, as in a dance, until it disappeared beyond my vision. But I felt ill and resentful, because I did not understand why my children should be born only to die so soon.

The suffering which followed the death of my sons led me to search further for the answer to the revelation which this phenomenon had allowed me again to witness. I wanted a method by which I could follow the journey of these moving energies beyond the point that my vision could not embrace, and follow them into whatever state might yet exist for them, beyond my present understanding. Whilst the intensity of my desire for reaching this state did not carry me as far out into space as I desired, I did begin to see

through, into and beyond dense form. I became aware that the processes of growth in organic life happened from without, as well as from within the living organism. I saw that the floating *surround* of all living organisms, sustained the organism and the life of its own inner physical body, as though it were a breathing, outer lung. I knew then, for the first time, that these surrounds were sustained and held in shape, (as I came to verify later) not by the breathing of oxygen, but of carbonic acid gas. I saw very clearly in these days that these *surrounds* of all living matter consisted mainly of what science calls carbonic acid gas; if the living organic matter became congested, I observed that the oxygen-breathing process slowed down and the carbonic acid gas became more dense. In the case of the human body, I have often watched the same process taking place during periods of illness.

All this "seeing" activity tired my body, for however little I took any part in this medley of movement, its force passed through me and shook my being. I was aware of a burning sensation as though constant charges of electricity were passing through me. Again, as in childhood, I now saw streams of colour and light, blending and interchanging their forces; a marriage in space, all light containing colour, all colour containing light. Light and colour no longer appeared as beams, or rays, but curved and became slowly rotating, cylindrical shafts, reaching out endlessly into space. I also began to feel and sense the thoughts of others and saw them as forms in light, moving towards their destiny, either dissipating or impacting, according to the force with which they had been projected. From these experiences, I knew that thoughts were things, clothed with a life and power of their own, once they were born. Thus went on the drama of vision for many weeks. If I could only find someone to understand what I was seeing! I knew that it had some deep significance if I could only penetrate its meaning. When I tried to explain these experiences, and struggled to find words to describe what I *saw* and *sensed*, my husband's anxiety for my sanity forced me to hold my peace. I looked in scientific

and religious books in the hope I might find an explanation of the things I was experiencing; but no help came to me from these sources.

Now I became more clearly conscious of what was happening to me, when I had begun to live in two separate states of mind at one and the same time. I had always known that I could withdraw from my physical body; I had learned that method of avoiding suffering long before, as a little girl; now for the first time I was able to see the process taking place, as it occurred in myself. I was sitting one day in a chair, in a quite relaxed and passive state, wondering whether I should get up, when looking ahead of me, I saw a shadowy replica of myself. Never had I had such a shock; I could scarcely believe that I was such a commonplace creature, as I now saw myself to be. I got up and tried to approach my other self; as I did so it lost its outline and began to draw back towards me, and fall into its protective place as my own *surround*. I came to realize later that such projections as these were only extensions of my own *surround* and I also came to know that these projections only take place when the conscious mind is completely relaxed. In time I saw and began to understand that, with everyone in states of sleep or alcoholic intoxication or under the influence of certain drugs, this *surround* separates and moves outward and beyond the physical body.

Studying the nature of these *surrounds* and their workings in later years, I became convinced that they had a positive and important function, as a protection to what we call the physical body. I became aware that enveloping and extending beyond the living organism, our *surrounds* receive and condense all impacts of sound, light and movement, diminishing their violence before they permeate our physical bodies. *Seeing* and *sensing* this, I realized that another function of our *surrounds* was that of an all-discerning eye, which penetrated beyond man's ordinary vision.

Since this process of separation of mind with its varying changes had been natural to me from childhood, it did not

cause me fear when it took place. I learned to use this division of consciousness in a practical way. I found that this *surround* became an actual mirror for my own use, in which I could see myself clearly at any time; whenever I wished, to assure myself that my personal appearance was in order I need never glance at a looking glass; I could use my lipstick or powder my nose in the reflection of my own *surround*. Some years later, I came to know that this *surround* had much more important functions than the ones I had then discovered.

The intense experiences consequent on pushing out into space, to explore the meaning of death, left me spent and mentally tired. It was increasingly difficult now to face the routine of domestic life; more than ever, my marriage had lost interest for me and I wanted to get away from my present environment and its painful associations. The only place I could think of to go and find peace, was my old home in Ireland. I knew that the woods and well-remembered haunts of childhood would heal me. I only hesitated because my aunt would be sure to be critical and difficult with me again; but so deep was my need to return to Ireland, that I did not allow this doubt to hinder my going. My aunt's cold greeting as she opened the door, chilled me again, as it had in my childhood. She looked frailer now, but her grim determination to rule and to be obeyed seemed even stronger than before. She disapproved of my coming back and leaving my husband behind; she intimated that my place was beside him in my own household. But this unfriendly attitude did not prevent me from enjoying my garden and the farm. I had my own little room back again and it gave me comfort and a welcome. There had been changes in the personnel of the place; a new housekeeper and gardener had come and this made it feel less like my old home. I had come back, hoping to find my former peace in the scenes of my childhood, but I began to realize that this visit to Ireland was but an attempt to escape from the problems of my married life, and it would not be the means of solving

them. Now I felt there was nothing to be gained by remaining any longer, so I went on to Dublin, before returning to my husband, in London.

Whilst I had been at school in Dublin, I had become interested in the Abbey Theatre. Now looking for an expression of life for myself beyond my career as a wife, I thought seriously of the theatre as a profession. I sought out some of the Abbey players and others connected with the theatre, to get some advice. I had always regarded actors and people of the theatre with wonder and awe, as individuals who were greatly gifted and set apart from others. My first intimate contact with the theatre now disillusioned me; actors, I found, were inclined to be vain and interested only in themselves. Also when I came to realize the amount of routine and training demanded in the theatre, the prospect of acting became less attractive to me. I felt that in acting, as in other things one did in life, one either must do it well or not at all. This attitude all through my life has made it impossible for me to undergo the routine of training or teaching from anyone else. I know immediately whether I can or cannot do a thing myself; if I can do it I know that I can do it well and quickly; if not, I leave it alone. There have been no half-way measures possible for me at any time.

Leaving Dublin, I went back home, to London. But my visit had helped clarify my vision; I was now ready to face the issue, and to find some way to terminate the marriage; I really wanted to find some work which would be an expression of my own self and give some reason and meaning to living. I went to my mother-in-law to express my need of some outlet in work, but she, far from being sympathetic, told me that my first duty was to my husband and my home, and that my job at that moment was to have another child. She pointed out that the loss of our sons had been as acute for my husband as for me; I had, until that moment, selfishly thought of the children as completely mine; that he too had suffered, had never before occurred to me. Her argument

convinced me that I should again take up our life together. In time I bore another son. This baby died a few hours after birth. My recovery was rapid, so swift in fact that I could scarcely realize that I had just been through another tragedy. I had borne this child as a duty, to please my husband, but I had never regarded it as mine, nor had I any great emotion over either its birth or its subsequent death.

After this I made another effort to interest myself in some activity outside my home, but still remained a part of it. I enrolled in a school for Domestic Science, and again tried to be active in the life of the community by taking a part in charity sales and bazaars. But all this show of activity was superficial and forced, and gave me no real satisfaction.

I tried another aspect of the theatre; this time it was musical comedy. I got myself a position quite easily and would have liked to continue long enough to accomplish something but my husband and his family were displeased and insisted on my coming home again. This was the second time I had taken a paid position away from my home and my husband, and on both occasions he had been upset at my independence and insisted that he was quite able to take care of me. He spoke sharply of my obligations to him and pointed out that there were many delightful ways for a wife to "kill her time," while still remaining attractive and responsive to her husband. Although I did return on both occasions, after proving to myself that I could be economically independent, I did so most reluctantly; these were only my first attempts to free myself from the economic bondage which a house and husband now represented to me.

Home again, as soon as outside activities had ceased to use my energies, the inner world opened again without any effort on my part. I was a victim of my own hypersensitivity. As I look back now on this period, it is difficult for me to formulate, even to myself, what the nature of the sensations of these weeks really were. I hesitate even to speak of the states I was then in, for I suspect that most people would link them with a condition of unbalance. Nevertheless, they

did contain preliminary signs of supernormal sensing, deeper and more intense than any that I have since experienced, except in times of serious illness.

Incredible as it may seem, I found myself, now, *seeing* more easily and clearly with my finger tips or through the nape of my neck, than through my eyes; and *hearing* come to me through my feet and my knees. In that state, I felt sound as an external current, entering my body from without and vibrating through its bony structure. From that time on, I became aware of auditory sensations that reached me from outside, but not through the hearing of the ears; this type of *hearing* later became more developed and coherent, and remains with me yet, as what is now called clairaudient perception just as the *seeing* which takes place, without the use of the eyes, is generally termed clairvoyant perception.

When I lay down to rest, exhausted from these experiences, I would suddenly get a feeling of nausea and lightness, and above me, I would see myself, as clearly as though I were looking at someone else. Although I am not sure what process was taking place at that moment, I believe that this must have been the beginning of those more conscious and controlled efforts at projection, which I was able, later, to use in controlled telepathic experiments. Until my husband later told me, I did not know that I had also short spells of amnesia at this time, in which I talked aloud.

I was thoroughly frightened by all these experiences, and asked my husband to take me to consult a good psychiatrist. I dreaded lest this was indeed that madness, now closing in on me, which my husband had so often warned me about. When we got to the psychiatrist's office I was prepared to tell him of these experiences, which had now begun to overwhelm me. I had hoped for help to deal with them, and sought an explanation of their cause; but he gave me no chance to speak for myself and simply turned to my husband for a detailed account of my family history. I came in to consult him, convinced that I must be on the brink of madness; I came away not only convinced that I was on the verge of insanity, but

that I had been the cause of the death of my children, through an inheritance of disease. The only concrete suggestion that the psychiatrist had made was that my husband's sexual inadequacy was probably the cause of my hallucinations; my husband, a passionate man, was furious. I was much closer to a nervous collapse, when I left, than when I entered the psychiatrist's office.

The sum total of this diagnosis led eventually, to the break-up of our marriage. Although this did not come immediately. Outraged and sick at heart at what I had just been told, I went immediately to have the necessary blood tests made, and soon received the proof that the psychiatrist's pronouncements about my own state of health were quite untrue. Convinced that I could get no help or understanding from the medical profession of that day, I began to wish that I could study the foundations of medicine, chemistry and physics for myself; I was certain that the key to my condition could be found in the knowledge contained in such studies. My husband, of course, opposed this effort of mine, as he had blocked all my other attempts to become independent, and my own means did not permit me to plunge into such years of study as I might have done then.

Chapter XXIII

MY FIRST ATTEMPTS AT BUSINESS

AND MY AUNT'S ILLNESS AND DEATH

AFTER several disappointing interviews with physicians and psychiatrists, who obviously understood nothing of my condition of mind, I came to the conclusion that it was useless to seek any further outside aid or advice. I must therefore, learn to know myself. I had always been sure that work which interested me, would be the only antidote to my nervous and unhappy condition. Soon the opportunity came to cure myself. One day at luncheon, a friend told me that she was opening a catering establishment with some capital left to her at the death of her husband. She asked me to join her on this venture and I jumped at this opportunity to take up some serious work which would absorb my energies and fill my life. This time I left home without any qualms and threw myself wholeheartedly into the new project. I was happy in this new occupation because I had been trained by my aunt to be a good cook and run a household competently. I was happy to find that I could work well and easily and that my partner complimented me on my special ability to make people buy and eat much more than they intended to when they came in to our shop! As the business flourished, my health improved, for the natural tiredness of hard work gave my mind less chance to separate into its two aspects.

Then news came to me that my aunt was dangerously ill; I was not asked to go to her but I felt a need to go back to see her and my home again. When I arrived, her sisters with dark and gloomy faces chilled me with their frigid greeting. I asked to see my aunt but they kept me away from her, telling me that she was no longer conscious and very close to her end. I however, managed to slip into her room for a few moments; she lay in her bed in a semiconscious state, and she turned her eyes toward me and opened them for a moment. I believe she recognized me for she regarded me with the hard and unforgiving expression which I had long associated with her. As I left the room I could only think that she was going out of this life in the same harsh and unforgiving way as she had always lived. When I came into the hall I saw my aunt's relatives waiting about, enjoying their black clothes in anticipation of the funeral ceremony and mourning which would follow her death. As my relation with my aunt was ended and I had nothing in common with the rest of her family, I could see no reason why I should go through this horrible pretense of grieving with her relatives, or wait for the completion of the funeral ceremony after her death. I therefore, announced my immediate departure and although I knew that the family was relieved to have me go, they did not hesitate to express their disapproval of my unconventional behaviour, in going away before the interment of my aunt had taken place.

I did not want to leave without going back to my garden for a last farewell to the place where I had known such happiness. I stood there in the dark and tried to recapture the atmosphere of my childhood, spent among the trees and the flowers. I almost hoped that I would hear again my uncle's voice, speaking to me as in the past; but the dream of my childhood was over. When my aunt died that phase of my life was closed forever. Also all the confusion which she had caused in my life had now dropped away. I knew in that moment that I was free. From that time on, however difficult life might become, I was always ready to meet each

new situation before it came upon me, by a certain foreknowledge of what was in store for me.

The Great War broke out almost as soon as I had returned to London from that trip to Ireland. My husband who was a Territorial, was immediately detailed for duty abroad. In the emotional crisis and upheaval following the prospect of war and of his departure for the front, I was very remorseful for my own inadequacy in our marriage; I willingly therefore, promised to give up my own work and attend to his household in his absence. I looked after his house, but my other work had now become increasingly important to my own life and I was unable to relinquish it.

In a few months, after his departure, I found myself again pregnant; I had no feeling this time, that the child would be a boy. A girl was born, as I expected and for several months after her birth I was dangerously ill. From that time on my lungs were never strong again. No year has since passed without many interruptions from illness.

When my daughter was three months old and I was beginning to feel a little stronger, my husband returned to England from the front, to transfer into the Flying Corps; that meant he would be in England for several weeks. I looked forward to his homecoming; the war and the sacrifices demanded from the men, made me, as a woman, feel that I had a great deal to make up to him now for the unsatisfactory nature of our marriage. I was full of good resolutions to remould myself into a satisfactory wife. On his return he was tender enough to me, but not in the least interested in our baby girl; he seemed worried and preoccupied, and was glad to be away from me whenever possible.

One day my mother-in-law came to see me in a very nervous and unhappy state; she told me that she had had a quarrel with Clive over his recent behaviour. She felt it was time that I knew that he had been on intimate terms with another woman since his return from the front. She was upset over it all and begged me to pull myself together and get well as quickly as possible so that he would have no excuse

for neglecting me. My first reaction was to be sorry for Clive, because his mother had found out about his relationship with another woman; I only wished that he had had the courage to tell me about it himself, for I would have been glad for his happiness if he had found someone for whom he could really care. Although my pride was hurt for the moment, that feeling did not last. Again, I heard a voice telling me, "You knew that this marriage would not last."

My husband's family took his infidelity more to heart than I did; I knew now that my marriage was really ended for me after all the futile attempts to free myself from it. My mind leaped ahead to a future devoted to the upbringing of my child and the making of a career of my own. A part of me had always known that I must some day create a place for myself in the world. As soon as this final freeing came, I wanted to be up and away long before my strength had returned.

The swiftness of my decision to end my marriage shocked both my mother-in-law and my husband. He could not see why his temporary unfaithfulness, while I was still ill, could be a sufficient reason for the break-up of our marriage. I told him that I took my share of responsibility for the failure of our marriage but that it was not in my power to fulfill his needs, in the terms he required; and he was annoyed at this indifference to him, and my lack of concern over his latest infidelity. I was in no mood to listen to him when he insisted that he still wanted me as a wife.

Chapter XXIV

MY CAREER DEVELOPS

AND I AGAIN EXPERIENCE "PREVISION"

THE success I had whilst assisting as a partner in my friend's restaurant, made me decide that I could start one of my own. In the two years that I ran my own place, it grew rapidly, with the patronage of the wounded soldiers from the nearby hospitals. I was much too busy to spoil my child, and had only time enough to give her proper physical care and attention; this was evidently good for her, since she gave me no trouble and grew up as a healthy and contented child. To myself, however, I still remained a problem; I had accepted the judgment of my husband and mother-in-law, who really believed that I was on the verge of insanity. They both stressed this point when I was determined to break up my marriage in order to have my freedom; both of them also suspected that behind my desire to be free, lurked a lover whom I now wanted to marry; they came to see me in my place of work on many pretexts, and in the end, my mother-in-law asked me if another man were not my real reason for wanting a divorce. They could not believe that freedom for its own sake was the whole aim of my life. That I threw myself with such intensity into work when I could still have been protected and cared for by my husband, seemed to them both further proof that I really was unbalanced; they could

not realize that I had found out for myself that hard work was the only thing which used up my tremendous energy and so for the time being, preserved my sanity.

I lived now, believing that my increased capacity to *see*, out and beyond physical sight, and *hear* beyond physical hearing, were surely signs of a disordered mind. I wondered from day to day, how long this condition would continue, or whether it would eventually lead to a more violent state. As a child in Ireland, I had seen several unbalanced people; I knew that it could be mild and harmless or that it might become suddenly violent and dangerous. I had, because of my childhood observations, a more detached and objective attitude toward madness. Without this preparation, I might indeed, have been in danger, through my very fear of an impending break-down. I did nevertheless, consider that I must be the victim of some mild form of unbalance, which might at any moment become more than I could deal with. In order to assure myself that I was not undergoing any subtle change for the worse, I would try to study the reactions of my friends to my behaviour and ask them from time to time, whether they found that my responses were very different from those of other people. They usually laughed at me, for imagining such absurdities, and so dispelled my fears. I grew, therefore, to accept myself and my state of extreme sensitivity as natural to me and I gradually learned to live with my apparent "madness."

My restaurant became so successful that if I were to continue it would need larger quarters. When it reached that stage I decided that I had had enough of that special type of activity. Everyone was then engaged in some form of war work, and I felt impelled to do something of that kind. My new plans at this point, were held up by a severe attack of rheumatic fever which the doctor attributed to over-work. When I had recovered, I leased some large premises in central London, where I set up a resting home for wounded officers. It combined the atmosphere of home and club; my hostel was started on the proceeds of my restaurant and some borrowed

capital. Many people discouraged me from launching it, declaring there was neither room nor need for such a place; this opposition only made me more determined to make the hostel a success.

To devise a scheme is, with me, to find myself already half-way towards its completion. My growing love of organised effort, and my then practical commercial sense, helped me to carry out my plans successfully. By running my place in a business-like way, I shocked many people who were at that time, swept by the sentimentality of war hysteria. I had no such emotions about war; I hated it and all its consequences. As a child, when my uncle read the Boer War news aloud, and sometimes told me stories of the horrors of the massacres in India, I could never understand the useless folly and needless cruelty of man; why should man desire to kill man. In dealing with the war results, I found a middle ground for myself, in establishing this officers' rest home where I could do something to help shattered individuals recover health and strength in order to take up life again.

Beginning with one house, my hostel grew until I could accommodate as many as fifty officers at a time; this made me very happy because it had grown up so spontaneously. Although the personal supervision of the place took a great deal of my time and energy, it still did not absorb all my forces, and in my alone times I found that my *seeing* and *sensing* were now opening into other types of perceptions. I began to see fragments of incidents and episodes connected with people whom I knew, flashing before me like blurred pictures on a dark screen. This new and unsought intrusion of vision disturbed me a great deal; especially when I began to see events taking place in the lives of my friends, before they had actually occurred to them. I saw images of people and events of whom I knew nothing; perhaps a few days or even months later, I would meet some of these same men or women whom I had seen previously in this way. Sometimes, a picture

of a fire or an explosion would flash before me and next day I might read a description in the newspaper of just that occurrence, which I had witnessed in a *vision*.

The opening of these new sensibilities disturbed my nervous and physical organism; waves of nausea often accompanied such *visions* and sometimes left me exhausted and ill as though I had spent my strength in living through the experience I had just seen. I began to observe also, that when such sensibilities were active, I felt an intense drawing upon the sex centres; this increased my anxiety and puzzlement as to the meaning and purpose of these further extensions of sensitivity. As a result of this increasing perception which at that moment seemed so useless and meaningless and utterly exhausting to my health, I felt more alone and bewildered than ever. I knew from my previous unpleasant experiences with medical men that their advice would be useless; so trying to re-establish a balance toward "normalcy" I threw myself into a whirl of social festivities and a round of gaiety in order to shut out the invasion of these unwanted perceptions. After a few months of this kind of living, I came to the conclusion that it was less of a drain on my strength to live with my own perceptions, than with people; so I gradually accepted these perceptions as an inevitable part of me and no longer tried to evade them.

Among the officers in the hostel there was one to whom I was particularly drawn and with whom I spent a good deal of time. He was sensitive, artistic in his tastes and beautiful to look at. He had not as yet, been to the front, but had contracted a fever which had invalidated him and prevented his going. I noticed, when the men spoke of their war experiences, that he shuddered and would say, "I wish you fellows wouldn't be so bloodthirsty." I felt sorry for him and when he confessed to me one day, that he dreaded going to war, I was full of pity for him. He was afraid I might tell the others how he felt; he had joined, as had so many others, because there was nothing else that he could do. As the days went by he turned toward me more and more for com-

panionship and sympathy; he said I gave him strength and courage to face the day when he would be called upon to go to the front. I was fond of him and responded to all his needs of mothering.

One day he came home very upset and told me that his regiment would be leaving in a week's time for the front. "I can't," he said, "face the going away from you, nor the horror of war, unless you marry me." I was fond of him, but not in love with him; I had such a definite sense that if he went he would never come back; it seemed, therefore, such a little thing to do to marry him, and give him this brief happiness. I did so, and gave him all the sustenance I could, by building up a fantasy of the gay and happy life which would be ours on his return from the war. When I saw him off, he had more courage over the prospect ahead of him, but I knew that he would never return. When he left, I threw myself again into the social whirl around me.

About a month later, came a day when I knew that my husband was going through hours of terrific suffering and fear. In order to relieve the strain of what I was feeling about him I gathered some friends together to go out to dine and dance. At eleven-thirty, as I went out of the crowded room, the vision of my husband dying, began to open; I seemed for the moment, to have lost my own identity, and was caught in the midst of a terrible explosion. I saw this gentle, golden haired man blown to pieces—I watched the pieces fall; I swam out on a sea of sound. When I came to myself, I was sitting in the foyer of the restaurant alone. I knew that my husband had been killed. I recovered my strength sufficiently to go back to my party; I was afraid to tell them what I had just gone through.

Two days later my husband was reported missing. A week later the official word came from the War Office that he was listed as dead. No one heard from him again. His brother officers wrote to me that he had gone out on a wire-cutting expedition and never returned. Years later, after the war was over I saw his name amongst the missing on the

Menin Gate at Ypres. I was the only one who knew the manner of his going.

For the few days which followed this *vision* experience I was sick with shock. I was rent apart by the uncertainty as to whether I was the victim of hallucination or the recipient of true experience happening at a distance. This second explanation seemed the most difficult to accept, because I had as yet, never heard of *prevision*. My Irish background made me wonder if this might not be what the country people called *second sight*. I did not dare mention the vision to anybody and waited anxiously for the next few days. When the news arrived that he was among the missing, I could no longer doubt the truth of my visioning. Fear overwhelmed me when I realized that I had something unusual in my make-up, which made it possible for events to register themselves vividly in some part of my being, whether I wished it or not. Furthermore, I began to realize that the event could be happening either close to me or at a distance, could be occurring in the present, or could have occurred in the past, or might even be about to happen in the future.

The unbearable strain of being the unwilling recipient of such events occurring either within or without our accepted clock-time standard, shattered for the time my every-day way of meeting life. In this condition I began to wonder, how I could prevent this invasion of external happenings from tearing my nervous system to pieces. At night, in bed, I began to do what I had always done in times of stress and emergency—I appealed to the Breath of the Universe to help me build up some strength which would assist me in shutting out the impact of these unwanted experiences; then as I lay in bed, I used, quite firmly, to address the chambers of my mind as I had come to know them, asking each in turn, to keep out the invasion of external impressions from my two selves.

I had come by now, to accept myself as having two separate selves to deal with. I had, in this dilemma, stumbled upon the technique of what I later learned, was called *auto-suggestion*. Gradually I noticed that as I continued this

method of appealing to my two selves, the invasion of things external diminished. If I relaxed my constant use of this process, however, impressions from without, would again rush in. This led me to continue that method of protecting myself from them each night. It became thereafter a regular nightly exercise, as inevitable as the brushing of my teeth before I got into bed. After I had found that this was so successful, I began to experiment with using it for several other purposes; I tried it out for protecting myself from pain and from illness, and for carrying through difficult adjustments in human relationships which I would otherwise have been unable to accomplish. It was only years later that I discovered that in order to meet my own needs, I had developed a complete technique of suggestion. I had shut off so completely all my participation in external *visions* that I soon began to wonder whether I had lost my power to *perceive* them; but whenever I stopped giving orders to my two minds, and allowed myself to drop back again into a passive and relaxed state, the outside impressions began again to register themselves upon me.

After the death of my second husband, everyone was very kind and sympathetic, but my friends seemed puzzled that I could now take up again the round of daily living, with such apparent ease. I could not explain to anyone what was really taking place within me; after all, I had no words to describe these experiences, even to myself, and I had become resigned to bearing them alone. Too often had the term of "madness" been applied to me in the past, when I sought outside help in dealing with these unexpected happenings. Now, my growing ability to control my two minds, made it possible for me to carry on my business and personal life with what seemed to my friends, an air of security and confidence. No one was allowed any longer, to know or share with me the difficulties or complexities of my being, which arose from this interplay of my two minds. As a result of this conscious protection of the activity of my second mind, I was accused of being hard and

indifferent. No one guessed what struggle and conflict produced this outer shell for my own defense and protection.

I began to ask myself very seriously, what was this double self which separated me from other people? Now that I had received verification and proof that my visioning was connected with actual events, I could no longer accept the implication of madness, which had previously been applied by my aunt and then by my husband to my *visionings* and *perceptions*. I knew that my mind was normal for me. I began dimly to be aware that this functioning of these *perceptions* had a meaning beyond what I could yet comprehend. My problem was now to understand the inter-relation and the working of these two minds, more clearly, so that instead of being used against my wishes by either of them, I should learn to use them consciously.

During the next year the process of dealing with myself became easier. I had an increase of *visioning* which I could now control by *allowing it to happen when I was ready* and also by *being able to shut it out at will*. This new mastery of the two minds, lessened my fatigue and nervousness and led to the return of my earlier *visioning* of both light and colour, which had seemed to be shut out during the opening of these more elaborate visual *events*. These *events* which I now witnessed, covered as they developed, a wider variety and range of subject than ever before. They were seldom connected with my personal life, but were often episodes related to past or future happenings in the lives of people I knew. Often I would hear snatches of conversation which at the time of registering them, had no meaning for me; but perhaps a few days later, to my amazement, I might find myself in a room with several people and listen again to this identical conversation which had reached my hearing from "somewhere," several days before it actually took place. Sometimes I would hear the names of people and places mentioned, which at the time sounded strange, were unknown; months later, these very names would crop up again, through some unexpected meeting with new people, who would turn out to have some

definite association with these very names and places which had been thrust into my consciousness.

During this period, another type of experience occurred to me. Within a few days of each other, two close friends wrote to me; one was living three hundred miles away, the other twenty miles from me at the time. Both enquired if all were well with me, because they had both been quite disturbed by actually becoming aware of my presence in their houses. This, they both knew must be physically impossible, but they were both troubled as to what such a vivid impression of me in their own surroundings could possibly mean. At that time I had no suggestion to offer, as to what they might have been sensing; but many years later I realized that I had probably been thinking of both of them whilst in a passive state and that one aspect of my mind had therefore, moved out and reached them. This must have been what was taking place, for later, when I learned to use the mechanics of clairvoyant perception and telepathic communication, I consciously projected this second mind to the place or person I wished to reach.

At the time of these *visionings of events*, I became conscious of an increasing pressure at the top of the nose, and between the eyes, and at the same time this pressure led to the feeling of a channel being gently opened from the centre between the eyes to the cerebellum. This process was not painful nor difficult, but if it continued long I became tired and had to shut it by moving about. As the visioning increased, I located a spot between the eyes, in the forehead, where the images began to register. These events, beginning at this point, appeared to move out, through, and beyond me, focusing themselves at a point far distant from me, so that I had almost to strain visually in order to see their detail. For want of a better description, I used to think of the process to myself, as a kind of mental magic lantern, the lens of which for reflecting pictures, was located on my forehead above the eyes.

As I struggled to find words to express to myself, the meaning of what I was going through, I came to feel that Mind was a greater phenomenon than anyone had yet seemed to realize. Whilst one tiny ribbon of it guided the mechanics of conscious thought, there must be vast realms of untapped and unfathomed sources which touched and linked all aspects of life with each other. I began then to sense the vastness of the Universal Scheme in which each individual plays such a minute part. I began to know that the human being was not nearly as important in the evolution of the Universe, as he liked to believe. He was only one channel through which the Force or Intelligence of the World worked toward its own Evolution. Man was but an incident in the larger scheme of things. I worked out a method for myself by which I could conceive of the Evolution of the Universe. It seemed probable to me that *individuals had no comprehensive minds of their own, but had brains which were delicate mechanisms, which simply permitted them to participate, according to the degree of their capacity, in this evolution.*

Chapter XXV

HOW I HAPPEN TO RE-MARRY—

I EXPLORE THE ENGLISH AND IRISH LABOUR MOVEMENTS

FINALLY one of the spells of serious illness made it impossible for me to carry on with my officers' hostel any longer. I had been working two years without rest, and my health had given way. I developed a quinsy throat, with scarlet fever and then rheumatic fever in quick succession. Since I had no partner in the business, I decided to give it up and take time for rest and recuperation. After a few months I came back to London able to face things again, but without my previous exuberant energy. I had then no active work in hand; such moments are always dangerous for me; they leave me open and liable to be drawn into the needs of those around me. This time I heard that one of my old friends was lying wounded in a hospital, not far from town. I was told that he was in a very bad state and that a visit from me would surely cheer him up. I went to see him and found him most depressed; his fiancée had broken her engagement to him and he had just heard from the doctors that the amputation of one leg was necessary.

I went to see him a number of times, doing all I could to cheer him up; I knew not only that it would be possible for

me to help him get well, but that the amputation of the leg was unnecessary. He came to depend on my presence and help and he began to feel that he needed me. He soon asked me to marry him. I was fond of him but never thought for a moment that I was in love. I had grown accustomed as had so many at that time to feeling that the long war years made everything one did, of but a temporary measure. I did not enter into this marriage with any thought of its being permanent.

Within a month the Armistice was declared. My husband expected me to settle down to a quiet, well-ordered life with him. He was very surprised when I refused to accept as final the comfortable way of living which he could offer me, for I had again the strong urge to get back into business.

I knew that when the soldiers returned there would be many pressing social changes to be dealt with and that the Labour Party would surely come into prominence in that connection. I had already been for some time, a member of the Fabian Society, and my sympathies had long been with the cause of Labour. I wanted to get an active contact with the workers and their leaders; I therefore, took over a Labour hostel which had already been started. Here I felt that I could observe and know all types, that made up the Labour movement. Through this I felt I could get an understanding of the fundamentals of organized labour and also earn my living by working with an active and interesting group of people. I saw a great number of fine, intelligent men, devote every moment of their lives to the cause of the worker, but when elected to Parliament, their ambition realized, they would lose all their eloquence and fire. I noted, with a sinking heart, how responsibility and new environment changed independent and courageous Labour leaders into cautious and conservative politicians. Feeling disappointed with this experience, I recalled the fire and enthusiasm of the Irish Political Leaders of my childhood, and wondered whether the lack of fire in the English Labour movement made it seem unreal to me.

So again I went over to Ireland, only to discover that there was little of the old imagination then at work in their leaders. It was at a time when they were bitter, sullen and resentful toward England. There were then no leaders of the calibre of Redmond, O'Brien or Dillon, to lift them out of their despondency. As a good Irishwoman, I could weep tears over the suffering of Ireland, but I was not in actual sympathy with the nationalistic policy of that period. I did feel, however, that the true spirit of the Ireland I knew as a youngster, was still kept alive by the literary and artistic groups, born and stimulated by the vivid and living faith of the beloved AE, Yeats and Lady Gregory.

I returned to London, knowing that I would never make a good politician. As soon as I came close to the famous and important leaders in any field, I became aware of their human limitations and was disappointed at the over-importance man placed on himself, and the under-importance he placed on the ideals of the movement, of which he was a part. I became convinced that I would always set my values in the reverse order. I never lost my sense that the ideal of any movement must continue to be far greater than the individuals who help to sustain or support it. I believe that at the heart of every man is this belief in some ideal, but the conditions of every day living, often blur this vision. Men find it too difficult to remember and make sacrifice for it; however, there are the few who remember and keep faith.

Part Four

FINDING MYSELF—

THE DEVELOPMENT OF MY PSYCHIC
POWERS AND THE GROWTH OF MY
MEDIUMSHIP

Chapter XXVI

EDWARD CARPENTER AND HIS EFFECT ON MY LIFE

DURING the time I was in this post-Armistice Labour hostel I still continued to have my experiences in *visioning* and *sensing*. But I was fortunate now in having found one person to whom I could speak of these matters. This was Edward Carpenter, who was then a man of almost seventy. I was deeply stirred before I had met him, in reading his social and political writings. We first became friends on the basis of our mutual sympathies for Labour and his deep, spiritual love of his garden and all growing things, drew me to him; in the early days of our acquaintance he spoke of his love of trees and that he was careful never to offend the spirit of growth in nature. I knew then that he too had the power to understand and merge with the force of living things. This made it easy for me to speak with him of what I *sensed* and *saw*; he did not misunderstand, but seemed tremendously interested, and explained to me that I was born to what he called a state of *Cosmic Consciousness*, and that many people sought in vain to achieve such a condition and failed. He told me of the lives of those personally known to him who had achieved this state of "miraculous living," as he called it. He took me back, step by step, through my early childhood experiences, and made me describe them to him in the order in which they opened and came to me. He explained, very gently, that these were not the ordinary childhood mem-

ories and experiences. My very way of describing them to him made him say that these experiences were not subjective imaginings, but external and objective impressions that came to me from without. He proceeded to show me the surprisingly logical way in which my perceptions had opened, and was full of regrets that I had not been brought up by someone who understood that my *visionings* were *Cosmic* realizations, and who might therefore, have encouraged me to follow, instead of suppress them.

He said that my inability to hear music correctly, or to even touch an instrument was due to the misunderstanding, misuse and repression of my *Cosmic* hearing, when it had begun to open. He was the only person who understood what I meant, when I told him that the spectrum was not sufficient to express the range of the colours that I saw; he assured me that I had such a sound knowledge of colour, that I might have expressed it in unusual painting and design. With these powers of *perception* he urged me to take up one of the arts; he felt that in some form of artistic self-expression, I would find an adequate channel for the application of my *vision* and understanding.

Also in order to understand my own nature more clearly and so that I might trace the steps by which man's lower nature became spiritualised, he advised me to read certain books on the psychology and physiology of sex. Only after I had read them, did I understand how profound was his purpose. He then explained that he wanted me to become aware that all who possessed these special sensitivities, blended in their natures the qualities of both the masculine and the feminine; in this way, he led me to understand that the variations in sexual types, such as the bisexual and homosexual, were not to be despised. He interpreted them as nature's steps to an ultimate and higher form of mankind. He had a deeply religious nature, I thought, and regarded Art and Beauty as the supreme expression of God.

He introduced me to the spiritual and religious movements of the day and singled out those leaders who seemed

to be the recipients of *Cosmic Law*. I heard through him of many religious movements previously unknown to me and amongst them was the Theosophical Society. He told me about the breaking away of the then-active Steiner group; he told me that Madame Blavatsky and Rudolph Steiner had both originally started their work on the basis of well-known spiritual truths. With a mischievous twinkle, he announced that when religion in such movements had lost its truth and simplicity, it was made to appear complex, in order to appeal to the pseudo-elite; with a kind of impish glee, he added, "The Theosophists tried to catch me, but I have my own God. And so have you." He advised me to read their publications, but not to get pulled in to anybody's organization; he stressed the necessity of not cluttering up my thinking with second-hand experiences, the reports of others, but to continue to remain true to myself. I went to Theosophical meetings, and read the literature of that society; I came away convinced that however satisfactory this might be for some people, it had no life or meaning for me; it seemed a laboured effort to superimpose a covering upon traditional religious forms; if one were looking for form and ritual, I felt that there still remained the beauty and mysticism of the Roman Catholic Church. But I was no longer in search of any kind of ritual for myself, so I turned away from all these movements.

I told Edward Carpenter of my negative reactions to the Theosophical teachings and to all the others of which he had spoken. He laughed, and seemed pleased, saying, "Your own judgment will take care of you. Now that you are growing up and beginning to think for yourself, I am able to introduce you to the true source from which these movements draw their so-called 'inspiration.' First I would have you read Emerson, and know him well. Then, digest the 'Leaves of Grass,' written by a well-beloved friend of mine, whose name is Walt Whitman. Fraser's 'Golden Bough' will give you something later on, and one day, get to know Spinoza, and when you know him, disregard the lesser prophets. When you

have absorbed these great ones, take time to read the Oriental Scriptures, especially the Upanishads and the Mahabharata, and then return again to your Bible and read it afresh with new understanding. After you have read and digested all of these writings, you will begin to understand the folly of modern man's attempt to create a new religion."

He told me of his discovery of Walt Whitman and how thrilled he had been when he first came across his writing. He had a profound love, amounting almost to worship for Whitman's vision; nevertheless, he saw the limitations of the man and his poetry. He told me much of Whitman's life, of the man's simplicity and inner decency; he regretted that, as yet, the world appreciated him so little, and that in consequence, Whitman had in his loneliness, become arrogant and self assertive in his own defense. He would always say laughingly, "Whitman is not respectable *yet*, but he will be some day."

In the two years of my close friendship with Edward Carpenter, I might say that I had the most profound spiritual experience of my life; one which gave me a sense of being re-born and set free. He had liberated me from the burdens of my past life; I no longer carried an abiding sense of sin and secret despair about my childhood or my parents, or the failure of my first marriage. He truly made me understand that my *sensing* and *visioning* were not the products of an unbalanced mind, but the positive powers of knowing and understanding, beyond the range of ordinary comprehension. For the first time in my life, I realized that my perceptions of this world of light and colour and movement, were not the hallucinations of a disordered mind, but the true seeing and sensing of what Carpenter called *Cosmic Consciousness*.

Whatever I have said of Edward Carpenter seems inadequate to express my profound debt to one of the greatest spirits of the modern world.

Chapter XXVII

HOW MY DAUGHTER RECOVERS FROM A SERIOUS ILLNESS

MY daughter was laid up with a series of illnesses that followed each other in close succession. Beginning with measles, she then developed whooping cough and later pneumonia. Although she had never been a particularly energetic child, this was her first serious illness. She suffered very much and I was extremely worried over her condition. One day I overheard the doctor telling my husband and the nurse that he could do no more for the child and that the crisis would probably occur at about two o'clock that morning; but at whatever time it might happen he was to be called, as I would probably collapse if the child did not pull through. I burned with resentment against him and the whole household, and made up my mind that I would not give up my fight for my child's chance to live. I sent the nurse away and decided, within myself, that the child must get better. Then came one of the strangest and most unexplained circumstances of my whole life. I had taken the little one out of her bed; she gasped for breath; I was helpless but could not bear to sit in agony and watch her fighting alone, for breath. In desperation I held her close to me, as though to give her of my own strength; there seemed nothing else that I could do.

Suddenly I heard a voice saying to me, "Be careful! She

must have more air. Open the windows and allow a new current of air in the room." I did not dare to look or question from whence came that command; I just opened the windows. I remember watching the curtains flutter, and wondering if there were too much breeze. A moment later I saw the outline of a figure leaning against the bed, a short, lithe man; his face was turned away from me. I was too petrified to look very closely at him. Although my limbs were trembling, I knew I must approach the bed, and put the child back on it. As I laid her down, I was aware of this man, in grey garments, standing beside me, with a sympathetic and kindly smile. His presence reassured me; fear left me and I knew he had come to help me save the child. I must have been sitting beside the bed when he left, but I did not see him go. I do not remember how long I remained in that position. The next thing I recall was a resounding noise in my ears, which turned out to be someone knocking at the door. I went to the door and unlocked it, to find my worried household standing there, fearing the child had died. I returned to my daughter, who was now sleeping quietly in her bed, and I knew, for certain, that she would recover. In the next day I collapsed from the strain of those last few days and again I was ill for many months. At that time the dread asthma, from which I have suffered ever since, developed. Meanwhile my daughter grew well and she is now a healthy girl of twenty-two. The memory of the mysterious stranger who saved my child's life remains to this day vivid, but unexplained.

After the miracle of the healing of my daughter by the mysterious visitor, I began to recall the other two objective *visions* of my childhood. I remembered the *vision* of my uncle coming to me, after his death, and the promise that he made to me, that I would within two years, leave Ireland to go to London. This prophecy had come true, although I had almost forgotten the entire experience until that moment. Then I recalled my first *vision*; that of my Aunt Leon holding her tiny baby; this experience had happened before she had actually died. I now realised, with astonishment, that without having

overheard in my home that she was to have a child, I understood in the *vision* that the child was the cause of her death. My third and most recent *vision*, was that of the stranger who had actually saved my daughter's life. I could no longer tell myself that these *visions* were not true. All three had been followed by objective evidence which proved their rightness.

Edward Carpenter had been reluctant to give me a clue to these *visions*, although I felt that he understood the nature of them. The time had come now, when I felt impelled to find some explanation of these phenomena.

Chapter XXVIII

MY FIRST EXPERIENCES IN SPIRITUALISM AND THE BEGINNING OF TRANCE

AT this time, among the many people who stayed at my hostel, was one man who threw some light on the nature of my *visions*. When I first spoke with him, I must admit that I misjudged his true comprehension of this subject. One day he stopped to speak to me and surprised me by telling me that he recognised my "latent mediumistic powers," and then proceeded to explain that he himself, was clairvoyant and that he could *see* that I had extraordinary powers, covering the entire range of mediumistic phenomena; and that these included healing, psychometry, clairvoyance and clair-audience. I was naturally excited by such a statement and asked him to explain to me the meaning of some of these words which I heard, used by him, for the first time in my life. He then gave me a simple explanation of what the spiritualist believes, about the capacity of individuals to communicate after death with the living. In order to illustrate what he meant, he told me that he was able to speak with his dead daughter; I was skeptical and asked him to show me how he did this. I then heard him address his daughter as though she were in the room; I looked about to discover her but was unable to see her. I looked at him then with pity and sympathy, quite sure that the poor man was quite

unbalanced and simply imagining that his daughter were there. At that moment I was quite unconscious of the fact that I was treating him in exactly the way that others had dealt with me, in the past, when I spoke of my own *visions*.

I might have dismissed the whole episode then as useless and unimportant, if he had not handed me his watch at that moment and said, "Tell me what you sense about this." I took it in my hand and so as not to disappoint him, I began giving him what seemed to come to me as incidents about his son's life. He said that what I told him about this son, whom I had never met, was true, and that this was proof that I had the power to *psychometrize*. I was startled, but interested in the whole procedure, and I questioned him closely about the nature and use of this psychometric and other powers.

When he elaborated his belief in the relation of the dead to the living with much emotion, I was disturbed by his implicit faith. He spoke of his daughter as though all the thoughts, the aims and tastes which had motivated her when she was living, were still the foundation of her new existence in some other locality. Although I knew something of the changing state of death, I was shocked that death was interpreted as a change of place, but not of consciousness, for personal and trivial ideas. From the little that I had yet been able to observe personally, of the change that did occur to living organisms at the time of death, I was certain that some definite transformation took place, which led to a new and vital state of being; just what this condition might be, I could not say. But after I had watched this intense and dynamic movement of separation taking place so often in organic and human life at the moment of death, I knew that any reactions which might occur in the state beyond death, could not possibly be the same as those which happened on the plane of the living in this world. And yet some such explanation as this man gave me of his daughter's changed state seemed the only possible one which could give any meaning to my own *vision* of the dead. I was, therefore, not unwilling to investigate the problem more deeply, and he suggested that I go with

him to the headquarters of one of the London spiritualist societies.

He first took me to a meeting in which a clairvoyant was giving messages to the audience from dead relatives and friends. I took it very seriously and went in trembling with anticipation; recalling the experiences of my own *visions* of the dead, I expected a profound and terrifying revelation. The room was very still, the audience waited, and then the clairvoyant began, "For the lady at the end of the room, with a big black hat, there is an old man with a grey beard and blue eyes. Could he be your father?" "Yes," said a voice in the back row. "Could his name be John? I see a large 'J'—or it might be James," and the lady in the back row responded helpfully, "You are right. It is James." "He says you are worried about conditions that are changing for the better at the end of the month. Would you recognise that?" The lady answers, "Yes. It fits exactly." As this conversation took place, I looked for the apparition of the father, but could see no sign of him.

The clairvoyant next asked for 'Alice,' in the audience; two or three women answered to that name; she settled on a restless looking girl in the front row as the appropriate one and said, "Your mother is calling for you. She is here." The girl breathlessly asked for news. "Your mother says she is happy and wouldn't come back for worlds," offers the clairvoyant, "but, Alice, you must carry on and take care of father and the household." Alice accepted this gratefully but I was so sorry for her, and thought how banal and meagre was her message. So it went on for an hour; communications from the new abode of the dead and advice about the routine existence of the living, poured forth from the lips of the clairvoyant; but I failed to see a single phantom in the room.

It is only fair to say that my few *visions* of the dead, up to that time, had come upon me by chance and were never as yet, produced by means of a conscious knowledge of how to be clairvoyant; this power only developed for me years later; after I had been using trance mediumship for some time;

so I was in no position as yet, to pass judgment on the performance of this clairvoyant.

As soon as the meeting was over a waitress served tea to the audience. There was a buzz of conversation and I overheard one grey-haired woman telling another that she was not coming again because she never got a message and her friend replied, "Oh, but my message was good. I knew Eric was there, because he described the fob with his initials on it that his father gave him before he went to the war." I heard 'Alice' compliment the clairvoyant for the wonderful evidence she had given her. I waited to hear no more, but persuaded my friend to leave the meeting with me. Once outside I told him how shocked I had been by this performance. Was it possible, I wondered, that all I had come to understand about the liberation and cleansing that followed death could be reduced to such a level of banality.

Nevertheless I went back the next day, and took out a membership in this society. There were two things that I did not understand and to which I was seeking some solution. I wanted to find out the way in which the clairvoyant functioned and I wanted to discover whether she also saw her *visions* of the dead, objectively, as I did. One other matter I wanted to understand also and this was the nature of *psychometry* and why or how I had been able to psychometrize my friend's watch. I began now to go to every kind of meeting which this society held; this included lectures and demonstrations in *clairvoyance* and *psychometry*. I still remained baffled, because I could find no clue to the way in which these experiences occurred. The people in the society were extremely kind; they encouraged me to read a great deal and told me about their own psychic adventures. They advised me that if I wanted further enlightenment on the subject, I should join a group for the development of my own psychic power. When I asked the secretary for some explanation of the way in which this power of *psychometry* worked, I could get no clarifying answer which satisfied me. She suggested that since I had obviously some mediumistic power, she would

introduce me to some other members of the society who were forming their own circle for psychic development, and this might help me to discover more about my own psychic powers.

I met the new circle, composed of half a dozen women, who gathered together once a week in a dark room at the society's headquarters. The meeting opened with the Lord's Prayer; I was then requested to place the tips of my fingers on the surface of a table with those of the other women. Each time that I was present they claimed that the table moved more rapidly and spelled out more swiftly, tapping out messages "from the dead" using the accent of the table leg on the floor.

I was intrigued by these experiments and tried them out at home with my husband and our friends. We had excellent results and received some unexpected communications. I recall one episode in which a cousin of my husband, who was sitting with us, asked the alleged communicating intelligence, to inform him of the exact address of the place where he was born. He did not know himself at that time, and only verified the truth of what was told him later. This type of objective verification impressed me enough to make me continue my investigations.

The third time that I sat in the circle with the group of women, something unexpected happened. I found myself growing drowsy and before I knew it I was sound asleep. When I came to I was being roused and shaken by the other women who seemed frightened and upset. I found myself in a somewhat nauseated and giddy condition with an effect of lights playing before my eyes. I heard them say that in my sleep I had given evidence of their dead ones being present, entities who spoke to them all. I was thoroughly frightened at what had occurred and I hurried home to tell my husband; he was indignant and said, "This is awful. You must not go to that society any more." For the moment I had a sense of relief that his decision had put an end to these experiments.

When the secretary of the society heard of what had taken place at this last session of the developing circle, she was

worried and told the group they must not continue any longer. She said that no one present knew enough of psychic development to handle what was happening to me. She then advised me to consult a friend of hers, who had a profound knowledge of psychic matters. And that was how I happened to meet a Swiss, whose name was Huhnli.

Chapter XXIX

MY CONTROL "UVANI" FIRST APPEARS

I WENT one day, in trepidation, to see Mr. Huhnli by appointment, at his modest rooms in Lambeth; I was relieved to find him a gentle and simple person. He asked me what had been happening to me and said that he had received a letter from the secretary of the spiritualist society telling him something of my problem. I told him of my experience and he listened sympathetically, suggesting that I sit down quietly in a chair and relax. I did so and felt myself becoming sleepy again; he told me not to worry about it, and again I lost consciousness. When I awakened, he said, "I want to talk to you of what has been happening while you were asleep. You are potentially a *trance medium* of great power." I had not heard these terms before and asked him to tell me what *trance* really was. He explained that it was a condition dependent on an extreme passivity of mind and that it could either be of a light or profound nature. In this deeply entranced state, the individual lost control over his own consciousness, in what appeared to be a sleep-like state; but at this time, some external "spirit" intelligence might enter in and take control of the organism, and he added, "This is what has happened in your case. I spoke with the controlling entity who used your mechanism whilst you were apparently asleep. He is a man of unusual intelligence, who declares that he is

an Oriental; he wishes to do serious work to prove the validity of the theory of survival. He gives the name of *Uvani*."

Mr. Huhnli's words bewildered and frightened me. I left as quickly as I could, and when I found myself again in the street, I was sure that none of this experience had really occurred to me. I jumped into a taxi, rushed home to my husband and told him the whole story. He was most annoyed that I had seen fit to go and visit this stranger, and then in angry tones he assured me that if such things had taken place, I was not merely on the brink of insanity, but had already lost my reason. I began to think he was right, and for the first time in my life I knew the meaning of fear. For weeks I never slept without a light burning in my room, and wondered all the time if this unknown, *Uvani*, saw and heard everything that I did in my daily life. I also wondered if this Oriental might not be a figment of my imagination; I could hardly believe that I had "made him up," as I had no particular interest in Orientals. I endured this state of conflict as long as I could alone, then in desperation, I went back to see Mr. Huhnli again.

When I returned to Mr. Huhnli, I explained to him that what troubled me, was the possibility that if this personality, the *control*, *Uvani*, really existed in such close relation to me, that he could certainly spy on my most intimate and private behaviour. He assured me that the *control* personality would not be interested in such matters, and had succeeded in reaching me for some profound purpose. I was somewhat relieved when Mr. Huhnli said, "Your *control* may not approach you unless you prepare the way for him by going into an entranced state." I replied, "I must have it in my power, then, to avoid trance, and so dispense with him."

He doubted whether this was possible and he feared that if I did so, I might harm my health; for the *control* personality, he explained, had already established himself through me and had made his purpose clear, having stated that he came to try to prove the truth of survival after death. I doubted the whole thing, but the sincerity and honesty of Mr. Huhnli

made me trust him, and believe what he said about these mysterious areas of my being, which I did not understand, and over which I had no control.

Mr. Huhnli then suggested that he could help me to deal with both myself and the *control*, if I would continue to allow him to speak with this *Uvani* whilst I was in a trance; and that he could thus help to direct and train him. I followed Mr. Huhnli's suggestions as far as I could and gradually came to accept his point of view, that I had the makings of a mental medium.

In order to continue my work with Mr. Huhnli, I had to go against the wishes of my husband, who was already hurt that I had ignored his advice against playing with my psychic powers. This development of trance, convinced him that I was now in a dangerous and unbalanced condition and should be examined immediately by a psychiatrist. This time I refused to go; he and his friends were so disturbed by my state, that they spoke of having me placed under observation. I had been wanting to give up my hostel for some time, and this marital disagreement coming close upon the illness of my child, and my increasing ill-health, made me decide to dispose of it at this time.

Having closed the hostel, and sent my daughter away to school, I was free to be alone again; for my husband had gone abroad. The continued strain of all that had taken place laid me low again. A serious hemorrhage kept me in bed for some weeks and I had ample time to reconsider all that had been happening to me since I had first entered the spiritualist society, and had begun to develop trance mediumship, with the help of Mr. Huhnli. In reviewing the activity of the past few months, I could scarcely believe that all these strange occurrences had taken place. It all seemed unreal and fantastic, and I was appalled to think that I had allowed myself to be drawn into behaving in such an hysterical manner. I began to realize that the validity of the existence of the *control* depended on the word of a single individual, Mr. Huhnli, and that perhaps he could have been mistaken in his interpretation

of my condition; then too, I refused to accept the idea that any other intelligence than my own, should work through my physical make-up. By the time that I had recovered my health I had fully determined to close off my trance powers forever, and I rejected the idea that a *control* personality could have any genuine existence. For several months I maintained this attitude and I kept clear of all spiritualist meetings.

Out of my illness and enforced rest came one very deep and important discovery about myself. I had time to review my entire life and link up certain experiences which had so far remained unexplained. I saw for the first time, that the trance state might be part of a psychological pattern which had its inception in my early childhood. I began to understand how the pain and suffering of these early days had made me withdraw from the world of people into the world of light and colour and movement. I could now recall that the first time I had been successful in *escaping* the pain of the punishment inflicted on me by my aunt, was when I so separated myself that I could see her lips moving as she scolded me, but not a word penetrated my ears. I now remembered also, that when the physical punishment became almost unbearable, rather than cry out, I learned to draw inside myself and would fall promptly to sleep, thereby banishing the painful after-effects of a beating. I carried this process to such a fine point of development, that I would later experiment at school by drawing physical punishment upon myself from the teacher, so as to discover how completely I had learned to escape the consequences of pain.

I also recalled the many episodes of amnesia which had taken place during the early and unsatisfactory years of my first marriage, and during the tragic episodes of my sons' deaths. I understood now more clearly, that these periods of so-called amnesia were also forms of escape from the too-painful conditions of living. This new perspective on the technique of escape which I had developed and continued to use all my life, for avoiding both pain and suffering, may well have prepared the way for the later development of this trance state, which was now upon me.

Chapter XXX

HEWAT MCKENZIE AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF MY MENTAL MEDIUMSHIP

I HAD made up my mind to forget the experiences which I had gone through with the spiritualist society and go to some other surroundings, perhaps Australia, in search of a release from old patterns, and also of a practical way to earn my living. But a stronger destiny was at work. On my way to the ticket office for an actual departure to Australia, I met a friend who offered me a very good position in London. At that moment, I happened to be in Southampton Row, only a few steps away from the headquarters of the spiritualist society; I had an impulse to call on the secretary and this call changed the course of my life. She seemed most pleased to see me, and expressed her regret that I had given up working with Mr. Huhnli; but she strongly stressed the importance of my continuing with my psychic development. In fact, she said that recently, while sitting with the trance medium, Mrs. Osborne Leonard, she had been told by the *control*, *Feda*, that she would meet me and be instrumental in helping me to continue my trance work. At first I resisted the idea, but her genuine sincerity and interest made me promise to meet a friend of hers who knew a great deal about the subject.

In this way I met Mrs. Kelway Bamber. She told me that she had been informed by the *control* of Mrs. Osborne Leonard that she would meet me and aid me in my development. She was a capable woman, with a strong personality and had lived in India for many years. She was herself very mediumistic and had received a series of letters psychically, from her dead son, Claude. These had been published. I was impressed by Mrs. Kelway Bamber; although she was mediumistic, she was a woman of fine and keen intelligence. She was sympathetic in helping me in the development of my trance; and when she heard that my *control* personality was an Oriental, she felt that she could help to develop the capacities of this Eastern *control* because she herself had a deep understanding and sympathy with the East and its philosophy. Through her I soon met most of the leaders of the spiritualistic movement in London, and she arranged that I have experimental sittings with all of them.

I went into trance and apparently the *control*, *Uvani* "came through" and spoke with them. From all reports, these early attempts contained satisfactory proof that he would be able to deal with the giving of evidence concerning "survival after death." This I soon realised, was the only subject that interested the spiritualists. Among the prominent ones I met at this time, was Mrs. Hewat McKenzie, who with her husband, had founded and organized the British College of Psychic Science. I was immediately impressed by her intelligence and honesty and also by her cautious approach to spiritualism, even though she believed profoundly in its truth. I was pleased, therefore, when she suggested that she would like me to meet her husband, who was reputed to be a great authority on psychic phenomena. Consequently, a few days later, I met Hewat McKenzie.

He had a most remarkable personality and his humorous outlook and generous welcome, made me want to know him better. I dined with him and realised that he had a greater knowledge and understanding of psychic phenomena, than anyone I had yet met. I was glad therefore, to give him an

experimental sitting, so that he might judge of the nature and quality of my *control* personality, *Uvani*. After this sitting, he told me that I had potentialities as a trance medium, provided that my powers were properly trained. He said that I had given him in this first experiment, little evidence of "survival," but that this was no proof that I could not later produce it. He also stated that I had great psychic power and that at this point I needed no training in order to use it. But he stressed that in trance-mediumship, the most important thing was the adequate training and development of the *control*. He was the first and only person in the entire period of my psychic development who seemed to realise that the quality and spiritual level of communications expressed in the trance state, were dependent on the degree of mental and spiritual development of the *control*.

Hewat McKenzie was the only one of the leaders of the spiritualist movement who refused to take any pronouncement of a *control* personality as inevitably the word of some "Higher Power." He explained to me, that in his estimation, the possibilities of trance mediumship had been wasted and allowed to deteriorate, so that they now, mainly functioned on emotional and sentimental levels. This was due to the fact that when the *controls* first appeared after a potential medium became entranced, no one regarded them as *limited personalities who might themselves need help and training, in order to understand the highest use of their own position and functioning*. He explained to me that a *control* personality is only an interpreter of what reaches him from other states of consciousness, and therefore, he (the control personality) had to be taught how to make the purest use of his powers and to transmit only from the highest levels of truth.

This attitude of Hewat McKenzie impressed me greatly and threw a new light on the possibilities of mediumship. I felt that with his assistance, I might get a true understanding of my "psychic powers" and some clarification of my early objective *visions*. I had come to value and trust the integrity of understanding, which both he and his wife possessed. For

the first time I was able to trust the judgment of somebody else and under the joint direction of Mr. and Mrs. McKenzie, I decided to become a trance medium at the British College of Psychic Science.

Hewat McKenzie's lofty conception of mediumship was something which I had never before met. He considered that the most profound philosophy of the early teachers and the inspiration of all great Scriptures, had been received throughout the ages by the channel of mediumship. He emphasized the responsibility which possessing this power placed upon me, and declared that I must therefore, exercise care and control over my habits of daily living. He emphasized the necessity of leading a quiet and harmonious life, free from the excesses of alcohol, sex and elaborate food. My whole responsibility to myself and my mediumship lay in living this simple and controlled existence.

He pointed out that under tuition, the *control* personality could be trained to take good care of the other aspects of my mind. The strength of Hewat McKenzie's training of my mediumship, lay in his profound understanding of the nature of the subconscious mind. He regarded the subconscious as containing the entire mind of man; its form, he said, was that of a vacuum which drew everything to it, and all memories were contained therein whether we were aware of this fact or not. Contrary to the general view expressed at that time, he regarded the conscious mind as merely a surface and incomplete expression on one level, of what was taking place in the profound subconscious; to Hewat McKenzie the nature of man and of his subconscious were one.

Because he believed that the subconscious absorbed everything in its environment, whether good or bad, he set up certain rules for the protection of my subconscious self, while he trained my mediumship. First he explained the danger of blurring or interfering with my own clear functioning, if I sat for experiment with other mediums; he said that this was equally true if I sat with development groups or opened up any other aspects of mediumship than trance, at this time.

In order to keep my subconscious free from other people's ideas and influence, he insisted that I avoid all reading on psychic and occult subjects. He gave special attention to the methods by which the control must give his evidence, asking him to bring through types of information that might be as far removed as possible from the conscious knowledge of the investigator. He regarded suggestion and hypnosis as valuable aids in the development of trance mediumship, believing that both could help to produce a deeper separation between the two minds, conscious and subconscious, and thereby create a condition in which the subconscious functioning would be freed from the influence of external conditions. The *control* would then have a clearer channel through which to work. (He also hoped that by means of suggestion, he could give me relief from the asthma from which I now suffered continuously.)

Before I met Hewat McKenzie, some aspects of my own physical mediumship had begun to manifest themselves. Knocking occurred when I was present and small objects moved, as though invisible hands touched them. When I consulted Mr. McKenzie as to how to deal with this matter, he advised me strongly to discourage it and helped me to control it by giving suggestion to me in the waking state, and by asking the *control* when I was in trance, to absorb this energy into the trance activity.

I continued working for the next five years under the care and direction of Mr. and Mrs. McKenzie. I sat once a week during this period with Mr. McKenzie for the further development of the *control*, and the direction of my trance mediumship, into other phases, not related to the type of communication which proved "survival." As long as we worked together, he limited my professional work at the College to not more than one or two appointments a day. In the years which followed, I built up a reputation as a trance medium, and following Mr. McKenzie's advice, I shut out all other aspects of development and activity. His insistence that I concentrate on this single form of psychic development, led to an intensification of the trance power. From the records which

were made at the time, it would seem that my trance utterances, dealt with evidence of "survival," precognition and clairvoyant perceptions in trance.

During the years of the development of this work, whilst I allowed Mr. McKenzie to train the *control* personality, I never fully accepted the reality of the control's existence for myself. Often, in conflict, I went to Mr. McKenzie and told him of my doubts about my *control*, *Uvani* and of my suspicion that he might not be a separate personality, but only a split-off of my own subconscious mind. Both Mr. and Mrs. McKenzie felt indignant at this suggestion, and told me that I was in no position to judge of the validity of the *control's* existence—which was true. My doubts made me often refer to the *Uvani* personality jokingly as the "Old Bird;" this shocked and hurt Mr. McKenzie who had taken the whole development of my mediumship very seriously.

As I continued to work at the British College, I began to observe more closely the reactions of the different types of people who came to be known as my *sitters*. For those who have no knowledge of this subject, a session with a medium is called a *sitting* and those who come to work with a medium are known as *sitters*. I often asked myself what these people came for and how they made use of the advice and information they received.

I was not long left in doubt. There were a few who came because they were drawn by an earnest desire to *communicate* with someone who had died. But at the risk of drawing angry criticism on my head, I must say that many of the people who consult mediums use these sittings as an opiate or aphrodisiac and not as an aid to more responsible living. I base this judgment on the typical comments made to me by the majority of *sitters* when I came out of trance. Although I usually produced results for them, there were times when a *sitter* did not get the evidence he sought; at such moments, when I awoke from trance, I was indignantly questioned and asked whether I was ever able to give any satisfactory results.

This shocked me for several reasons. If these people

believed that I was truly in deep trance, and that the *control* personality was transmitting knowledge from another level of consciousness, how then could I be held responsible for either the *quantity* or the *quality* of the evidence which might be given to them? Furthermore, I wondered why they should, at any time, accept so eagerly and unquestionably any of the *positive* statements which were made to them while I was entranced and then complain so bitterly about any *negative* results. It seemed incomprehensible to me that whatever the products of trance communication, no one ever raised any question as to the principle by which the technique of mediumship was able to function. I came to the conclusion that the chief reason people desired to use my trance was for entirely personal enquiry concerning messages of consolation and encouragement. How rare amongst the thousands of *sitters* who have come to me in the past fifteen years, were those who ever sought to investigate objectively the nature and principle of communication and mediumship.

I began to feel the futility of continuing work on this level. It had none of the basis of fine understanding that Hewat McKenzie trained me to expect in objective investigation. Even though I had seemed up to that time, to accept the spiritualists' point of view about *controls* and *communication* in my work, a part of me, had nevertheless, never believed in the reality of my own *control*, *Uvani*, nor that these *communications* which he transmitted were necessarily from the alleged dead. It was not that I questioned the validity of the messages; I was in no position to do so; but the source from which they came, I felt, might have been that of my own subconscious mind, or that of the investigator. I knew that, had I continued questioning in this fashion, I would be incapable of doing the work expected of me, and that I would also be shutting myself off from further objective investigation and information. I went on therefore, with my work as a trance medium at the British College of Psychic Science until Hewat McKenzie died.

Hewat McKenzie's death removed the only person whose lofty attitude towards psychic matters had made possible the serious development of my trance mediumship. This sustained me up to that time, and through the years which followed. Whatever integrity and seriousness I have been able to achieve in my attitude towards using my supernormal sensitivities, I feel I owe to the untiring patience and faith of this unflinching and courageous man.

Chapter XXXI

MANIFESTATIONS OF PHYSICAL MEDIUMSHIP AND EXPERIMENTS WITH POLTERGEIST PHENOMENA

HEWAT McKenzie had always insisted that if my trance mediumship were to serve its purpose, I must be willing to keep out all aspects of physical mediumship when such appeared. I had accepted his point of view on this matter, and had therefore refused to encourage any of the manifestations of physical mediumship. In my last years at the British College, I showed signs of developing physical mediumship. But as this force suddenly grew strong in me, I became curious to investigate for myself whether it had any real use or purpose.

Because I knew that Hewat McKenzie would not approve of my opening myself consciously to this power, I consulted some other leaders in the movement about it. A group of us then sat experimentally together each week, for observation. Before long my co-workers observed that I was beginning to produce a misty, translucent stuff, related to *ectoplasm*. In this substance, they noticed the formation of a series of faces which they felt represented as many as twenty people whom they had known in this life. It is possible that further experiment along these lines might have produced interesting results, but I began to have an attack of conscience and hesitated to

allow such physical phenomena to develop further, contrary to the advice of my friend, Hewat McKenzie.

I therefore went directly to him and told him just what had been taking place in our experimental *sittings*. He talked most seriously to me and explained exactly why he had advised me against allowing such outbreaks of physical mediumship to develop; they would, if I continued; he insisted, interfere with the growth of the deeper and finer aspects of my mental mediumship, which he considered too valuable to interfere with in this way. He warned me also that the hypersensitive state of my body, which already subjected me to so much ill health, could not possibly resist the added burden of the terrific strain of physical mediumship. Since I had already experienced one or two manifestations of the shattering effect of this physical power, I listened most attentively and following his advice, I shut down on any further experiment with physical mediumship. I promised Mr. McKenzie, then, that I would not indulge in any other form of physical investigation or development, until I had, for several more years, solidly established by mental mediumship.

One of Hewat McKenzie's greatest interests in life was the observation and study of *poltergeist* phenomena. The reason he gave for this was that he believed that such phenomena contained the clearest and most objective proof of "survival of life after death." He often recounted some of his own experiences in dealing with the *poltergeist*. As these occurrences were extremely rare, I had not ever expected to be present at any of them.

A *poltergeist* manifestation is known to take place usually where there are present either adolescent children, or those of retarded development. The outbreak can take many forms, but its usual expression consists of violent and unexpected movements of objects through space. These movements are likely to be accompanied by either loud noises or explosions or repeated rappings. There can, of course, be several explanations offered for the cause of these phenomena; but Hewat McKenzie felt that the spiritualist hypothesis was the most

probable one. He believed that behind the manifestations of every *poltergeist*, there existed an "unhappy spirit" earthbound who was trying to attract attention by means of whatever sudden movements and sounds it could produce. Sometimes these "unhappy ones" might, he said, turn out to be connected with the family, or the place in which the outbreak occurred. Mr. McKenzie declared, from his own previous experiments, he knew that if he could, with the help of a medium, reach the "unhappy spirit" who caused the disturbance, he would then be able to get at the cause of the *poltergeist* manifestation.

He asked me to assist him in the investigation of just such an occurrence which he was about to explore. In order to do my part, I was simply expected to go into trance. What occurred from that moment I was told later, after I awoke from trance. I heard then that *Uvani* had succeeded in reaching the "unhappy spirit" which was causing *poltergeist* disturbances, and had relayed to Mr. McKenzie the explanation of why the troubled creature had come back to disturb his relatives. Hewat McKenzie then undertook to unravel the difficulties which had caused his return. In this particular instance there were, I was later told, complications over a lost will. McKenzie succeeded, through the directions given to him by the unhappy spirit, in locating the document hidden behind a picture frame. Satisfied by the successful outcome of his disturbing visit, the alleged grandfather departed and that outbreak of phenomena gradually subsided and came to an end.

Since that experiment I have assisted, successfully, at a large number of these *poltergeist* experiments. The spirits who, on these various occasions, unfolded their stories while I was in trance, seemed without exception to have caused these *poltergeist* disturbances because they were troubled by some deep emotional conflict which had not been resolved before their death. Revenge and the righting of wrongs often seemed the motives for their return. When these complications were removed, the manifestation of *poltergeist* phenomena always ceased as abruptly as they had begun.

Chapter XXXII

I TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR MY MEDIUMSHIP AND SEEK A KEY TO ITS MEANING

AFTER the death of Hewat McKenzie (summer of 1929), I felt shaken and very much alone in my work; for now the only person on whom I relied in the direction of my mediumship, had gone. It seemed impossible for me to continue any longer at the British College for Psychic Science without his support. But I now found myself so deeply committed to work as a trance medium, that I could not easily withdraw from that activity. I therefore, decided to work with a number of other well-known spiritualist societies; in this way I hoped to gain a more varied contact with people in this field, and also expected to obtain a clearer understanding of the types of people whom the other spiritualist societies attracted.

Although in my contacts with a number of organizations, I had now a wider range of types to study, the quality of their interests and the motivation of their activities were, I soon discovered, no more profound than those of my previous *sitters* at the British College. I began to notice that most of those who had sat with me over long periods of time, seemed well satisfied with the communications they received while I was in trance; but I had come to the conclusion, however, that instead of gaining strength and independence through their work with me, they became more emotional than they

had been, and seemed less, instead of more, able to think out or decide matters for themselves. I was disturbed by this realization, for I feared that this might gradually lead to a serious weakening of their mental fibre.

I was then beginning to take a new attitude towards my own work. I began to feel a serious responsibility for the effect of these trance *communications* on my *sitters*. Although I accepted the activity of my *control* while I was in trance, I began, nevertheless, to see that I too, was to a degree, responsible for the consequences of these messages. The realization that there was far more deterioration than improvement in most of the people who had a habit of working with me, brought back all my old doubts as to the value and use of my mediumship. I began to have a strong revulsion of feeling at the part I had played in producing such results through trance. Again I wondered whether I should not be finished with my mediumship forever.

During this time, while working as a trance medium, my daughter was happy at school and now as this period of doubt about my work set in and I was considering a new cycle of living I fell ill with para-typhoid fever. This was followed by two serious operations which suspended all my activities for many months.

During this time of my illness I lived close to my own being, glad to immerse myself again in the realm of the two minds and so forget all about the drifts and problems of the trance work I had been doing. I returned in convalescence to explore once more my world of light, sound and movement, and I began to discover for myself, that colour could begin to heal me; I found out, for example, that I could attract certain, specific beneficial rays to me by wearing certain colours. I gradually began to find myself understanding the meaning and the use of colour in the momentum and equilibrium of many aspects of life. I believe that I had learned then to revitalize myself by this new comprehension which had come to me of the nature and use of colour vibration. When my friends saw me again after my months of

serious illness, they were amazed that I gave out such a vivid impression of health and vitality after so long a siege.

I was urged again to resume my activity as a trance medium and for a while I forced myself to go on even though the spirit of its usefulness seemed to have vanished for me. My work continued to give satisfaction to those who came to me, but I no longer felt that I was functioning usefully. I longed to be free of my mediumship and I began to cultivate an active social life, which I had avoided during these later years of my psychic work.

Uvani had always been the only *control* who purported to transmit messages and information when I was in trance, until just before my illness, when a new personality spoke through me to some of my *sitters*. They told me that his name was *Abdul Latif*, and that he claimed to be a Persian physician, who had lived in the time of the Crusades, at the Court of Saladin. He first presented himself to an American sitter and then later to an Englishman, who was especially interested in healing work. From that time on he extended his activities through my trance state to many people interested in health and healing, and among these were several London physicians.

Abdul Latif had been known by spiritualists to appear and work through a number of mediums in different parts of the world, before he had ever spoken through my trance; he still continues to do so with other sensitives as well as with me. When I first heard of his appearance, I was afraid lest this new manifestation be due to a split in my own personality. I then studied carefully my own condition after trance, in order to discover if there were any disturbing consequences. Since none were evident, I ceased troubling about *Abdul's* presence. When I was first told that he had communicated through me, I had never heard of his name; only much later did I find out that he was already quite well-known for his work through other mediums. From the reports of my *sitters*, I began to realize that the level of my trance communications had altered considerably since the

introduction of the alleged *Abdul Latif*; apart from his work in healing and prophecy, he discussed both serious spiritual and philosophic problems. He did not spend time on the constant proof of "survival" as *Uvani* had done, so steadily, for many years. I wondered why this change in the type of communication occurred whenever *Abdul Latif* was said to be present.

Always needing to find my own answers to my problems, I puzzled over this matter for some time, and finally came to the conclusion that the level of communications might have changed because the needs and wishes of the people who now sat with me were different. They sought information and advice on healing and philosophy and therefore, I began to suspect the subconscious mind could reach out towards these new areas and draw in whatever knowledge was sought. If this were true, then two conclusions would be possible; either that the control personalities were part of my subconscious, or that the subconscious might be vaster and more profound than anyone had yet imagined. Therefore, without coming to any final conclusion on this point, I went on with my work and produced results which were satisfactory. This seemed, for the time being, more important for me to do than to worry over the existence or non-existence of the personality of *Abdul Latif*.

Chapter XXXIII

I PLAN TO GIVE UP THE USE OF MY SUPERNORMAL POWERS

YET the feeling of dissatisfaction recurred. Looking back on the trance work I had done up to this time, I realized that though I was producing results, I could not wholly accept their significance. Finally I decided to try to get some evidence for myself from the work of other mediums. I felt that I could justifiably do this now, since my own mediumship was firmly established. I attended seances for both mental and physical phenomena, but I was never able to get any form of evidence for myself which I could accept. This increased my doubts as to the usefulness of my own trance communications. Again my health was poor and several physicians suggested that the separation due to my use of trance, might well be the cause of my many illnesses; I personally believed that my own conflict and doubts concerning the nature of my work had driven me to a point of nervous tension and exhaustion. The combination of these circumstances made me determine to give up completely, all my work as a trance medium.

My friends protested and could not believe that having carried on my psychic work so seriously and steadily to the satisfaction of my sitters for many years, that I could now seriously intend to give it up. Some of them, distressed at my

decision, undertook to discuss the matter with the *control* personality, *Abdul Latif*, while I was in trance. They reported that he made light of my intention and said, "This is only a process in her further development. I wouldn't worry her about it. She will go through with this, but will not, as she thinks, give up her mediumship." My friends reported all this to me, but I ignored the reported comments of *Abdul Latif*, and I went right ahead with my plans. I again heard a voice, toneless and cold, which said to me, "Make the most of your happiness; it cannot last." I shuddered, and remembered that similar warnings had been the forerunner to the deaths of my two sons. Now this undoubtedly applied to not only my determination to give up professional psychic work but to my determination to try to find some personal happiness again. A dear and valued friend had convinced me that in marriage to him such happiness was possible and life moved ahead smoothly enough for us, until the day that the banns of our marriage were published. On that very day both my fiancé and I fell suddenly ill. I developed an active mastoid and he caught a serious chill, which quickly developed into septic pneumonia. Within a week he was dead, and I was lying in a hospital, dangerously ill from the complications of a burst appendix and mastoid. I was then so near to death myself, that no one dared tell me that my fiancé had died; I was still in a critical condition when the doctors thought fit to inform me of his tragic end. Perhaps the shock was too much for me, for I now developed a sudden high temperature, and again was forced to undergo still another operation, this time on the throat.

I was told by my own physician, long after I had recovered, that the doctors and the nurses in the operating room at that time had heard clearly the tones of a voice, which spoke just after I had become unconscious from taking the anesthetic. No one present seemed to know exactly what the voice said; but my own physician who, in his youth, had been in India, told me that he recognized certain definite words of command, as spoken in Hindustani. He knew that I personally,

had no knowledge whatever of any Oriental language, and that at that moment, because of the way I was bound up, I would have been quite unable to utter a word anyway. He was so impressed by this incident, that he sent a letter to one of the leaders in the spiritualist movement, recording the exact circumstances of this occurrence. It is surprising to note that G. R. S. Mead, the well known scholar, who often during this period, communicated with *Abdul Latif* through my mediumship, as well as through other sensitives, reported that he was informed by *Abdul Latif*, shortly after this occurrence, that he had been present in the hospital room during my operation.

It was many months before I recovered sufficiently from this protracted illness to begin to consider my future. The state of my health now made it impossible for me to try to undertake any new type of work. The only thing that I could envisage doing, was to take up my mediumship again, but I decided, it would have to be in a new and very different manner from any of my previous work. I felt that the only condition under which I would now use my trance, would be for the purpose of investigating it and other psychic phenomena. This new attitude had developed as the result of startling changes in my own psychic make-up, during the days of convalescence.

One evening, when I was feeling very low and weak, I was lying quietly in my hospital room, when I became aware of the ebbing away of my vitality; I felt that if this continued I should soon lose consciousness. The next thing I knew the wardrobe standing against the wall opposite my bed was tottering and crackling and explosive sounds were coming from it. I was terrified and rang for the nurse. The moment she entered the room the manifestations ceased; but I knew that when she left again, the outbreak would recur. I explained to the nurse what had happened and begged her to remain with me. She humoured me and stayed a little while. Scarcely had she left me when the wardrobe started to shake again and a particularly strong interior explosion threw open

its doors. I was just able to touch my bell before I passed out in a dead faint. It took me twenty-four hours to recover from the effects of this experience. The nurse told my doctor that, while standing in the hallway, she had heard the explosive noise which took place in my room just before I fainted.

As a result of this disturbance, the doctor who treated me now admitted that he himself was clairvoyant, and told me that he felt sure I had just undergone an important psychic experience; but beyond that he could give me no further help in understanding what had taken place. However much I had been frightened at that time, the experience heightened my clairvoyant perceptions; they were now definitely opened, and they have remained active ever since. A knowledge of this new development in myself led me on to try to discover what principles made possible the occurrence of psychic phenomena.

No sooner had I come to this determination, than the way for me to carry it out, presented itself in an almost miraculous manner. I received an invitation to visit the United States, and to work there under the auspices of the American Society for Psychic Research.

Part Five

**CAN SCIENCE UNRAVEL THE MEANING
OF MY MEDIUMSHIP AND SUPERNORMAL
PERCEPTIONS?**

Chapter XXXIV

TO THE UNITED STATES IN SEARCH OF OBJECTIVE RESEARCH

I SAILED for the United States in the autumn of 1931, and I worked for six months in New York, under the auspices of the American Society for Psychical Research. I left London expecting that the American Society would be much more scientific than the spiritualist groups which I had worked with in London. My first disappointment came when I found that although this organization was established originally for psychical research, the majority of its members were spiritualists; these, as was the case with the English, were not in the least concerned with the objective investigation of mental phenomena. I was amazed to find that no attempt was made in the American group to keep objective records of the sitting which I gave. And again I found myself surrounded by people whose only interest was in *communicating* with the dead.

I was deeply disappointed, but I remained in America to fulfill my contract. Continuing under the auspices of the same society, I then visited Los Angeles and San Francisco. The research in these cities was even less objective than the work in New York.

However an opportunity soon came to me to do some special research in one of the well-known American universi-

ties. It was, I heard, to be an investigation of my powers of trance, clairvoyance and psychometry. I spent some weeks in those laboratories over these experiments, but the results were never published.

My next piece of research dealt with telepathy, taking place over a distance. I worked on this subject with several well-known psychiatrists and scientists in America who were much interested in the problem. Besides myself, a note-taker and two investigators were included in each experiment. One of these investigators was present in the room with the note-taker and me, while the other one was always at some considerable distance; sometimes in another part of the city, sometimes as far away as across a continent, or even on the other side of the world. Although the investigators considered these experiments as being purely telepathic, I knew that in order to do them I had also to employ both clairvoyance and projection; but as telepathy itself was the only concern of these researchers I was never asked to explain *how* I did the work. In all these experiments the results were outstanding; they not only proved telepathic communication, but they also contained evidence of clairvoyance, prevision and clairsaudience.

In the room arranged for the experiment, the investigator at a distance from me and of course unseen prepared a series of objects, perhaps on a table; I was expected to get an impression of them and describe these to the note-taker. At the same time the investigator would also select some subjects to think about; they might concern the title and contents of the last book he had read, or the automobile accident which had happened to his child.

If I were expected to pick up the impressions of the objects resting on the table, my method was first to use projection, and then clairvoyance alone; but when I had to pick up thoughts from the investigator's mind at a distance, I first used projection and then telepathy. If the investigator at a distance thought about the objects on the table, and I drew these impressions from his thoughts, I was then not using clairvoyance, but telepathy. In the many experiments

I had done of this type, I have found no one who was aware of the fine distinction between the steps of these processes of projection, clairvoyance, telepathy and clairaudience, and how they were related to each other. In order to explain them, I shall have to use concrete examples of my own work.

Let me use, first, as an instance, one of my experiments in what the investigators call *telepathy at a distance*. I shall tell the circumstances of an active experiment, but the names of places, personalities and the exact materials used in the experiment are purposely disguised. We worked this experiment between Newfoundland and New York. I was in New York; a well-known medical man had arranged the conditions of the test in his home in Newfoundland. I knew for myself that in order to accomplish the experiment successfully, I would have to use conscious projection in order to arrive at that destination in Newfoundland, which I was expected to reach.

It will, therefore, be necessary for me to explain the process by which I knowingly project. What is not generally accepted by science, but which I nevertheless know to be true, is that everyone has a *double*, of finer substance than the physical body; it is referred to either as the astral or as the etheric body by some scientists. This is not to be confused with the *surround*; which remains in position enveloping the human body, while the *double* can be projected. It is by means of this *double* that either accidental or conscious projection is accomplished; now in these experiments I was doing conscious projection, and I know from my own experience, that when I project this *double*, I do so from the centre of my chest above the breasts. From the moment I begin to project, I am aware at this point, of a pull, accompanied by a fluttering, which causes the heart to palpitate, and the breathing to speed up, accompanied also, if the projection is a long one, by a slight choking in the larynx and a heady sensation. As long as the projection continues, I remain aware of these sensations taking place in my physical body.

While I am in a state of projection, the *double* is apparently able to use the normal activity of all five senses which work in my physical body. For example, I may be sitting in a drawing room on a snowy day and yet be able in projection to reach a place where summer is at that moment full blown; in that instant, I can register with all my five physical senses the sight of the flowers and the sea, I can smell the scent of the blossoms and the tang of the ocean spray, and hear the birds sing and the waves beat against the shore. Strange to say, I never forget the smallest detail of any such experience which has come to me through conscious projection, though in ordinary daily living I can be quite forgetful and memories of places or things may grow dim. It might be interesting here to note certain differences that occur to me during conscious and unconscious projection. In the unconscious state when I may be day-dreaming, or on the verge of sleep, my *double* may slip out without my willing it and sometimes strike obstacles in space which block its free movement and cause a repercussion to my nervous system and a shock to my physical body. Such impacts never occur when I project myself at will into space; this is due to the fact that I then move out *consciously* in a more flexible and fluid state.

Now for the Newfoundland experiment mentioned above: In my projected state in that place in Newfoundland, where the experiment was set up, I found myself not only at the place of the experiment, but before I entered the house, I was able to see the garden and the sea, as well as the house I was supposed to enter; I actually sensed the damp of the atmosphere and saw the flowers growing by the pathway. Then I passed through the walls and I was inside the room in which the experiment was to take place. There was no one there and I looked up the staircase searching for the experimenter I had been told would be there. If I had to move upstairs to find him, that would mean additional effort on my part, but fortunately he walked down the stairs at that moment, and entered the room which I knew had been selected for the experiment. What took place then included not only

telepathy, but the entire range of supernormal sensing, including clairvoyance, clairaudience and precognition. The doctor in this experiment, himself had powers of supernormal sensing, and was obviously aware of my presence and that the experiment had begun. In what I am about to relate, the proof of our mutual awareness will soon become evident.

Speaking aloud and addressing me, he said, "This will be a successful experiment," and I sitting in a New York room, was able to receive this speech, seemingly through my physical hearing. The investigator in Newfoundland addressed my *double* which I had projected into his study, and said, "Now look at the objects on the table." I followed his direction from that moment on, in much the same way as a hypnotized person responds to suggestion. I could see the objects on the table, not by means of ordinary sight, but through clairvoyant vision; I then gave a description of what I saw to the note-taker with me in New York. I heard the doctor say, "Make my apologies to the experimentors at your end. I have had an accident and cannot work as well as I had hoped." I transmitted what I was hearing in Newfoundland to the note-taker in New York, in the exact words which had been spoken to me, and I also described the bandage on the doctor's head. This had scarcely been done, when I heard the experimenter in New York comment, in an aside, "This can't possibly be true, because I had a letter a few days ago and the doctor was quite well then."

The experiment continued and I remained in my projected state; I followed the activity of the investigator in Newfoundland. The next thing he did was to walk slowly to his bookcase in his room; before he reached it I knew that he was thinking of a certain book and I knew its position on the shelf; this was telepathy. He took it down and held it up in his hands with the definite idea that I, being present, could read its title and he then opened it and without speaking, read to himself a paragraph out of this volume. The book was about Einstein and his theories of relativity. The paragraph he had selected, he read through silently, and as he did so, I

was able to receive from his mind, the telepathic impressions of what he read. The sense of his reading, I reported in my own words to the stenographer in New York. In the meantime, the experimenter, speaking aloud, told me in my projected state, that during this experiment, he too had projected himself into the bedroom in New York of the psychiatrist who was his co-experimenter. He proceeded to describe the two photographs that he had actually seen there on his previous (physical) visit to New York, but he now explained in Newfoundland, that these photographs had been put away, and that the bedroom of his friend had been redecorated since his actual physical visit.

This was the end of that experiment, and the recorder commented when it was over, that the entire proceeding had taken fifteen minutes. Had this experiment rested on telepathy, alone, I could never have *reached* nor *seen* the experimenter, the locality or the room and set-up for the experiment. All that pure telepathy could have produced would have been the *thoughts in the experimenter's mind, and the impressions of the words he spoke aloud to me*. Much that made this experiment unusual and striking, was that this doctor in Newfoundland also had the power to project himself, and was then able to receive impressions clairvoyantly and telepathically from the place in New York, as I projected and did the same to his home in Newfoundland.

The record of the experiment in New York was posted that night to the doctor in Newfoundland. Next morning a telegram was received from him; in it, he described an accident which had occurred just before we began our experiment, and a day later a letter was received from him, listing the steps of the experiment as he had planned it. The telegram proved that I had not only heard his message correctly, when he spoke to my "double" there, but I had actually perceived his bandaged head. Remember, he opened the experiment by predicting that it would be successful; this prophecy was more than justified by our unusual results. I had succeeded in catching and relaying this prediction telepathically; so that

in this case *precognition* and *telepathy* occurred simultaneously. From his letter, we learned that he had used a table and placed upon it a series of objects which I had seen correctly by means of *clairvoyance*; every step of my description of his behaviour turned out also to be correct. The book he removed from the shelf, the title and the subject matter he read to himself, were as I described them when received through my own conscious projection, and my application of *clairvoyance* and *telepathy*. Without the use of these additional faculties of perception, such a complex experiment would not have been possible.

The mechanisms I use in *precognition* are closely linked to the mechanisms I have already described for projection. This and all the other steps in psychic functioning are *induced by conscious changes in my breathing*. To do *precognition* I have to conceive of standing outside of time; that is a process which I learned as a child when I drew back from the curving movements of colour and light, in order to watch them more closely. In this stepping back, I perceive yesterday, today and tomorrow as a single curve, the circumference of which becomes visible to me at all points on its surface. It is only by moving out of time, away from past, present and future that I can examine their every aspect. In this state they present themselves to me, not as in sequence, but as existing simultaneously; in that moment, time loses all reality and I seem able to live in the past and future at one and the same instant. To me then, there can be no such thing as present time, for the moment we begin to think in the present, it is already past, and the future is already present.

Soon after this telepathic work I completed a piece of research work already begun by the famous psychic researcher, Hereward Carrington. His study was an attempt to test the validity of *Uvani* and *Abdul Latif*, as trance personalities, quite separate from my own. He used for this purpose two types of testing; the measurement of the psychogalvanic reactions and the well-known association-word-tests; in this psychological test, if the association reactions of *Uvani*,

Abdul Latif and myself should each be quite different, to this single list of carefully selected key words, then presumably these two trance personalities would not be drawing from the same subconscious memory as my own, and therefore the minds of the two controls would then be regarded as psychologically separate from mine.

The plan of this experiment was well worth carrying out, and the results, as far as they went, showed certain striking differences of response, between the alleged trance personalities and myself; but a more intensive study of this subject would have to be made in order to draw any final conclusions as to the identity or non-identity of trance personalities with myself. Another study along similar lines was undertaken with me in England during the following summer, by a well-known psychic researcher. The conditions under which the experiments took place were, in my opinion, not sufficiently scientific. The galvanometer was not delicate enough to register my exact reactions, and the researcher sometimes tested me without having anyone else present to witness the work.

I made several attempts, at this time, to get some scientists I knew, interested in further research of objective mental phenomena, hoping to get them to repeat and thus recheck some of the work that Hereward Carrington had done with me in America; but without success. The subject still remains an important one, and would lend itself to serious research, if it were properly conducted and carefully recorded by trained investigators.

Chapter XXXV

MY CHANGING ATTITUDE TO MY MEDIUMSHIP

SINCE no scientist I knew seemed ready to go deeper into the investigation of mental mediumship with me, I resigned myself to returning to my work with the spiritualist societies. Now then something unexpected took place. I, who had hitherto given many successful *sittings* each week, found myself unable to produce results. I wondered whether my trance mediumship was coming to an end and I was encouraged to believe this by the people who came to me. Most of them considered that scientific research was unnecessary and that the experiments had probably interfered with the activities of the *control*.

I soon learned, however, that this was not the point of view of the *control*; I heard from some of the regular, more objective sitters, that *Uvani* said that he would not cooperate in giving advice, and producing purely personal evidence any longer for *sitters* who were not concerned with the serious and objective method of his work. He also stated that for many years he had given sufficient proof of the truth of "survival," and that he was now prepared to deal primarily with the more serious aspects of living and research. I was again in conflict with myself, over the nature and meaning of all my own trance work, and I began to question the validity of my *control*. Up to this time I had been able to consider *Uvani*

as a pale shadow in the background of my work who had helped towards its results.

Now a new problem presented itself to me. If I were failing to produce the evidence which the spiritualists sought, and *Uvani* were unwilling to cooperate further in that way, in all seriousness I asked myself what indeed was the nature of this *control*? Did he have any reality apart from myself, and if so was his intelligence superior to mine? I also began to question whether evidences of "survival" could really be obtained by this method of trance mediumship, which I was using? The profound implications lying behind the entire process of communication were brought home to me. I had been *sitting* for over ten years, acting as the channel through which alleged conversations took place between the living and the dead; either this procedure was a tremendous self-deception, and none of what was spoken came from supernatural sources; or else it was a source of profound truth and it should never have been allowed to be played with in the casual handling of so-called psychic researchers who were interested largely in personal messages. Maybe, I realised, the great philosophers and teachers of old understood this verity, when they kept certain great spiritual laws apart from the multitude, revealing them only to such as had attained a high state of being. I began to feel that the great religious teachers of the past had understood this principle of which modern man seemed ignorant, and that perhaps this was the cause of the division of religions into the esoteric and an exoteric teaching.

This realization grew more powerful to me as I weighed its implications; man I knew, had always been able to gain infinite knowledge from the Universe by means of Revelation, but only at such times as his state of being was truly desirous and inwardly prepared for its reception. Again I wanted to reconsider what purpose or meaning could be attributed to my own work as a sensitive. I had to retrace my steps and re-examine the process by which I had established my trance mediumship. I realised now that those who had been able to

help me develop my mental powers, were spiritualists and had inevitably conditioned the products of my trance communications. Their own faith in, and desire to communicate with their dead, had, I came to believe, given the initial impetus to these trance communications which they obtained through me. If this speculation of mine were correct, then would not other *sitters* who did not have a spiritualist philosophy, but who sought sincerely through my trance for some other revelation of knowledge or confirmation of faith, also be able to reach quite different levels of communication?

It was not long before I understood the answer to this question; for with the new trance personality of *Abdul Latif* introduced, certain entirely different levels of understanding had begun to open in my trance work; subjects such as healing, philosophy and religion had replaced the flow of spiritualist messages. I began to understand also that had I been born in some different culture or civilisation, I would have been conditioned to become a channel for quite other communications. Had I been born in India or China, or the Congo, I might only have produced in my trance such communications as were sought by those of the local faith or cultural tradition. Now I believed I saw a certain principle at work, behind all communication—*namely that the subconscious mind was a vehicle capable of expanding indefinitely and able to contact all possible realms of understanding which it might choose to reach.*

I came back from these speculations as to the meaning of man's capacity to reach areas of understanding beyond his conscious knowledge, to re-examine the mechanisms by which it was possible to communicate. This led me to continue with renewed seriousness in my consideration of my own mediumship and an analysis of the means by which it took place.

I tried to diagram the process of trance mediumship. In it we have three personalities to consider—the *control*, the medium and the investigator. Each is limited by his own point of view and experience, and in the case of two of the three involved, control and medium; control and investigator;

unknown to each other by way of the usual human contacts and exchange. What takes place between these three personalities? I assumed that the *control* exists and I allowed him in this assumption to function as the personality he claims to be. I assumed that his experience is as conditioned in its own way, as that of the medium and the investigator; his role, as we know it, is to transmit communications through the medium's mind.

Here is what takes place in a specific *sitting*. The investigator arrives; the medium goes into trance, and the *control* begins to speak. Let us suppose this enquirer has come to speak with a dead sister, fully convinced that this is possible. The *control* correctly describes the dead sister and gives her name as "Prudence." The investigator says this is true. Then comes a message advising the brother to dispose of the family property to the real estate man who visits him tomorrow. Before the investigator accepts this advice, he asks his sister for some real evidence of her identity. She refers to the amethyst ring on his finger, which had belonged to their dead mother; she also describes an accident which occurred to him in the River Seine, when he was studying in France, at the age of eighteen; she describes the death of his older brother after an operation for appendicitis. All these proofs the investigator admits are true. He then asks his dead sister, through the control about the place which she now inhabits and enquires about her present activities. She tells him that she is content and working hard at her own development with others who have passed on; but she is vague about the conditions of her present dwelling. This we may take as an example of the kind of information which comes through in a sitting. What then is the value of such information and by what mechanisms has it been gathered together and presented to the enquirer?

To my knowledge, nobody has as yet sought an answer to these questions, on the nature and functioning of mediumship. In order to obtain it for myself, I found it necessary to examine every step which takes place in trance mediumship.

Return with me therefore, to the example which I have just cited, and begin to watch the medium go into trance, and the *control* appearing to take possession. (We know that science regards the state of trance as the product of auto-suggestion, that it can first be produced by some unexpected shock or fear, or the desire of the individual to escape from some painful condition of living; its appearance can also be due to the influence of suggestion from another person.)

The next step to observe in a trance sitting, is how the *control* deals with communication. The average sitter is usually too emotional and eager to be critical of what takes place. The *control* first introduces to the investigator whatever personality is present for him. In the example I've used above, it was the dead sister whom he described as blue-eyed and wearing braids of fair hair coiled around her head; he gave her name as "Prudence." The *sitter* accepts these statements as correct and he agrees that the evidence offered by his sister concerned actual experiences of his own life. This type of sitting occurs frequently and I am told that *Uvani* has produced much evidence of this type, when I am in trance. (But I am also able, in the waking state, to give similar evidence clairvoyantly. I can see dead relatives surrounding the people who seek my help and sometimes I hear the names of these dead ones, and receive the impression of the message they wish to transmit. I see all this in a series of images and symbols, which shift and change before my clairvoyant sight. This is only the beginning of the process; the most difficult and most important part follows: this is the interpretation of these pictures and symbols. What must not be ignored is that *the meaning of these images and symbols depends entirely on my limited human interpretation of them.*)

This *control*, *Uvani*, has been questioned by my more objective *sitters* as to the process that he uses in communication. He has stated more than once that *he receives messages by means of visual impressions and he must interpret the meaning of these images in order to project them through my mind.* He explained how he got the impression of the names

of dead relatives for a *sitter*. In the example I have just used, of the sister's name "Prudence," *Uvani* explained that he first saw an upright column; he was not certain at first whether it was intended to form a "P" or an "F"; he then saw the image of a purse, and then knew the letter to be "P." He asked whether the purse meant anything to the *sitter*; on receiving a negative response, he sought further association with the meaning of the word "purse." Words such as "caution," "saving" and "prudence" came to him. Then, with a flash, he said "something fell into place" and he knew that the name was "Prudence." He announced this as the name of the sister, and the investigator admitted that this was so. The way in which the name of the sister was secured by *Uvani*, while I was in the trance state, is exactly the way I work in the clairvoyant, waking state. It is evident to me from this that the stimulation taking place in the trance and clairvoyant states is similar. This, I think, opens up a tremendous field for objective research in the future, *as to how the subconscious mind arrives at these impressions through images and symbols.*

In examining my own process of clairvoyance, I have become aware that I draw the knowledge which helps me build the images of the dead relatives and friends of those who need help, from the subconscious minds of the sitters. Is it not possible therefore, that the *control* does likewise, with or without being aware whence he draws the substance for his images? If there is truth in this conclusion of mine, is there not a possibility that the *control* personality is unnecessary to the reaching of what is considered supernormal knowledge? Such information may be there, within areas of the subconscious mind though the conscious mind may not be aware of it, nor yet know how to reach it.

Whether the material received by clairvoyance, or in the trance state, does come from the subconscious of the *sitter*, or from supernormal levels, it is in either case received in pictures and images which need interpretation. This is the important part to remember: the symbols and images of clair-

voyant *seeing* or of trance communication can be misinterpreted and misunderstood. So long as the human mind is responsible for the interpretation of matters dealing with subjects beyond its own limited experience, there is bound to be inaccuracy and distortion. If it were possible for a tenant of another state of being, to try to communicate his ideas by aid of symbols to a human being in this dimension, it is very doubtful if our type of human intelligence would ever fully comprehend what was being transmitted. If my reasoning on this subject were correct, it would lead to the conclusion that no control, nor trance state is necessary to obtain what is termed supernormal knowledge.

I hesitated to allow myself to think too persistently along these lines, since I realised that the majority of experienced and trained investigators whom I had met (up to that time) would not agree with me. My desire to explore more deeply this aspect of the problem of trance mediumship and of all "supernormal communication," made me eager to work with trained scientists, who would be interested in such a serious study of mental phenomena.

Now it was practically impossible for me to continue to give "evidence of survival" in the old way, since I no longer was sure that it came from the alleged dead. I felt, from that time on that if I went on giving such evidence through my trance state, I might become a party to fraud. I therefore, determined, in order to protect my own integrity, whether I was understood or not by spiritualists and others wanting sittings, to begin to exclude this type of communication.

This forced me to become more objective about myself. I had not originally wanted to become a medium, and had never consciously sought this method of using my supernormal perceptions. Nor had I ever been wholly at peace with my work of using trance for communication. But whilst I was coming gradually to reject the thought of the *control* as a personality, and to reject as well the mechanics of trance, as the means of reaching supernormal knowledge, I was nevertheless, aware that there was some Force outside myself which

worked through me to produce supernormal functioning. I was still at a loss to understand how this energy worked through me, where it came from and what its purpose could be.

Looking back over my life I knew that ever since I was a small child, I had been aware of such sound, movement and colour, as other people apparently did not *sense* or *see*; these perceptions unfolded and grew until now I found in myself, powers which gave me the ability to see clairvoyantly, hear clairaudiently, and sense telepathetically what took place around me. Through the years I had obtained enough objective proof for myself that these faculties produced correct results; but what I did not know was *how* they worked, or *how I came to be in possession of them*.

The answer to these questions I thought could only be found with the help of those who were trained in exact methods of Science.

Chapter XXXVI

WHAT I DISCOVER ABOUT TELEPATHY AND CLAIRVOYANCE IN THE RESEARCH AT DUKE UNIVERSITY

AS at that time there seemed to me no opportunity to do research in England, I returned to America in the autumn of 1933. I got in touch with the late Professor William McDougall, who was then at Duke University and I asked him whether he knew of any objective investigation in this field being done in America. He told me that research in parapsychology was then being carried on at Duke University, and that if I were interested in cooperating, he would be happy to have me come down and take part in the experiments with his assistant, Professor J. B. Rhine; but Dr. McDougall explained that he would be absent from these experiments as he was about to return to England.

I was eager and interested at the prospect of working at last, in a University which was prepared to do objective research of this kind. When I met Professor Rhine, I was charmed with his directness, simplicity and enthusiasm, and heard with interest, of his plan of work for studying telepathy and clairvoyance. He told me that he had already done a considerable amount of experimental work with a group of students and that he now looked forward to doing a similar

study with me. Dr. Rhine explained to me the way he worked in order to examine clairvoyant and telepathic powers and he showed me the (now famous) type of especially designed cards which he used for his investigation. The experiments to date had shown him that the students who had clairvoyant ability, had also telepathic power and he also thought it possible that other supernormal perceptions might later be revealed and observed by further investigation.

He used the term *Extra-Sensory* to describe any perception which could not be attributed to the working of the ordinary five senses; he had abbreviated this term for convenience to the initials ESP which have since become the accepted condensation for *Extra Sensory Perception* in all research of this type. It is unnecessary for me to describe Dr. Rhine's technique of testing with his special cards; it is now well known because of his magazine articles and his books, to those who are interested in this field of research. After making thousands of tests with his students, Dr. Rhine came to certain conclusions as to their powers of telepathy and clairvoyance and he aroused great interest and controversy in the general public by his statement that about one in five of those students tested showed decided ESP ability.

When I heard from Dr. Rhine that he had been testing his students for telepathic and clairvoyant ability by means of these ESP cards, I was glad at his suggestion, to submit to the same experiments. He thought that it would be especially interesting to check my known powers of clairvoyance and telepathy by his recently developed tests. I began the experiments with interest and enthusiasm, never doubting that it would be a simple matter for me to produce results quite easily by means of this new technique. But after a few tests for clairvoyance with the cards, it was evident that my scores were unusually low. As I had done so much successful work in clairvoyance and telepathy for many years, I began to ask myself why I could not produce them also with Dr. Rhine's ESP cards.

My study of this revelation brought me to certain definite conclusions as to why the method by which I had been able consciously to produce clairvoyance in my own work in the past, was not applicable to the laboratory tests with the ESP cards. I tried to explain my conclusions to Dr. Rhine and he seemed to listen sympathetically, but without giving too serious consideration to my explanation, he asked me to continue the card tests in the same way as I had commenced them. I did so, in order that he might complete his experiment, and also that I might continue to examine most carefully every step of the technique of his work (and my results) both in the experiments with me and with the students.

I was first challenged to reexamine the processes by which I worked supernormally when doing these experiments at Duke University. I stated my conclusion at the time to Dr. Rhine, that I was sure *clairvoyance and telepathy depended upon an active radiation registering between two people or between an individual and an object*; and since the ESP cards lacked such radiation, they did not stimulate my clairvoyant vision. I repeat this now, not as a mere theory, concerning the ESP cards, but as a practical conclusion based on years of supernormal experience.

There is, I am well aware, among psychic researchers and those few psychologists who accept the validity of supernormal sensing, little agreement as to the nature of these powers, or as to their method of functioning. Most of the time the scientists and specialists who discuss the subject, are theorizing as to what telepathy or clairvoyance may or may not be; not on what they know as fact from the development of their own psychic faculties or from any objective research on the functioning of these powers. I considered the beginning of Dr. Rhine's experiments in ESP a most promising and important step in the direction of objective research concerning the nature of supernormal functioning. I have heard him state in a lecture, before publishing the results of his work on ESP, that he did not believe that the theory of radiation contained a possible explanation of clairvoyance and

telepathy. At another meeting in answer to a question, he admitted that he did not know what this *Extra Sensatory Perception* which he was testing really was. Dr. Rhine is apparently not the only scientist working in this field who does not know the nature of these supernormal powers, for I have not yet been able to find an exact description of the process of clairvoyance or telepathy produced by either a psychic or a scientific investigator of this subject. This gives me the courage to go ahead and try to describe, at least, what I know occurs when I become clairvoyant or telepathic. The method by which I place myself in a psychic state with the help of certain processes of breathing and stimulation from an object or a person, may not be the way in which other psychics work. But I am conscious of my own processes throughout the work and I shall therefore try to describe the way in which my own supernormal faculties become active:

Clairvoyance as I know it, cannot simply be directed to order on any particular subject. I may, or may not, be able to get knowledge clairvoyantly concerning a specific person or object. I can only do so if I receive an adequate *energy stimulus* (which I shall presently explain), from the individual or the object. In order to reach a psychic state in which I can *sense* and *see* clearly, I need such a stimulus. And then what comes to me clairvoyantly, I *sense* and *see* simultaneously in a series of images which are animated, but simple, like a child's drawings. After I have received such impressions and *visions* in this way, I must then struggle to find words to interpret them adequately to the listener. What I receive may be much or little. This depends on the degree of the *energy stimulus* I receive, as well as my own condition of psychic sensitivity at the time.

Suppose that the object I am asked to be clairvoyant about happens to be a watch. If it were a brand new watch which had just come from a factory, the most that I could get from it clairvoyantly, would be images connected with its manufacture. I might get episodes of the people in the factory who set the springs in place, or of those who melted the

silver for its case or of the salesman who sold it in the shop. But the watch would not as yet, have developed a "personal history" of its own by being long in the possession of one or more people. On the other hand, should I be asked to become clairvoyant about a particular watch which has lived with many owners, I could not predict just what part of its history I might begin to get impressions about clairvoyantly, at a given time, but I would certainly be able to describe some aspects of its wanderings and perhaps some of the life of its various owners. So unpredictable is this process of clairvoyant psychometrizing that one day I might get images of the history of one of the watch's owners, and at another time, some quite different episodes from the life of someone else who possessed the watch; and yet in many such experiments which I have made in the course of the years, the various episodes might all prove to be true about that watch. This type of clairvoyance concerning things, is popularly known as *psychometry*, though it is not an accurate word for describing the process.

People as well as objects must give out an *energy stimulus* by which I am able to work clairvoyantly. But if when I begin to do so, the natural stimulation which I know I receive from the active *emanations* or *radiations* of people or objects is interrupted or not permitted to enter spontaneously into the conditions of an experiment, then I am left without the natural stimulus which I have always found necessary in order to work supernormally.

For me Dr. Rhine's ESP cards, just like the new watch I have been describing, lacked that *energy stimulus* which would make it possible for me to see the symbols on the cards clairvoyantly by the light of their own *radiation*. In fact during many of these tests, I seemed to be inhibited by the very limitations set to the experiments, from using whatever supernormal powers I possess. But when I could not get these from the ESP cards themselves, I found that I could sometimes, when Dr. Rhine was fresh at the work, draw them from his own mind, when he concentrated on them. When-

ever I used this process, my scores at reading the ESP cards at what was called clairvoyance, would rise perceptibly.

But I want to make it clear that when I did this with Dr. Rhine I was, from my viewpoint, really working *telepathically and not clairvoyantly*. In this connection it is interesting to note that whenever I was doing the planned telepathic experiments with the ESP cards at Duke, I obtained better results than with clairvoyance. Whether I did these telepathic experiments with one of the students or whether I picked the images of the cards telepathically from the mind of Dr. Rhine, I was, in both cases, freed from the limitation of the direct use of the cards and their inanimate symbols. Instead, I was able to catch the moving symbols which the mind of either Dr. Rhine or a student projected to me through space. *By being passed through the mind of another, the symbols were thus made to live again and register for me supernormally.*

My interpretation of what takes place, in my own experience, is that the card symbol when thought of, is projected as a light image, moving through space, and thus reaches me as a form of radiation. (In the last part of this book I discuss in greater detail the way I believe such radiation registers through space, working through all forms of organisms, human and otherwise.) What I have, since childhood, seen as a nebulous *surround*, enveloping each living organism, has, according to my present understanding, a definite use and purpose as receiver and transmitter of *radiation* throughout the universe. I have, in recent years, come to call this human aura or surround a *magnetic field*.

Although I had defined my position towards telepathy and clairvoyance to Dr. Rhine, he wished me to return to Duke University and continue working by his experimental methods for a second year. I did so, but the results produced never had, from my point of view, anything to do with true clairvoyance; they were to me then as now, only *guesses*, as to what images existed on the face of Dr. Rhine's ESP cards. However many thousands of tests might be made with the technique followed by Dr. Rhine and his assistants, with the

students and myself, their conclusions never changed my personal conviction that I was simply guessing at the symbols on those ESP cards. Clairvoyance, as I understand it, from my many years of work, depends, for me at least, on the use of an active *radiation* or *emanation* from person or object as a stimulus. I have spoken of an *energy stimulus* as being necessary in clairvoyance and telepathy. I had such a stimulus in my work at Duke, not from the ESP cards, but from the interest and enthusiasm of Dr. Rhine toward the work we were doing. Let me repeat, when he was present, I could produce better results with the ESP cards by taking them telepathically from his mind.

In order to produce good results in trance and in other forms of supernormal sensing, it is also, according to my experience, necessary to have such a stimulation that is due either to the energy which radiates or emanates from the object, or from the interest, sympathy or desire of the individuals who take part with me in an experiment.

I say this, convinced that no serious experiment or good work to further such research can take place, without an ardent desire on the part of the experimentors or workers to achieve positive results. Affirmation, faith and desire, are the *energy stimulus* needed to produce results, in science as well as in art and life. I know that in making this statement I am speaking of a subject which has rarely been recognised as of serious importance in the development of Psychic research. But I am convinced that *many an investigator has confused a negative attitude toward an experiment with objectivity, and has thereby closed the doors on the necessary energy stimulus needed by the sensitive, engaged for the experiment in supernormal sensing.*

I again summarize why, from my point of view, it was difficult for me to read Dr. Rhine's ESP cards: It was due to three things; first, that I cannot do true clairvoyance suddenly to order; secondly, that for me, the symbols on the cards, gave me no definite *energy stimulus* in the form of *radiation*; and thirdly, that if I did catch images and move-

ments from the cards clairvoyantly, they concerned, as in the case of the new watch, those people who perhaps had produced or designed the cards or places where they were made, or the substance from which they were manufactured. All this, according to my own knowledge of the subject, would have been true clairvoyant data in the experiment, even if it were not the information which Dr. Rhine was at that moment seeking; all he was asking me to do was to *sense* the symbols on the cards.

While I was at Duke University, I also did some experiments with Dr. Rhine in the reading of handwriting. For this purpose he prepared a series of uniform envelopes. Within each had been placed a fragment of handwriting, perhaps a word or a phrase of a particular person. This had been carefully wrapped in many coverings and then well sealed in the envelope. As a test, Dr. Rhine expected me to take these envelopes in turn and by means of what he considered psychometry, give replies with each envelope of handwriting to a series of questions concerning the sex and age of the individual, whether married or unmarried, the colour of his or her eyes and hair and so forth.

From my own experience, the excessive covering over of the handwriting precluded my use of psychometry and made it necessary for me to use clairvoyance instead. The handwriting itself does not give me the impression; though if I perceived the handwriting I would certainly get impressions from it. The thing that I tried to sense in holding the envelope was the radiation of the writer's personality left there by him.

This experiment was, from my point of view, another *effort to force supernormal sensing into especially selected and quite arbitrary channels, in order to answer certain specific and quite limited questions*. I could get very little by this method of attempting to regulate my own clairvoyance. For if I placed myself in a truly psychic state, to be clairvoyant about a given envelope which contained a scrap of handwriting I might happen to get some information in clairvoyant

images (as in the case of the new watch) about the author of the handwriting or about any number of other aspects of that piece of handwriting history. To explain more specifically why I might not be able to get the required information to answer these questions, I might sometimes perceive the image of the one who prepared the envelope of handwriting for the test, or he who had last handled it, instead of the person whose handwriting was on the paper inside. All these contributing factors lead to a bewildering and complicated series of clairvoyant images which make it quite impossible, from my point of view, to study or estimate clairvoyance by means of such an arbitrary technique.

Supernormal sensing, whether for pure clairvoyance, psychometry or telepathy may, to a degree I know, be focused and consciously helped by my own control so as to become either consciously active or consciously closed. But I have already explained the vital importance of an *energy stimulus* which works spontaneously to create a psychic state in which I am able to be clairvoyant. All that I have said about the impossibility of becoming clairvoyant to order, concerning a pack of ESP cards, applies also to becoming arbitrarily clairvoyant about a questionnaire concerning an individual whose handwriting I happen to hold encased in an envelope.

I cannot say that I consider that I worked from psychic levels when I told cards for Dr. Rhine, or answered a questionnaire about the life of an individual whose small scrap of handwriting lay in an envelope before me. I made myself give answers to both types of questioning, in these tests of clairvoyance and telepathy at Duke. But according to my knowledge of the processes of clairvoyance and telepathy, I merely guessed.

The result of further experiments I made with Dr. Rhine, while I was in a trance state have been published; he had spent little time on the study of the nature of the *control* personality in trance and so could, therefore, give me little help on this subject.

Whilst I had been delighted and interested to work with this university teacher in the terms of his own experiments, I did not find that he had any answers to certain vital problems which still concerned me. I was still searching for answers to the mystery of the mechanisms of my supernormal powers, and the meaning of my trance mediumship.

Supernormal sensing is not subject, so far, to the same laws as our rationalized thinking. Supernormal perceptions, as I have experienced them, are not limited by either time or space. Science, it is true, has not yet been able to discover the laws by which the mind is able to work telepathically or clairvoyantly. But I believe that the time is not far distant when research may be able to both measure and photograph those human energies by which supernormal sensing occurs.

Chapter XXXVII

ANALYSIS UNDER HYPNOSIS AND OTHER EXPERIMENTS GIVE ME FURTHER CONTROL OVER MY SUPERNORMAL POWERS

ON my return to England in 1934 for the summer, an opportunity for further research was ready for me to undertake. Dr. William Brown, the well-known English psychiatrist, who founded the experimental laboratory of psychology at Oxford University wanted me to begin a new type of research into the nature and mechanism of trance. He had, the year previously, tried a few trance experiments with me, in which he communicated with the *Uvani* personality; following this he made one attempt at hypnotising me and again succeeded in reaching *Uvani* under that condition. This led Dr. Brown to propose a new type of experiment; he suggested that if I would be willing, he would like to make a study of multiple personality, analysing me under hypnosis. This was not the first time that such a proposal had been made to me by psychiatrists and analysts, but I now felt ready for the first time, to seriously undertake such an experiment. I had reached a point through my own investigation of the processes of my trance, where I welcomed the prospect of any further light which analysis might give me on the nature of my own mediumship; I also hoped that it

would offer an objective method of testing the reality or non-reality of the *control* personalities.

I made it clear to Dr. Brown that I was fully aware of the psychiatric viewpoint towards the nature of trance, that it was a form of neurotic escape, and that I knew that it was regarded by psychiatrists and others as a disassociation of the personality; I was also conscious that any psychiatrist attempting to analyze me, whether he did it with or without hypnosis, would be searching for the fundamental cause of my disassociation in some shock or fear in early childhood. I declared that I was willing to cooperate with him in this analysis, and was quite prepared to risk the loss of the trance condition and the possible disappearance of the *controls*, should these prove to be no more than "a disassociation of my own personality."

I was advised by some of the serious investigators in psychic research, not to undergo these experiments with Dr. Brown for fear that it would lead to a disruption of my trance accomplishment. But I welcomed this opportunity. In addition to my previous doubts and disappointments in arriving at any clear understanding of these psychic states, I also continued to wonder whether the physicians were correct who had so often suggested that my trance mediumship was a contributing factor to my constant ill health.

While I underwent analysis, Dr. Brown's assistant recorded my galvanic reflexes. I had less than a dozen appointments with him. In the first session he asked me to recall while still in my waking state, whatever memories I could of my childhood; the rest of the work took place while I was under hypnosis; *but it is important to note that Dr. Brown never reached the controls by this method.* So at the last appointment before he went on a holiday, he asked me to go into trance. When I awoke, Dr. Brown told me that he had, on this occasion, spoken with *Uvani*.

There were no further sessions. Although I had gained at that time no further understanding of my own mediumship, I did, however, soon prove to myself that a new mastery

of my supernormal functioning had become mine. This was important and unforeseen. Now I developed the ability, in the course of the following months, to penetrate those levels of consciousness from which the *controls* had drawn their supernormal knowledge.

This came about, as a result of my careful study and contemplation of the method by which Dr. Brown had been able to make me recall on awakening exactly what I had said in hypnotic sleep. I felt certain that I could apply to myself the same principle of hypnotic suggestion as Dr. Brown had used on me. I also came to the conclusion that if I had been able to speak under hypnotic control, I could also write to myself in that state. I therefore experimented for a number of months in developing automatic writing under auto-suggestion. I believed that if I began to give myself the necessary suggestion, before going into trance, I would then not only be able to penetrate those other levels of consciousness, familiar to *controls* but that my automatic writing would reveal facts about the levels visited.

It is necessary to explain for those unfamiliar with the mechanisms of mediumship, that up to the time of this analysis with Dr. Brown, all my trance utterances seemed, from what had been reported to me, to be transmitted either through the *controls* (Uvani, etc.) or some other specific trance personalities. But never at any time had I been able to accept the existence of the individuality of any so-called trance personality who claimed to communicate through me; though I had accepted as genuine the information drawn from those other levels of consciousness, through which these *control* personalities seemed to work. This had, therefore, left me in the somewhat paradoxical position of doubting the reality of the *controls*, while recognizing the validity of the source from which they drew their supernormal knowledge.

Automatic writing is at present a little-understood and much-misused process. What is claimed to be derived by this method from supernormal sources, may often be no more than an expression of the unconscious conflicts and desires

of the human writer who produces these scripts. But even though many of the scripts are the result of subconscious conflict and self-delusion, there are a small number which deserve objective checking. I regard my own experiments with automatic writing made at this time through auto-suggestion, as of no importance to anyone but myself. And I only refer to them because they played an important part in beginning to free me from further dependence on the *control* personalities in my supernormal development.

My automatic writings dealt not only with the subject of my immediate life, but also with what seemed to relate to possible previous states of consciousness. Some of this material was undoubtedly drawn from my subconscious, but a great part of it, I am convinced, came from areas of the superconscious.

How then did I, during this experience, come to distinguish between the levels of the subconscious and superconscious mind? The subconscious, I recognized in both picture and symbol as representing the conflicts of my daily life; but beyond this level, I discovered still other areas which needed to be explored. I came gradually to understand that I was drawing from a less personal and more extended area which reached beyond the limits of the experience of the subconscious. In it, I found vivid pictures of distant and unknown places and people, fragments of strange music, rare colours and unfamiliar languages. These experiences were quite unrelated to those (subconscious) dreams of the conflicts and problems of daily living; with such dream symbols, I have always been able to deal, interpreting them quite easily for myself. But in these more profound and unknown scenes I came to realise that I was drawing upon areas beyond those related to either my waking or subconscious states. I could only explain my deep sense of connection with such remote but nevertheless soul-stirring experiences, as due either to their association with possible other lives I had lived; or with race memories. Penetration of these supernormal areas made me aware of a consciousness greater than anything I had ever before

conceived. A sense of supreme awareness pervaded me; it was a state in which I was permitted to participate and receive knowledge from some ultimate source beyond the limits of personal being.

The *controls* had not been dissipated by means of the analysis under hypnosis, nor had any new interpretation of their meaning come to me during my work with Dr. Brown. No scientist, I had to admit, had yet been found to interpret the real meaning of trance communication. Again I began to wonder whether the whole structure of mediumship might not depend on a form of telepathy and whether the medium does not draw information for communications, from the subconscious mind of the *sitter*.

Back in America for the third time, I spoke to one of the greatest living scientists about the impasse of my investigations of trance mediumship. Not only was he expert in his own field, but he possessed a more comprehensive understanding and knowledge of supernormal phenomena and the laws which govern them than anyone I have ever known. He suggested that if I wanted to penetrate more deeply into the problem of my own mediumship, I should find a way to have an objective investigation made of the *controls*; to do this, he suggested that I get some doctor with the proper training, to make a study of the physiological states which registered while I was in and out of trance, so that science might begin to learn what a psychic state really is. This suggestion interested me deeply, and gave me a new line of approach, by which a serious study of the *controls* and the trance state might at last be made.

It was not long before I found that the doctor who had looked after my general health, had sufficient training to make these physiological tests for me. He made a series of these experiments, first on me in the waking state, and then on the alleged *controls*, when I was in trance. Unfortunately, these physiological tests were left incomplete, and were done

too inaccurately to allow any scientific deductions to be drawn from them.

Another experiment along similar lines was undertaken on my return to London. Very little time was given to it by the investigators; only three tests of physiological reactions were recorded. From these few experiments made upon the alleged *controls* and myself, a report was then made, stating that no difference was evident between the responses I exhibited in the waking and the trance states. I remained convinced, however, that in spite of the fact that this report was negative, the physiological investigation of trance mediumship, thoroughly and objectively studied by trained researchers, would reveal interesting and useful data to the human race; for I have not forgotten that it was one of the greatest scientists of our day, who proposed this experimental method of the physiological investigation of the *control* personalities and myself.

I did another piece of research that summer in England; this was a repetition of the type of work that Dr. Rhine had been doing with the cards in *Extra-Sensory Perception*. In going into this second experiment to test clairvoyance and telepathy with the ESP cards, I knew that my work would be limited by the nature of the cards just as in the previous experiments at Duke University. But I asked a friend of mine, who was well acquainted with the range of my psychic work, to visit, if possible, one of these London experiments. I wanted the verification of my own reactions to this type of work before I closed the door on it as a possible means of study.

She received an invitation from the investigator to take part in one of the ESP card experiments. I made no comment to my friend, either before or after the experiment, as to my own attitude toward these card tests. When that day's work was over, we left the laboratory together, and her first remark to me was that I had seemed to show no signs of working psychically at any time during the ESP card tests for clairvoyance. I agreed with her comment, for I knew that while reading these ESP cards in London, I had not been in

a psychic state. I had again, as at Duke University, made a sincere effort, while experimenting with these cards, to apply my own powers of clairvoyance and telepathy. But for the same reasons I have previously given, about dealing with Dr. Rhine's tests of clairvoyance and telepathy, with these identical ESP cards, I could not become psychic over their symbols. Consequently, I was forced to give my answers by what I consider a process of guessing, quite unrelated to either clairvoyance or telepathy; I was therefore, not surprised to hear that the results of my ESP card tests in London, were entirely negative.

After these experiments were over, a friend recalled to me that in a trance communication received by him, some months before I started the English experiments, he had been told by the *control* that my work in the coming summer in England would contain nothing but negative results. The *control* sent this message to me through this friend, advising me not to work at all that summer, because I had as yet, recovered very little vitality from a previous serious illness. Since I have however, never taken the advice or the opinions of the *controls* seriously, concerning my own life, I brushed this suggestion aside, and in spite of ill health I tried to do a great deal of experimental work that summer. In retrospect I must, in candour admit, that whatever Force gave me that advice, the prediction, as well as the advice that it offered, was more than justified by the lack of success in the work of that year.

I have often been asked to explain how I regard the advice and suggestions given by my own *controls* for my benefit. Again I repeat I have never been willing to accept entirely, the reality of these *controls* as personalities, but I do accept the authenticity of certain knowledge I receive supernormally through them. I have always regarded the direction of my own life as my responsibility and have never felt therefore any need of external help or advice. I have been fortunate enough to have always been aware of a very definite power

within myself upon which I am able to draw when necessary for help either for myself or others.

By means of this finer *sensing* which scarcely seems supernatural since it has been so much a part of me since earliest childhood, I have always been able to reach out for whatever knowledge I might need for myself or for those who are close to me. I have regarded this power as a sacred responsibility and trust and I allow no personal experience or opinion of others to interfere with its true functioning. As I have developed more ease in reaching out consciously to those areas, regarded by some as subconscious and by others as superconscious, I have come to wonder whether the so-called *control personalities* as well as I, in my waking state, do not draw from the self-same extraneous source of knowledge and understanding, though in somewhat different ways.

The attitude of medicine and psychology towards those who have any form of mediumship or special sensitivities is to place them in the category of neurotics, hysterics or even schizophrenics, and then consider that this has finally classified and disposed of them. But as I have suggested in tracing the phases of my own research with a number of well-known and experienced investigators, none of them was able to throw any new light for me on the nature and mechanisms of my mediumship and I was always, in each step, forced to re-examine it for myself. And I feel bound to state, not in a desire to defend mediumship in general but in order to clear myself from these false appellations of abnormality, that I do not find that I show any signs of being either neurotic or hysterical in any of my adjustments to life. Rather would I say that I find myself more sane, more objective and more practical in coping with life, than are many of the non-mediumistic people I meet in my social and professional existence. And I must add that whatever disturbances of ill health have been mine, are primarily not due to my mediumship, but to an extremely poor constitution, a family inheritance. *My investigations of the phenomena of mediumship convince me that these are not new or extraneous sensitivities but rather refine-*

ments of the physical senses all men naturally possess. I cannot therefore accept the usual explanation of mediumship as an abnormal or supernormal development.

Part VI

**I DISCOVER FOR MYSELF A MEANING
TO MEDIUMSHIP**

Chapter XXXVIII

MEDIUMSHIP AND OTHER SUPERNORMAL PERCEPTIONS AS I HAVE COME TO KNOW THEM

AT the end of the summer of 1937 I asked myself what new understanding of my own supernormal powers I had gained by submitting myself for some years to arduous and objective research under the direction of a number of recognised medical men and university professors, in both the United States and England. These men included many recognised leaders in the field of psychiatry and internal medicine, as well as biology and psychology. Every part of my anatomy had been examined at one time or another by the various specialists and researchers who made these experiments. X-rays and fluoroscopes, galvanometers and cardiographs were used. All my sense organs were tested, my blood, heart, chest, throat, nose and various internal organs were examined. Some of these tests were made while I was in and out of trance. Others were made under hypnosis as well as in a waking state. Records were made of my physical, mental and emotional reactions in trance and under hypnosis, as well as in my normal waking states.

And what light, I now asked myself, had all this scientific research at the end of seven years, thrown upon the nature and mechanism of my supernormal functioning? In terms of the reports and investigations of the doctors and the profes-

sors I would answer that the experiments showed meagre results and no illuminating conclusions as to the nature of my supernormal powers. But in terms of the understanding of my own supernormal powers, I came to the conclusion that I had really learned a great deal for myself about how to function consciously in telepathy, clairvoyance and precognition. I had also made some interesting discoveries about the workings of my mental mediumship and I had come to certain conclusions about the nature of physical mediumship. Each experiment I had gone through had forced me to re-examine the way in which I worked supernormally, and showed me why I could not accept as valid, certain of the scientific techniques which were used as a means of testing or investigating my supernormal powers.

I know now that most of these workers were not looking for the answers to what I consider the basic questions concerning supernormal phenomena. And until Science comes to grips with the way in which clairvoyance, clairaudience, precognition and physical and mental mediumship operate, nothing revealing and conclusive will be realised.

Among the scientists who did research with me, I was aware of two fundamental attitudes; a minority was interested in a personal approach to my mediumship as a means of gaining knowledge and information to be applied to their own life and work. Such investigators would, if questioned, certainly deny any private interest or confidence in this practical aspect of my work. The records of such research, in which the investigators were personally concerned will, I am certain, in consequence of their emotional identification with the subject matter, never be published.

The attitude, however, of the majority of the scientists who worked with me was of another order. They considered themselves objective and open-minded, but they met the investigation of mediumship and other supernormal phenomena with an attitude of negation. While I have always welcomed the skepticism and detachment of the scientific observers who have worked with me, I have come to believe that this

personally negative, instead of a positive, objectively critical approach, may interfere with the detached procedure of pure research.

Amongst the many scientists I have known there has been only one who combined with exceptional scientific training, a genuine psychic power of his own, and a profound understanding of how it functioned. Perhaps without such knowledge, the scientist who attempts research into supernatural phenomena will never be able to develop an adequate technique for its investigation. And without this fundamental comprehension of the nature of psychic processes in his own being, the researcher will constantly be assailed by fear and doubt and thereby negate and destroy his own research.

But this state of fear and negation is in many men; they dread change and resist any pressure which draws them away from familiar paths to those less known. Man clings to what he hopes will remain the security of an ancient pattern, rather than risk the untried forms of the new. Only some terrific shock or crisis forces the mass of men to break from their age-old habit and tradition. When negation rises up in the garb of fear and insecurity, it turns the herd of men against the few who serve as advance guard to open new pathways for those who follow.

We see this same struggle taking place today, in education and government as well as in medicine, physics and biology, against the new implications of greater personal freedom and wider social responsibility for all men. Such changes are resisted because the old order has served in the past.

. . .

As I grew in the understanding of the development of my own mediumship I knew that my psychic capacities had actually begun to develop in my early childhood. What I then called my first *sensing* and *seeing* of movements, of light, sound and colour were an important aspect of the growth of my supernormal powers. When I first became aware of these nebulous *surrounds* of all living organisms, I began to study

them and discovered that they appeared to contract and expand, as though breathing with an "outer lung." I also perceived at that time, and have ever since, been aware that light and colour and odour were given to flowers, as they breathed inward gently, by means of their *surround*. Since my earliest youth, I observed these *surrounds* or *auras* of all animals, plants and man, working on this same principle of a gentle exterior inhalation and exhalation.

Not only did I become aware of this process of breathing which took place in the *surrounds* of the living organisms I studied, but I also made certain discoveries about the rhythm of my own breathing. This became very important to me in later life; I could consciously shift my way of breathing when I wished, to change from one psychic state to another. I mention the control of the tempos of breathing because it plays a vital part in all of my supernormal work. Few people are aware that there is always this intimate connection between the way in which I breathe and the kind of psychic state I wish to induce. This applies not only to my conscious movement into trance, but also to my power of shifting at will into the clairvoyant, the clairaudient or the precognitive state. *Each state requires a different tempo of breathing.*

If this principle of controlled breathing were more clearly understood by those who are sensitives they might thereby help to regulate their own psychic state, and avoid much of the hysteria usually associated with the preliminary stages of mediumistic development. Hypersensitivity is an inevitable part of the psychic nature, but it can be both controlled and protected by the use of specialised breathing. And yet this is a subject that I have never heard discussed by either psychics or those researchers in the West who have been concerned with studying the nature and mechanism of supernormal perceptions. No one showed me how to control my breathing in this fashion. I believe that I first learned to hold and change the rhythm of my breath in those early days in my garden. Perhaps it was the awe and wonder at these first childhood experiences of entering a whirling

world of light and movement, which caused a state of sudden suspense, so breathless that I began thus to hold back my breathing and so first change its normal rhythm.

I can still recall that in those youthful days I would command myself and the flowers to be completely still. I would remain suspended, almost without breath or motion, so that I could enter into the rhythm and colour around me, without missing a single sound or movement. Out of these earliest experiences of *sensing* and *seeing*, began my habit of giving myself either mental or vocal orders, which developed into a conscious technique of applying auto-suggestion to all aspects of my living. My later discovery of the use of suggestion as a practical means of overcoming the difficulties of existence may have been born out of living so much alone, and of being so little understood by grownups that I was forced to rely entirely on myself for direction.

Always this light and colour and odour I *sense* and *see* have reached me in a state of incessant movement, going either towards or away from the organism in the form of active rays. Each type of living has for me its own particular kind of radiation, whether it be a flower, an animal, a metal or a stone. In man, the light and colour rays are more condensed than are those of lower organisms.

In order to do supernormal *sensing*, I enter into the very life of these rays of light and sound and colour and I use the light rays as one might a telescope in order to see what lies beyond and within the body protected by its own *surround*. Then I seem to be able to sense the *history* of the organism which rests within its own gently breathing envelope. But I can only do this if I attach myself to the light and colour rays which penetrate and emanate from the *surround*. That is why I have emphasized the nature of this process which takes place around the object as being one of some kind of *radiation*; it is always on these shifting rays of light and colour that I work whenever I do clairvoyance, telepathy or projection.

I am fully aware that my own trance, as I have shown in the story of my early childhood, did begin as a means of

escape from a too painful aspect of living. The immediate cause of all trance may well be, as psychiatrists claim, due to some sudden shock or fear which causes a disassociation in the psyche. But classifying trance as due to shock or fear or a wish to evade some painful experience does not explain either its fundamental nature or its function. *It only describes the immediate way in which it manifests.* Scientific research has not yet discovered the true nature of a trance state nor been able to show how trance is able to penetrate areas beyond the reach of the conscious mind in the waking state.

Most people regard trance as consisting simply of a passive and sleeplike state. They do not realise that an active as well as a passive principle is here at work. For trance contains within it a double rhythm which I have come to understand through my own experience. The passivity of the trance acts as a mirror in which the images and thoughts of its more active aspect are received. The active and passive principle are so closely related as to bring forth and reflect almost simultaneously; and both of these trance conditions, the active and the passive, I know are stimulated by the creative and glandular processes of the physical body. Trance is mental, emotional and physiological and its true condition still awaits more exact scientific investigation. Trance in its duality of active and passive behaviour, responds according to a fundamental law of our entire Universe; this principle of being passive and active, negative and affirmative, links such mediumship to the laws which govern the action of matter and energy throughout space.

The role of the *control* personality is, I believe after my experiences and study, primarily that of interpreter of the images constructed or discovered by the subconscious mind; it might also be but an aspect of this subconscious mind which dramatises itself into a trance personality. On the other hand, is it not equally possible that the subconscious mind is in itself but a channel which can reach out toward other areas of superconsciousness, and draw from that illim-

itable reservoir of the Universe, knowledge beyond the attainment of man's conscious state?

So far as I am able to judge, what I receive clairvoyantly is in no way connected with my personal life and associations, either conscious or subconscious. I know immediately when this type of acceleration begins, and I am aware that without its action I can make no claim to working supernormally. Whenever my clairvoyant faculty is active, this produces a stimulation, a sense of excitement, such as one feels on entering some unknown and forbidden territory as a child.

The problem of dealing with the nature of clairvoyant vision is very complex. It is regarded by most of the investigators with whom I have done laboratory research, as a form of extra-sensory perception. But when these scientists are asked to define what "extra-sensory" perception is, they usually describe it merely as a form of sensing outside of the range of the five physical senses of man.

I do not, from my own experience of clairvoyance, consider that this faculty is either an extra-sensory or abnormal perception, but rather that it *is simply due to the intensification and refinement of the activity of the five senses, of touch, taste, smell, sight and hearing, combined and carried to a higher pitch of awareness than most people ever reach.*

I should like to give a concrete example from my own experience, as to the way in which clairvoyance develops for me as I intensify and raise my own state of consciousness. I might happen to be working clairvoyantly with a certain investigator and suppose that I find myself suddenly projected to the garden of this experimenter's home. There I become aware perhaps of standing under an apple tree. Now all the physical senses here come into play *within the conditions of my clairvoyant state, even though the clairvoyant sense still predominates.*

It is winter and I see the apple tree which is at that moment stripped and bare. Then I am able also to see that same apple tree in its different phases of seasonal change and growth outside of that moment in time. Just which aspects

of the tree I may see, depends partly on my own focus, also partly on circumstances beyond my control. I may glimpse it first as a seed when planted or as a young tree not yet ready to bear fruit. Or again I may perceive it in full bloom and quite definitely smell the odour of its leaves and blossoms. Or I may get an impression of the tree, laden down with apples and be able to describe the colour and size of its fruit and anticipate their flavour to such an extent that saliva gathers in my mouth. While I am in such a clairvoyant state all this may take place in rapid sequence. It may concern many periods of that apple tree's life, or I may only catch a glimpse of the phase which is especially related at that moment, to the life of the investigator with whom I am working.

But in this example which I have chosen at random as illustration, it is important to note that the physical senses of sight, smell and taste are very much in evidence, *though they occur within the functioning of the clairvoyant state*. In my own experience, supernormal sensing is never "extra-sensory," but always includes within it the functioning of the five physical senses.

Often in clairvoyant images I see a single person with perhaps some part of a limb, or a facial feature, suddenly emphasized and growing to a size and importance quite out of relation and proportion to the rest of the figure I am seeing. When this occurs I always know that there is purpose and meaning in this distortion. If it is presented in this way, it is a method of drawing my attention to some particular problem or event, for instance, on one occasion the hand of a man I was seeing clairvoyantly increased to such size that I could see clearly that it lacked a thumb, a significant disfigurement to the sitter. Once I saw the dimple on a cheek of the dead wife of a certain man with whom I was working, grow so large that it seemed to become a hole in her face. The reason for this distortion appearing to me became clear when the unnatural importance of that par-

ticular dimple in the love relation of the husband and wife was presently told me.

I do not know when and how clairvoyant vision begins, any more than anyone can explain how their own sight begins; but once it has commenced, I am able to increase its power and intensify its action, *by consciously accelerating my breathing.* — When clairvoyance does begin for me, a tingling sensation passes through the body but seems to release itself through my fingers and feet, the tip of my nose and other hyper-sensitive parts of my body; it is as though the clairvoyant mood were cleansing the channels of the body to make room for itself. As this happens I know also that my other senses become sharpened and more acute and interact with the clairvoyant vision, enabling me to become increasingly aware of sound, taste, smell, touch and sight.

My clairvoyant vision is always accompanied by its own musical rhythm. It is as though the act of clairvoyance produces, in my case, a sound chamber of its own. By this I mean that while in the clairvoyant state I myself seem to be contained within a sound box which, far from disturbing me, creates an exhilaration in which I feel protected. Within this contained area, I am aware of finer distinctions in tone and volume and hear far more clearly the tones of a human voice or of a musical instrument. At such a moment I am able to be more keenly aware of divisions in the notes of a tone of a voice or an instrument than of the words which are sung, or the tune that is played. I am then also conscious that there is a sense of separateness established between me and the object or person of the experiment. A thick mist seems to form which divides me from the subject with which I am working. This misty veil or substance steadies my own movement and makes it possible for me to receive by means of its reflective power, the thoughts, feelings and emotions connected with the object or person of the experiment. As the clairvoyance grows, actual physical surroundings become dimmed; also I am aware of a kind of expansion within myself. I seem to be at the same time both within and

without my body, while drawing breath and vision from the *field* surrounding it. In this condition of clairvoyance my entire body seems to take on a visual perception, so that I am able to see not only through the forehead but equally well with the back of the head or the fingers, and sometimes the whole surface of the skin becomes both an all-seeing eye and an all-hearing ear.

In my own experience I cannot easily draw a satisfactory distinction between clairaudience and clairvoyance so as to clearly explain exactly where clairvoyance leaves off and clairaudience begins. I know that both these types of perception are usually classified as "extra-sensory," but I never find them functioning except with the other senses; again I emphasize this belief of mine based on experience that all of our physical senses are included in an intensified or refined form, within the functioning of clairvoyance and clairaudience.

The question of the nature of the images received in clairvoyance, their method of reception and their gradual building up or translation by man into words, is still a vast province to be objectively explored, and investigated. In order to estimate the role of the image-making process in clairvoyance, would it not be interesting to discover what proportion of so-called normal people, receive their ordinary impressions in every day life in the form of images or pictures? This must indeed be a universal experience, for man's first attempts to communicate with others by means of writing, were always in terms of picture language.

I have previously spoken of receiving clairvoyant impressions as images and then having to interpret their meaning in relation to the circumstances or people they impinge upon. From earliest childhood I have been aware of fundamental symbols which I seemed to be compelled to draw. When I went to school I found these images were closely linked with the shape of the printed alphabet. To me the letters also became associated with and identified with types of people and their characters; this grew into what might be called my personal picture-language and when I later came to use

clairvoyance I found that these same symbols presented themselves to me always associated with certain types and temperaments. I have now what is an almost infallible sign language for me which makes the classification of all the people I meet and work with a clear and simple matter.

In the every day exchange between people there is, under ordinary circumstances, stimulation of the activity of the heart, the movement of the blood and the action of brain responses taking place. But when communication occurs through "supernormal" sensing all these processes are, in my case, distinctly speeded up; there is a definite acceleration of sensation, productive of a rise of temperature, a quickening in the heart action and a swifter pulse. The normal processes of thinking, sensing and seeing are accelerated and a changing emotional state takes its place; I then become the recipient of a series of pictures, images and reflections which reach me seemingly slower than through my other or "normal" senses. When I am using clairvoyant vision I do *not* look *out* at the object, as in ordinary sight, but I draw the object towards me and enter into its very life essence, becoming for that moment a part of it.

So definitely is this an experience which impinges on one's physical body from *outside*, that when such an experiment is over, it is difficult, if not impossible, to remember any part of the experience—even a single word spoken. The effects of "supernormal" sensing are very different from what occurs if one sits down to think through a difficult problem for one's self. The solution of the personal difficulty brings about a certain strain and fatigue; but after "supernormal" sensing there follows only a pleasant relaxation and stimulation, without any form of tiredness; there is for me no disturbance to the mind, only a feeling of lightness, accord and rest.

I have heard it said that in "supernormal" sensing, concentration and meditation are necessary. But this seems contrary to anything which I have learned from my own experience in clairvoyance, telepathy and projection. I would say that ease, nonchalance, an absence of directed thinking about

the process, are prerequisites to the production of such states. A mood of what I like to call high carelessness, is the one in which I obtain the best results. In fact I have found that any conscious effort to think, feel, sense or see in the manner of meditation, makes impossible that accelerated movement which I have found essential to "supernormal" perception.

I am now aware of seven levels of consciousness when I work clairvoyantly. But it took me many years of self-examination before I was able to analyze their differences. Transition from one of these states to another is swift and subtle. I can only describe these changes as they are known to me. I have not met anyone who seemed aware of these shifting levels which register certain physiological changes during the process of clairvoyance. In the *first state* there is an instinctive reaction which registers in the nerve centers of the stomach, accompanied by an intense and primitive desire. In the *second state*, I become aware of a movement which sways upward and outward from the solar plexus and then folds back towards the base of the spine. In that moment a welling up of strength transforms the original primitive desire into a pleasurable state of suspension and anticipation. This *third movement* which follows the demanding activity at the solar plexus, leads to an expansion of the torso and a stimulation of the circulation of the breath throughout my being; this change of tempo causes the spine to relax and become flexible. The warm and pleasant sensations which arise from the spine open up a distinct *fourth level* of consciousness; which leads to a clearing and expansion at the back of the neck and this sensation continues to rise until it reaches the skull and penetrates the brain.

In the *fifth state*, the space behind the forehead clears and becomes suffused with soft light in which changing colours play an important part and I actually enter into a dimension which is colour. Accompanying this state comes a condition of peace, free of all thought and connection with time, space or events. This period of passive receptivity is followed in the *sixth state* by a general acceleration and unification of all

five senses. Now the process of clairvoyance definitely begins to function and coordinates and speeds up all sense perceptions.

In the beginning of clairvoyance the tiny space behind the forehead, illumined by the glow of light, seems to grow and expand beyond the measurement of time or space. The action which then takes place can be related to an actual event of today, an occurrence of tomorrow, or of an episode which was lived a century or more ago. Likewise the actors in the scene I see in that space behind the forehead may be people who are now alive or those who lived in the distant past. Within this moving panorama these figures are distinct, whether they be large or small.

The *seventh level* of consciousness contains within it much that I have so far found difficult to put into words. This final level is no longer a part of the process, but is the attainment of a new state of being. In that instant I become almost simultaneously, more and yet less myself. It is at this moment of the crescendo of my clairvoyance that precognition, clair-audience, projection and vision-at-a-distance occur simultaneously. In this state, I receive inspiration, and I become one, am identified, with all life, which my vision beholds and my wish embraces. On this level of consciousness I can reach out and be aware at will of the cycle of life of any human being. Had I not learned to control this power of perception to protect myself from the impact of these experiences, such intensive sensing and receptivity might cause exhaustion. As my body becomes increasingly exhilarated in this development of the clairvoyant state, my mind grows more clear and quiet.

I know that clairvoyance and other "supernormal" sensitivities are not simply mental processes, since they work through the emotional and physiological functions of man before they reach the mental state. When investigators classify those who show psychic proclivities as "abnormal," they have failed to recognize that "supernormal" functioning is rooted in the normal and instinctive nature of man. Unfortunately, the development of psychic sensitivity which may have begun spontaneously, is sometimes forced unduly by those who are

eager to hurry the opening of their own powers. And this may lead to a neurotic or unbalanced condition, which does not occur when supernormal sensitivities are rightly handled. Others who have begun to develop, sometimes misuse this new capacity in a desire for selfish purposes, to gain either money, attention or power.

The foundation of such powers as clairvoyance and telepathy are, I am convinced, not abnormal, but natural to all human beings; they are simply the result of the development of our physical senses and are the instinctive products of man's gradual evolution. I know this to be true, not only from my own experience, but from my knowledge of people from all parts of the world, whom I have met, types which have oriented themselves to a normal and practical existence but who happened to develop some aspects of "supernormal" sensing, which helped them to enlarge either their personal or professional life. A number of such people whom I met have been interested in archeological or anthropological research, and have admitted to me that they found themselves possessed of faculties which enabled them to perceive the inward nature of whatever objects they were investigating. Sometimes, such individuals, through their supernormal sensing, were able, unexpectedly, to analyze the unknown history of some prehistoric relic, or to uncover the technique of some lost colour process or the secret of some ancient glaze. Others have told me that they succeeded in restoring lost modes of early music, forgotten religious ritual and buried forms of ancient speech, hidden within some fragments of the past. Such recognitions of the history of man's evolution in music, art, language and archeology were not vague ideas of untrained individuals; they were statements made by men and women thoroughly versed in their chosen professions, who accepted the validity of such experiences of sensing or "supernormal" identifying of an old record, only when careful scientific research had corroborated the data of their "supernormal" perceptions.

What explanation has modern psychology to offer for such phenomena? It tends to reject the validity of such claims as

those which I have just cited as paranormal; and it prefers to regard individuals who claim ability to recover ancient knowledge through "supernormal" sensing, as either neurotic or unbalanced. *But psychology will finally be obliged to envisage the human psyche in its comprehensive relation to both time and space.* When that time comes, the present concept of memory and consciousness will have to be revised so as to include the superconscious as well as the subconscious areas in man.

Instinctive awareness which I find as the base of all supernormal sensing, is not confined to man alone, for it also directs the behaviour of all other living organisms. Intuitive perception is that activating principle in the life of both man and animal, which preserves them against the hostile forces of their own environment. This alertness, or hypersensitivity, in all living creatures, is created by the fundamental synthesis of their five senses registering within the physical body; such instinctive vigilance is the foundation of all true self-protection, which means survival. "Supernormal" sensing is really nothing, therefore, but *a refinement of that dynamic power which propels all life through its own incessant growth and evolution.*

I have already spoken of the way the development and use of my own supernormal perceptions is related to the control of my breathing. All athletic trainers and teachers of singing are aware of the vital importance of breath in regulating the balance between movement and equilibrium. Born athletes, dancers and skaters not only possess an instinctively perfect coordination of the body, but also an *unconsciously* perfect correlation of their breathing with their movements. I emphasize this, in order to draw attention to the fact that the instinctive athlete or dancer is born with such natural coordination, now rare in man, but still common to all animals. Man has forgotten that rhythmic coordination of movement and breath was once his natural heritage. He has lost his birthright, but he can remember how to retrain this instinctive capacity for his own use. And so today, for success in sports or dance or song, man

submits to a careful discipline in order to correlate his sense responses with bodily control.

From my own efforts to regulate my supernormal states, I know the importance of the exact use of breath in harmonizing the coordination of the body. The manner in which the psychic uses his special sensitivities is closely allied to the way in which the athlete, when alert for action, uses his physical senses. And by a careful study of my own breathing processes, I have discovered that I control my supernormal states in exactly the same way as an athlete or dancer controls his body.

The importance of the process of breathing as an aspect of supernormal phenomena is not yet recognised by the West. But the East has long understood its significance and use in both the instruction of Yoga and the ritual of the dance.

In ancient times it was known to teachers, leaders and many others that inspiration was the power which linked man with the Supreme Forces of the Universe. When this power of true communication with the Highest was lost to man, he not only forgot the method by which he had reached those states, but also the memory of this inspiration; what remains to him of this inspiration, man still reveres in his Sacred Scriptures as the living Word of God.

Chapter XXXIX

MY OWN CONCLUSIONS CONCERNING RADIATION, MIND AND CLAIRVOYANCE

AS I have grown more familiar in recent years, with the functioning of the body and the mind, I have come to know the *surround* as a *magnetic field*; and since this seems to be a more adequate term than either *aura* or *surround*, I shall continue to use it. While such a *field* envelops the physical body, it also encompasses in it a nebulous and mist-like formation around the body which seems to breathe at a higher vibration than the body to which it belongs. I also *see* this *field* acting as a life-giving and protective mechanism to the chemistry of the body. Although the *magnetic field* consists of substance similar to that of the body, it draws its strength as far as I can observe from the carbonic gas as well as from other elements of the body. These substances, when released from the physical organism, appear to come into contact with the atmosphere and form therewith a closely woven, though fragile and cob-web-like stuff which always surrounds the body.

This *magnetic field* plays the role of the condenser of all experience which enters the physical body from without; it is capable of sifting through its mesh-like substance all atmospheric *radiations* of light, sound, colour and movement. This makes the *magnetic field* surrounding each human organism the receptor and reflector of all "supernormal" as well as normal perceptions which eventually reach the human organism.

When experience is received within the *magnetic field*

I see it as then passing through the body in a series of light rays which move rhythmically in and out in a swift and continuous succession. The *field* is able to participate in the ceaseless changes of the physical body through an inner process, whereby these light rays register, unfailingly, the design of daily living throughout the physical, mental and other bodily states of the human organism.

I always examine the condition of the *magnetic field* which envelops the body of the person with whom I work clairvoyantly. It is by the state of this *field* that I am able, according to its clarity and particular colours, to judge the degree of physical, mental and emotional vitality and health of the individual. Colour plays a most important part in signifying the state of well being and emotional stress in the *field* of each person.

I have often been able to trace within the *magnetic field*, lines and breaks which tell me what specific disease or illness a person has had. My analyses of such "scars" have been verified on many occasions. To those who know its language of signs and colours, man's *magnetic field* becomes a kind of map by which the condition of body, mind and spirit is clearly disclosed. So does this *field* play a decisive role in the development of man's personality. I hope that Science will soon become aware of the existence of the *magnetic field* as the diagnostic chart of the state of man's entire being.

Since this magnetic field interpenetrates the physical body and yet reaches out and exchanges with other energies in the Universe, by means of *radiation*, man is thus closely linked with all the forces at play upon the world, through the energy of his mind, his emotion and his physical sensation. There is actually no real separation between man and his mind, his psyche and his body; these are but three aspects of man's being. And I am convinced that the key to the interrelation of man's three-fold nature lies in the scientific investigation of this *magnetic field* which envelops his physical body.

When man perceives the range of powers within his grasp, he eventually will understand the nature of his own *field*, and

then he will be able to reach out to the furthest realms of thought and being. What are now regarded as the accidental supernormal perceptions of the few, will gradually become the widely accepted and more clearly understood powers of the many. I do not state this as a plea for developing supernormal sensing in everybody; but were science to accept the actuality of this *field*, after a period of objective investigation, it would begin to alter its opinion concerning the nature of personality; and what the world now calls supernormal would gradually be accepted as the natural and normal condition of man.

I have described this *magnetic field* which I see enveloping all human beings, as the receiving station in which man may obtain images, impressions and sensations not only from other people but from many parts of the Universe. These impressions are simultaneously sifted by the responses of the mind which accepts or rejects such impressions; they are received and transmitted by a form of *radiation* which is active throughout nature.

The movement of this energy is not visible to ordinary sight. In my own case I first see movement in colour and light; the nature of this primary action taking place throughout space is a rotating one; and out of it are born all my objective clairvoyant perceptions. I am aware of heavy inchoate darkness, before I begin to see form clairvoyantly. This darkness is charged with pulsing, breathing, movement which bursts into curving rays of light and colour. Some of these seem to split from the original parent rays, and moving out, form themselves into lines of light which proceed to develop an animated four-fold movement. These vivid lines take on a swaying rhythmic motion as they interlace in light spirals throughout space. From these, more lines are continuously born which tumble into place and create simple forms. Within such shapes I am aware of energy forming into substance which is both iridescent and seemingly gelatinous. Globules of colour emerge from these light forms and contain, I believe, the original pattern and essence of all life.

This process occurs in a fraction of the time it takes me to describe it. Nor does any such conscious analysis ever accompany the activity of my seeing it. I mention it to clarify the transitions which occur before the clairvoyant sight is opened. At that moment I am able to see through, around and beyond an object. Again, I repeat, I must be in a state of easy relaxation, with no effort at concentration in order that this clairvoyance may function, and any attempt to force the vision simply limits its power.

I have described only what I directly perceive and know to exist, although I cannot pretend to wholly understand what takes place. I lack the scientific training to grasp what lies behind such transformations of energy into light and light into colour. Some of these changes, I am aware, are already known to the physicist, but I am now merely attempting to describe what I am able, through my own perceptions, to *sense* and *see* clairvoyantly.

Mind, in the universal sense, I know to be without and not within the human body. I am able to *see* the impressions emanating from the outer universe register in the *magnetic field* of all living organisms. As such ideas, sensations and emotions reach man from without, they are, I recognize, received by certain centres located within his own *magnetic field*; these impressions are then passed on to register within the physical body. From my own experience, I am prepared to state that the brain of man registers and directs the activity of only a limited part of the impressions of his own mind. For the mind of man consists not only of the conscious and the subconscious, but of the superconscious as well; and of these three areas, the subconscious and the superconscious are, as I *sense* and *see* them, located in the *magnetic field*; the conscious mind simply registers within the body a limited pattern of daily living.

To this conscious mind I attach little importance as compared to the subconscious or superconscious areas. For I regard it merely as a temporary pattern of existence, played upon and transformed by the other more powerful and more

important levels of consciousness. It is by means of the subconscious that man is linked to the experience and events of the past, and through the superconscious that man attains, or may attain, his own powers of vision and inspiration.

The area of the deep subconscious is, according to my own understanding, the source from which is born both the conscious and the underconscious mind. The underconscious, I see acting between the conscious and the subconscious levels and containing that part of the day's history which has not yet been dealt with, and drawn up into the pattern of the conscious mind.

Modern psychology has come, of late, to accept the hypothesis of the subconscious as the area in which man's buried wishes and forgotten experiences push through to the conscious mind, in symbolic form and action. But no such recognition has as yet been granted to the power and importance of the superconscious mind.

The subconscious, I regard as containing the whole and complete ego of man. But though the subconscious is complete and self-contained, as is the seed kernel from which a perfect tree with trunk and branch and leaves will ultimately spring forth, yet the fulfillment of the process and mechanics of this experience depend on its interrelation and exchange with its own superconscious. If the subconscious represents the seed of the tree, the superconscious is as the leaf and represents the external agent by which the tree of consciousness lives and breathes.

In each phase of evolution all changes in states of consciousness become enveloped in an external form appropriate to its degree of being. This transformation is evident in the evolution of all life from plant to animal and then to man. There is no reason to suppose that this process comes to a stop at man's present phase of development. Higher states of consciousness would inevitably evolve corresponding forms of being. And this I know to be true from my own personal experience of seeing and living in supernormal areas. Although I penetrate these levels through the direction of mind and

the control of breath, I do so, with the accompaniment of a swiftly vibrating *magnetic field*. The form of this *field* although invisible to normal sight, is the body which accompanies the functioning of superconsciousness in man. And though mind can reach out into space through the *radiation* of thought, each phase of consciousness is wrapped within some form of vehicle, subtle and invisible though it may be, which is appropriate to the state of evolution of its being.

. . .

I have described the steps by which I sought a fundamental explanation of mediumship in my work with the psychic researchers and the scientists. And when they had all failed to present any form of interpretation of supernormal functioning, I was forced to turn within myself and so seek to discover a more profound understanding of the meaning of mediumship. But before I give my own conclusions, I must, however, briefly recall that psychiatry still estimates all aspects of mediumship as abnormal states, in which all degrees of dissociation, including trance, are regarded as neurotic escapes from reality.

While I am able to agree that some "dissociated" people are neurotic, I cannot understand why this should condemn all who manifest signs of dissociation, as necessarily abnormal or unbalanced. It would be well to remember that every normal person has also his moments of dissociation in day-dreams or phantasy, and that these are but minor expressions of that same phenomenon which occurs in mediumistic states. Where then is the dividing line between what is normal and what is abnormal in dissociation? And how much phantasy may an individual be permitted before he must be classified as neurotic? This raises the interesting question of whether artists and sensitives are "escaping from reality," either in creating works of art or in mediumship. Or whether there may not be, in the state of superconsciousness, a higher reality from which the artist and the sensitive draw inspiration?

I have come now to a point in my own life, where I am prepared to take a stand, and to state positively that super-

consciousness is not a condition of illness and unbalance, but rather one of vitality, harmony and completeness, a state of realisation from which all the great creations and profound illuminations of mankind have been derived. And when I speak of superconsciousness, I refer to a state which I know through all the manifestations of mediumship. Dissociation has been considered as an abnormality and a source of destruction to the life and personality of the individual; but in the course of years, I have come to know that in my own states of separation, whether in or out of trance, I can be constructive and helpful to others as well as myself.

When I withdraw into the trance state, this neither tires nor exhausts me; rather do I gain strength and deeper understanding from the supernormal levels I then reach. When open-minded and earnest people, free from the limitations of a spiritualist faith, or any other fixed formula or belief, work with me, they have often reported that constructive help in healing, enlightenment and understanding, has been given to them, during my trance. I have received so much proof of the constructiveness of my trance states, for others as well as myself, that however much trance may be interpreted, as a means of escape from the problems of living, I am sure that it is more than that, since it contains certain positive and constructive elements of supreme importance to the growth of man's personality. I therefore believe that much study and investigation as to the nature of trance still lie ahead for the scientific investigator.

Because trance mediumship is so little understood today, I have given considerable attention to it here. Those unfamiliar with the various expressions of mediumship, may not be aware that both its mental and physical aspects manifest during the trance state. But I do not intend to discuss at length the nature of physical mediumship, because I regard it merely as a further transformation of that same energy evident in mental mediumship and in all other forms of supernormal phenomena.

In physical mediumship, I believe it is the wish of the unconscious mind which directs the energy (without material

means) that can throw vases to the ground or raise tables in the air. If unconscious mind can so influence objects by means of its energy, how much more effectively may conscious mind, with its more clearly focussed power, cause the movement of objects and the activity of people at hand or at a distance. I say this, knowing through my own experiments that I am able, to influence the movements of objects and the behaviour of people, without physical means. With the direction of conscious mind, I can also score, at will, certain numbers in a game of chance, with a frequency far beyond the expectations of the law of probability. I can carry such an experiment further and so control the mind of another person who is playing the game of chance, as to produce whatever number I have previously selected. By such results, I have shown again and again, how conscious mind can control physical phenomena; a proof that energy can be directed at will, and that wish and desire do control physical action. Surely such experiments invite further objective investigation.

Controlled experiments have been made, not only with the control of objects as in the case of the games of chance, but with the influencing of the behaviour of people at a distance. I might cite a very simple example in my own experience. When my daughter goes out, though I do not know where she is, I can if I choose project to her mind my wish that on her return, she bring me flowers of a certain kind and colour. When she comes home in the evening, she will be carrying whatever flowers I ordered her, with my conscious mind, to bring me. In this case, the use of will to direct energy is similar to the process which takes place in the control of the results of another's play, in games of chance.

How has it been possible for such things to happen? *I believe that thought is a process of energy that has the power to move through space with a swiftness invisible to ordinary sight.* In the two cases cited, the successful outcome of games of chance, and the desired flowers brought home by my daughter, I consider that these results are brought

about by my control of the radiations of energy sent out by my mind either to the dice in a game of chance, or to the mind of my own daughter. Such experiments, (of many, many similar ones) prove to me that thought has the power to move objects and influence people and events and to interfere with the predicted results of the law of probability. These occurrences become significant to us when we recognize that mind is here evincing the power to deflect the energy of a destined event, before it takes place in time.

The power of thought, is therefore intimately connected with the nature of time. We are in consequence obliged to ask ourselves what is time, the laws of which can, under certain conditions, be overcome by mind? Time is a product of man's mentality. It is said to consist of past, present and future. But these are but the limited mental categories man creates for his own convenience, in attempting to focus his own fluid existence within the limitless areas of space.

To me, as a sensitive, such divisions of time have no significance. For the present is but the instant which lies between the past and the future, and in that moment in which we utter "now," it has already become a part of what we call the past. Nor can we refer to these classifications of time, as past, present and future, without necessarily relating them to our changing states of consciousness, which move both within and without time. For the present is as fleeting and illusory as that ephemeral area of consciousness we call the conscious mind. *Conscious mind is then identical with that temporary narrow strip of man's living where unconscious and superconscious meet and blend. Such terms as "present time," and "conscious mind," are man's way of expressing that instant of arrest and focus in his own awareness, occurring within the limits of time and space, as he knows them. Such are the confines of what man is wont to call "reality." A condition limited to practical use, in his daily dealings within a three dimensional world.*

But man is surely more than a three dimensional being. For through mind or consciousness, he is capable of penetrat-

ing both the past, and the future; by turning back and recalling his buried memories, he is able to recover the past; and by projecting his thought forward he can learn to control the future. *Did man but comprehend the potential range of his powers, he would be capable of reaching beyond time to a state where past, present and future are one, and beyond conscious mind to an area where the subconscious, the conscious and superconscious are united.* When man comes to recognise such experience as his birthright, he will indeed be able to live with himself at the same time in those states outside of time, which are as yet little known or understood by him.

I have often spoken of *radiation* as my own means of contacting the world of outer events; especially do I use it as a way of relating myself to that supernormal world of which I am constantly aware. While the process of man's own power of *radiation* is as yet so little understood or accepted by Science, I am convinced that in the near future the exploration of the *magnetic field* will prove that man is a living "world" or "sun" and that he is surrounded by a certain nimbus, as are all light bodies; and it will also be discovered that this *field* or nimbus which envelops his physical body connects him and his consciousness with the mind of all other forms of life, as well as with the greater Mind of the Universe. With the growing knowledge of the science of light and colour, man will be able to photograph the form of the *magnetic field* which envelops him and every other living organism.

New precision instruments will soon be built to register man's own *radiation* and its relationship to other types of energy in the Universe. These will have to be more delicate than any yet constructed, in order to catch the swiftly moving emanations radiating from the body, as well as the brain of man. Eventually, man will begin to discover that his own body has within and without it, the answer to the meaning of his existence on this earth and to the riddle of all these other states of consciousness which baffle him today.

Although he is keenly aware of light and colour in the world of which he is a part, man does not begin to recognize that he also participates in the brilliant pageantry of nature's ever-changing hues. This *magnetic field* in which he dwells, can be likened to the shifting radiance of a rainbow. Unaware of being folded within this ever-changing film of colours, man covers his physical body with vivid clothes in order to gratify his own need for colour. He has this deep need although he is far from understanding that in the true science of colour every shade and tone has a particular effect upon the living organism.

Medicine has become more definitely aware of the therapeutic importance of colour in various forms of treatment, as it has also become more successful in the use of X-rays, infra-red and ultra violet-rays. But there still remains much to be discovered about the healing value of colour rays in the research and experiment of the future. When the unexplored possibilities of man's own radiation begin to unfold, a new comprehension of the nature and functioning of the human mind and consciousness, will be formulated, and a wider use of the range of light and magnetic rays will be developed by Science.

Healing on a scale undreamed of as yet by medicine or psychology, will soon be made possible, when further knowledge of the nature and strength of the rays contained within each body are charted and rightly directed. Then, will it be more widely recognised that such fundamentally destructive states of negation, as doubt, fear and insecurity are at the root of man's physical ills. When at last he comes to understand that he himself gives out those vital rays which can either heal or destroy life, he will begin to accept his own responsibility and he will desire to learn to direct and control his own radiations for the *positive* use of himself and his fellow men.

Such self-knowledge could be increased and directed by the right use of suggestion and auto-suggestion. There exists today little understanding of the therapeutic and educational

use of suggestion in opening the potentialities which lie as yet undeveloped within the personality of each human being. Those who now use suggestion, evidence no serious recognition of the complexity of the process, nor of the special technique required for using it correctly. They will have to become aware of the many levels of conscious and unconscious mind, to be reached and dealt with in all human beings, before they will be able to recondition the emotional and spiritual forces of those who turn to them for help. I have observed that those doctors, educators, parents and religious teachers who attempt to use suggestion, whether they call it by that name or not, usually insist upon a state of passivity or lack of self-direction from those they treat. This is a mistake, for although this method may result in quick and easy domination of a person's mind and also produce a temporary improvement, it can but lead to an increasing dependence and a loss of initiative on the part of the patient. Only when suggestion helps to liberate the powers of an individual and so gives to him an understanding of how to apply auto-suggestion for the growth of security and self-mastery, does it begin to fulfill its promise as an healing art.

Most people are not yet aware, that in our daily life and thought, we are continually releasing energy to form light rays which will strike and "ground" somewhere. When man recognises that he can direct the energies of mind, not only in such mental forms as appear in telepathy and projection, but also in a physical form that can influence and move matter, he will then begin to understand that he has the ability to challenge consciously the law of chance or probability.

Mind is the true force that creates all things in the Universe. Just as the architect must image in his own mind the building he will some day erect, so must mind in the Universe, conceive all things before they can be born. First comes the image or vision to the artist or creator and then follows the realisation of the dream in a completed work of art, or a world.

In the not far-distant future people will become more consciously aware of the tremendous power which is contained in thought and of how it acts throughout the universe, incessantly charging and recharging the current of our daily lives. For let me repeat and emphasize, thought is an active force, going forth from man's mind like a flash of lightning, which strikes and affects other minds as it moves and travels through space. It is so potent that it can make or mar us. If we realised the inherent and compelling power of thought to direct and control, or create and destroy, we would think deeply and constructively before allowing ourselves to be drawn into much of our useless living. Thought is the great motivating power from which all desire stems. And desire is the breath of the Infinite within all pulsing life. In the world today there are signs that the profound nature of thought is again beginning to be recognised, understood and applied to our daily existence. If man comes at last to accept through objective proof that mind can be transformed into energy as well as energy become mind, he will soon be able to understand the principle of supernormal sensing and all else which takes place in the Universe. Great is this truth and greater the man who truly perceives that spirit is the strength of mankind and that thought is the monarch of the world.

Chapter XXXX

WHERE I STAND AND WHAT I BELIEVE TODAY

I AM now ready to explore new levels of objective research made impossible by my lack of health in the past. For a number of years, I have been aware of a healing power within myself, but I knew that the time had not yet come when I could rightly use it for myself or others. I was still at that stage of my development where I questioned and negated the positive aspects of my supernormal powers. But I was sufficiently aware of the law, to know that I could not accept the responsibility of these powers until I had been able to heal myself by their means. I recognized that until I could grow into a full acceptance of the use and responsibility of my own supernormal powers, I could not begin to exact true satisfaction from my work.

I am now being asked where I stand today and what is to be the direction of my future work. I find myself reluctant to continue my activities as a professional medium, since I have become convinced that it interferes with the objective research to which I now desire to devote myself. I have come to the conclusion that the spiritualist hypothesis alone limits the freedom of such research; nor is the point of view of most psychic researchers as yet sufficiently objective or

detached to penetrate into those new and unexplored areas of the mind with which I now propose to experiment.

In order to do this, I must first return to that point in my own development, where I allowed the spiritualist interpretation of the trance state to be placed upon me as the only true explanation of such a phenomenon. Such biased use of trance, I am now convinced, limited, for me, the natural functioning of many states of consciousness, which were already making themselves apparent in my life. In recent years, quite apart from my work as a trance medium, I have been able to use these other aspects of consciousness in dealing with myself and others; the effective use of such areas has brought me to a deeper understanding of the laws governing my own body and mind, and therefore I have also been able to apply this realisation to the lives of others. In dealing with these mental levels in myself, I have found the way into certain areas not understood today, but which are certainly related to the symbolic language and alphabets of the past. Although I am aware that the symbolism of the unconscious plays an important part in psychology today, this seems but the beginning of a process which must go deeper into the subconscious and also the superconscious areas of man's being. This is one of the most important fields of research in which I hope soon to take an active part.

I have grown increasingly aware of the way in which thought can be employed to build up states of mind which become as real and objective as three-dimensional material reality. It may have been that in early childhood I created these protective images which later dramatised themselves into *controls*; but it is also possible that unconscious or racial memories may have supplied the substance which filled the *controls* with personality.

Through the years of my trance communications and research, two *control* personalities, those mentioned previously in this book, have always been identified with my work, and they have never ceased to maintain their independent and separate selves. It is interesting to note that they have

always welcomed every form of scientific investigation into the nature of their own being and the mechanisms of my supernormal functioning; but up to the present any efforts to dislodge them or to reduce them to aspects of my own consciousness have led to no change in their attitude, position, or state of being. The *control* personalities still maintain the roles they have always played in relation to me, since my trance work began. I have reached that point in my development where I can live in harmony with myself and at peace with those so-called personalities, for I am now able to regard them as the finer aspects of my true self. Whatever their origin may be, I do not, at present, have at my command the means of knowing; but for the time being, I am content to accept the *controls* as aspects of a constructive principle upon which my entire life has been built.

Since I believe that thought is the fundamental process of creation and that nothing that has once manifested in this world, is ever lost, it is possible that those who existed before us, have stamped a living memory of themselves upon the ether of our cosmos, and that such form may, through desire, be vivified and drawn back, by those of us who have within ourselves some special bond with that aspect of the past. All my supernormal experiences convinced me, that the past, present and future are but aspects of one continuous process in the Universe. In such an evolution, birth and death fall into place, as necessary phases of an eternally changing cycle which strives towards the perfection of man's soul. One life, is for a human being, a single fragment of his total experience, and through such existence, man is bound by memory and sensation to all living forms which have been and shall be. For me, therefore, the state of death is no more than a breathing spell, in which the soul which has passed out of this life, may take time to extract the essence of that experience before it enters into another phase of being. Death therefore contains within itself a subtle preparation for that new and unpredictable adventure, which, though man may, as yet, be incapable of perceiving, lies most surely beyond

all life and death. When man comes, at last, to remember that state of realization which he knew of old, then truly will he regain the power of the Spirit and the ultimate reunion with his God.

The End