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PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA AND THE WAR

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The Occult and Psychological Sciences

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PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA  
AND THE WAR

BY

HEREWARD CARRINGTON, Ph.D.

AUTHOR OF "THE COMING SCIENCE," "THE PHYSICAL  
PHENOMENA OF SPIRITUALISM," "MODERN PSYCHI-  
CAL PHENOMENA," "YOUR PSYCHIC POWERS  
AND HOW TO DEVELOP THEM," "PHAN-  
TASMS OF THE DEAD."

American Universities Publishing Company  
NEW YORK

1920

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DEDICATED  
TO THOSE BRAVE SOULS WHO HAVE,  
WHILE FIGHTING FOR THEIR COUNTRY,  
SOLVED THE PROBLEMS WITH  
WHICH THIS BOOK DEALS



## PREFACE TO THE NEW EDITION

THE Great War was at its height when the present volume was originally published, in 1918. American soldiers were pouring into France at the rate of more than a quarter of a million a month, but they had not yet been in action on a vast scale, as they were to be shortly afterwards—in the battles of the Marne, the Argonne, etc. It is because of this fact that the Great War is spoken of in the present tense throughout the book—as though it were still actually being waged, whereas now it is a matter of history; it is today a thing of the past—existing only in the memories of those who shared in its terror and its glory, or marked by the graves of those who made the supreme sacrifice in France. It was inevitable that any book which dealt with the Great War—which was written at the time of its actual occurrence—should speak of it in this manner, and the present book is no exception to the rule. The book is based upon letters, experiences and “cases” from the front; upon observations and experiments made at the time; and of necessity records such cases and experiences as they were then reported. Such a “reminder” is necessitated by the republication of a book such as the present—which contains nevertheless (as I believe) psychological material of considerable interest and value, and constitutes a “human document” which future students and future generations would do well to study.

Since the Armistice and the conclusion of peace,

## PREFACE TO THE NEW EDITION

several books have appeared dealing with the psychology of the Great War, but none of these have caused me to change the views expressed in the present volume—in fact, they have confirmed them in a remarkable degree. Further interviews with American soldiers have also tended to confirm the accuracy of the “psychology of the soldier”—contained in “Part I.” The present volume may, therefore, be regarded as a fairly complete and accurate summary of the psychological and psychical aspects of the Great World War; and, save for the fact that the War is spoken of throughout as still being waged—whereas it is now a matter of history—it may be regarded psychologically as accurate as when the book first appeared. With these remarks—which were, nevertheless, necessitated, in view of the facts, I leave the book to speak for itself.

H. C.

*March, 1920*



## PREFACE

THE present book is an attempt to study the psychological forces at work in the present world war; and for this purpose I have divided the book into two portions: Part I dealing with psychology proper,—applied to the minds of nations and of individuals; Part II to psychical or supernormal phenomena,—largely of a spiritistic character,—which have been observed to occur at various times, and of which the present war furnishes many fresh examples.

Thus Part I may be said to study the mind of the soldier up to the point where he is killed in action; while Part II continues our study of the same soldier after his death. We thus extend our inquiry into the realms of the vast Beyond,—and seek to bring back from that Unknown Land definite knowledge of those who sojourn there.

. . . . .

Several books have been published dealing with psychic phenomena consequent upon the great war, such as *Raymond*; *Private Dowding*; *Gone West*, etc., but these books are strictly limited in their purview, and do not attempt to survey the whole field, while the last two mentioned are the product of automatic writing. Sir Oliver Lodge's book has, of course, aroused a great deal of comment, and has been the means of affording solace to many who have been bereaved by the war. I wish to acknowledge, in this place, my indebtedness to these books, for having suggested to me the compila-

tion of the present volume; I have also made extracts from the books in Chapter XI. I wish also to acknowledge here my indebtedness to the editor of the *Journal of the Society for Psychical Research*, for kind permission to quote several cases published in the *Journal*; to Mr. Ralph Shirley, editor of the *Occult Review*, for permission to quote several valuable articles appearing in his magazine; and to the *Harbinger of Light*, *The International Psychic Gazette*, *Light*, *The Two Worlds*, *Azoth*, *The Psychical Research Review*, *The Literary Digest*, *The Bookman*, and other periodicals, for material utilized. Also, to Rosa Stuart's book, *Dreams and Visions of the War*, and to M. Maeterlinck's *The Light Beyond*, for "cases" and quotations.

For material utilized in Part I, I wish especially to acknowledge my indebtedness to M. LeBon's book, *The Psychology of the Great War*, and to Dr. George W. Crile's *Mechanistic Conception of War and Peace*. The bulk of the psychological material, relating to the mind of the combatant in action, is taken from my own article on "The Mind of the Soldier," first published in the *Forum*, January, 1916, and reprinted here, by the editor's kind permission, with considerable additions. The chapter dealing with the psychology of the soldier in action is (naturally) based almost entirely upon observations on the Franco-British front; and but little reference to the psychology of the American soldier is as yet possible. Doubtless many psychological observations of great value will be forthcoming, when U. S. soldiers get into action on a vast scale.

I particularly wish to acknowledge, here, my indebtedness to Mrs. Ethel Raynor,—to whose sympathetic coöperation and assistance this book owes so much.

H. C.



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PART I  
NORMAL



# PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA AND THE WAR

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTORY

THE importance of psychical investigation has never been so forcefully demonstrated to us as by the present great World War. Is man essentially body or spirit? The former seems to be the view expounded in German philosophy; and it has resulted in the greatest cataclysm the world has ever known. Every month that passes, thousands of souls are being shot into the spiritual world—or obliterated altogether, according to our view of the facts. What becomes of them? Is it not our duty to ascertain, so far as is humanly possible, whether they be truly obliterated, or whether they continue to persist in some spiritual world? and if so, how and where? Surely this is the most important question man can set himself, when every day the papers contain names of those “killed in action”—a long “Roll of Honour,” with no certainty of anything beyond! At a time such as this, when thousands of parents, wives and mothers are yearning for some definite word from those who are no more; at a time when the faintest word of hope and encouragement would mean so much, if founded upon truth and ascertainable fact; the importance of this in-



vestigation surely looms up before us; for it is by this means,—by psychical phenomena and by these alone,—that either the truth or the falsehood of spiritual existence can be proved; for this method and this alone is the one capable of ultimately solving the great riddle of existence. . . .

The whole question of psychology, in the present war, assumes a great and hitherto unsuspected importance. For, on the one hand, we find certain psychological principles underlying the methods and conduct of the various warring nations;—the mind of the soldier in the cantonment, in the trenches, and in action—his dreams, phobias, fears and heroism; and, on the other hand, as we have said, it enables us to attack the great central problem: whether the soul or spirit of man is extinguished at death, or whether it continues to persist in some other sphere of activity—some “spiritual world”—whither we shall all one day travel.

A gigantic psychological experiment is being undertaken in Europe; as never before, certain psychological and psychical phenomena present themselves for investigation and solution; and these should assuredly be studied with the same degree of care and exactitude as the wounds, injuries, and pathological disturbances due to bodily injury are being studied by physicians and surgeons now at the front. For, in the present conflict, surgery of the soul is no less a reality than surgery of the body; and such an opportunity for gathering valuable psychical and psychological *data* may not again present itself for many generations—in fact, never again, in the history of the human race—and my purpose in writing this book is largely to make a first,—it may be crude,—attempt to gather together and study material of this character, and to urge upon



the various warring governments the importance of having a few experts appointed, on all fronts, whose duty it would be to gather psychological *data* of this character, for future generations to study. Already, the French Government has approved the publication, in the *Bulletin des Armées* of an appeal, by Professor Charles Richet, for psychical experiences and "cases" of all sorts; and I understand that a great number of such cases have already been collected, and will be published shortly. A similar investigation, undertaken by the British and American governments, would doubtless yield lasting and extremely valuable scientific results.

The present world war, while it must be considered, in a sense, the greatest catastrophe the world has ever known, yet has shown us, as nothing else possibly could, the innate spiritual loftiness and heroism resident in man's soul. Deeds of valor have been performed which we would have deemed incredible but a few years ago,—or attributed only to the heroes of mythology. Compared with them, the soldiers in the present war shine out as super-heroes—there is no comparison, indeed, between the single brave deeds-of-arms formerly performed, and the year-in, year-out struggle, the continuous hell, which our soldiers are enduring. And whereas, in former wars, single acts of heroism were marked for distinction, in the present conflict, every man is a hero; and not only the men, but the women too have displayed a devotion, a pluck, an endurance surprising to all who have witnessed it, and never before approximated in the history of the world.

Should it be proved, however, largely as the result of the present conflict, that man is immortal; that he

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possesses a spiritual principle within himself which survives the death of the body, and continues to persist in some sphere of activity more suited to its evolutionary progress than is this world,—then it will not have been in vain, for mankind will have gained knowledge past all recompense, the “pearl of great price,” for it will have solved the riddle of existence, and shown that we are indeed immortal, and that we can, at times, return and communicate with those yet living upon this earth.

## CHAPTER II

### GERMAN METHODS OF WARFARE: THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE DOCTRINE OF "FRIGHTFULNESS"

#### BATTLE

With a terrible delight  
I hear far guns low, like oxen, at the night.  
Flames disrupt the sky. The work is begun.  
"Action!" My guns crash, flame, rock, and stun  
Again and again. Soon the soughing night  
Is loud with the clamour and leaps with their light.  
The imperative chorus rises sonorous and fell;  
My heart glows lighted as by fires of hell,  
Sharply I pass the terse orders down:  
The guns stun and rock. The hissing rain is blown  
Athwart the hurtling shell that shrilling, shrilling goes  
Away into the dark to burst, a cloud of rose,  
Over their trenches.

ROBERT NICHOLS.

It may be appropriate to begin our study of the psychological principles underlying the great war by a brief study of the German mind, as manifested in the military leaders of Germany; as the result of which we may be enabled to understand why it is that the Germans have behaved themselves as they have, and antagonized and embittered the whole world by their acts of savagery and cruelty.

For some generations, the Germans have been sedulously educated in the psychological principles under-



lying the present militarists' conduct of the war. Bernhardt, Treitschke, and others have so instilled into the Germans that they are a "superior people," that "might is right," that power constitutes that acme of attainment, etc., that they have become blind to any other doctrines than their own; materialism has laid hold upon them, as a nation; their mechanistic conception of the universe has led to the complete disregard of the higher, spiritual values and powers, and in consequence of this, their understanding and appreciation of others, holding different views, has steadily diminished, until, of late years, it may be said to have been almost *nil*. Yet there is a poetic retribution in all this; for, as we shall see presently, it is these very qualities in the German mind,—this lack of understanding of the psychology of others, which will lose Germany the war.

War, say the Germans, is man's normal vocation; "all else is foolishness." Biologically, there is something to be said in favour of the view that man is a fighting animal, and will always fight. But the German extension of this doctrine is quite unwarranted. Man will assuredly outgrow war, with increasing knowledge and spiritual development. But it is because of the fact that, as yet, man is very largely a primitive animal, that he can be induced to make war, by the glamour which has always surrounded it. Says Dr. Crile (*A Mechanistic Conception of War and Peace*):—

"As I reflected upon the intensive application of man to war in cold, rain, and mud; in rivers, canals, and lakes; underground, in the air, and under the sea; infected with vermin, covered with scabs, adding the stench of his own filthy body to that of his decomposing comrades; hairy, begrimed, bedraggled, yet with

unflagging zeal striving eagerly to kill his fellows; and as I felt within myself the mystical urge of the sound of great cannon I realized that war is a normal state of man.”

The Germans, having realized this fact, have played upon it, and made it the basis of their militaristic and terroristic policy, in their conduct of the war.

From the beginning of the war the Germans have endeavoured to terrify the enemy. They have shot or tortured a large number of inoffensive civilians in order to frighten the others, and have put the finishing stroke to the effect thus produced by levying such immense contributions that the survivors were stripped bare. If the enemy can be influenced by destroying monuments which he is fond of, they are bombarded until nothing is left of them but ruins. We know how carefully this system was carried out in most of the Belgian towns and villages. The whole population was assembled at a given place, where a certain number of civilians were shot and the houses were plundered and then burnt. These things were done openly and the officers gloried in them. As M. Andler says:—

“In a proclamation addressed to the municipal authorities of Liège, and dated the 22nd of August, General von Bülow, alluding to the sack of Andenne, said: ‘It was with my consent that the Commander-in-Chief caused the entire town to be burnt and that about one hundred persons were shot.’ ”

These savage Generals are only continuing Germany’s ancient modes of warfare. In the twelfth century Frederick Barbarossa almost always had one hand of each of his prisoners cut off, and when he had pillaged and afterwards burnt Milan he ordered all the inhabitants who could be seized to be put to death. In

Sicily his son caused prisoners to be flayed alive or blinded. Such conduct has always been customary among the Germans. In 1622 Tilly massacred all the inhabitants of Heidelberg and burnt the city, and in 1631 he sacked the town of Magdeburg, destroyed fifteen hundred houses and six churches, and burnt most of the inhabitants alive.

Bismarck asserted that war must be made extremely painful to the civil population for the sake of inclining it to the idea of peace. In 1870 he said:—

“True strategy consists in hitting your enemy and in hitting him hard. Above all, you should inflict the maximum of suffering upon the inhabitants of the cities you invade, in order to sicken them of the struggle, and to secure their aid in putting pressure upon their Government to induce it to stop the war. To the people of the countries through which you pass you should leave nothing but their eyes with which to weep.

“Our guiding rule in every case is to make war so terrible to the civil population that they will themselves entreat for peace.”

We have seen with what fierce ardour the Germans have followed this advice, how they have set villages on fire and burnt women and children alive or subjected them to torture; but these actions have had no result except the exodus of the inhabitants *en masse*.

Cases of massacre and of torture inflicted upon prisoners are innumerable. The *Temps* of December 31, 1914, gives the following facts:—

“On the 6th of September the cavalryman Blackelandt was disarmed. He was bound and his abdomen was ripped open with bayonet thrusts. At Tamines a French officer was tied to the trunk of a tree and a horse was fastened to each of his legs. At a signal the



horses were whipped. It was quartering in all its horror.' 'I saw,' says an eye-witness, 'his red trousers tear and the body burst asunder.' "

The following extracts were published by the *Journal de Genève* of May 5, 1915:—

"The massacre and conflagration commenced by signal and at an hour which had been settled in advance. The horror was unutterable. The troops soon got shockingly drunk and gave themselves up to the most shameful excesses. The officers were in command, and M. Fuglister heard them say, 'Kill every one and burn everything.' It is still impossible to give exact figures, but the population was forty-three thousand, and there are not more than twenty-one thousand people left in Louvain.

"M. Fuglister testified personally to a series of peculiarly dreadful atrocities. He has the proofs and is keeping them. The known limits of the horrible are enlarged by the things which happened in this place."

"But," it may be contended, "these are prejudiced reports, written by outsiders, enemies of Germany; and may not be true at all!" No one who has read the Bryce Reports can doubt the truth of these accounts, however. If further proof were needed, it could be secured from the diaries of the German officers and soldiers themselves. Take, for example, the following extracts, picked almost at random from a vast number equally horrible.

A Saxon officer's notebook:—

"24th August. The charming village of Gue d'Hos-sus (Ardennes) has been given up to be burnt, although it is guiltless, as it seems to me. They tell me that a cyclist was thrown and that his rifle discharged itself

as he fell. Shots were then fired in his direction and thereupon all the male inhabitants were thrown into the flames."

Another:—

"In this way we destroyed eight houses, *together with their inmates*. In one of them two men and their wives and a young girl of eighteen were bayoneted. I almost pitied the little creature, she looked so innocent!"

Another fragment of a notebook:—

"25th August (in Belgium): Three hundred inhabitants of the town were shot. The survivors were requisitioned as grave-diggers. You ought to have seen the women then!"

Some of the soldiers had treated the prisoners kindly, so General Stenger, who commanded the 58th Brigade, gave his troops the following order on the 25th of August:—

"To date from this day no prisoners will be made any longer. All the prisoners will be executed. The wounded, whether armed or defenceless, will be executed. Prisoners, even in large and compact formations, will be executed. Not a single living man will be left behind us."

Or the following extracts, recently published in the *Literary Digest*, from diaries in the possession of the United States Government, and found upon dead German soldiers:

"A horrible bath of blood. The whole village burned, the French thrown into the blazing houses, civilians with the rest." (From the diary of Private Hassemmer of the Eighth Army Corps.)

"In the night of August 18-19 the village of Saint-

Maurice was punished for having fired on German soldiers by being burned to the ground by German troops (two regiments, the Twelfth *landwehr* and the Seventeenth). The village was surrounded, men posted about a yard from one another, so that no one could get out. Then the Uhlans set fire to it, house by house. Neither man, woman, nor child could escape. . . . Any one who ventured to come out was shot down. All the inhabitants left in the village were burned with the houses." (From the diary of Private Karl Scheufele of the Third Bavarian Regiment of *landwehr* infantry.)

"At ten o'clock in the evening the first battalion of the One Hundred and Seventy-eighth marched down the steep incline into the burning village to the north of Dinant—a terrific spectacle of ghastly beauty. At the entrance to the village lay about fifty dead civilians, shot for having fired upon our troops from ambush. In the course of the night many others were also shot, so that we counted over two hundred. Women and children, lamp in hand, were forced to look on at the horrible scene. We ate our rice later in the midst of the corpses, for we had had nothing since morning. When we searched the houses we found plenty of wine and spirit, but no eatables. Captain Hamann was drunk." (This last phrase in shorthand.) (From the diary of Private Philipp of the One Hundred and Seventy-eighth Regiment of Infantry, Twelfth Army Corps.)

"August 23, Sunday (between Birnal and Dinant, village of Dison). At 11 o'clock the order comes to advance after the artillery has thoroughly prepared the ground ahead. The Pioneers and Infantry regiment, One Hundred and Seventy-eighth, were marching in front of us. Near a small village the latter was fired



on by the inhabitants. About 220 inhabitants were shot and the village was burned. Artillery is continuously shooting. The village lies in a large ravine. Just now, 6 o'clock in the afternoon, the crossing of the Maas begins near Dinant. . . . All villages, châteaux, and houses are burned down during this night. It was a beautiful sight to see the fires all around us in the distance." (From the diary of Matbern, Fourth Company, Eleventh Jäger Battalion, Marburg.)

But here are three entries that show the hearts of the writers to have been still free from the taint of blood-lust:

"At 5 o'clock we were ordered by the officer in command of the regiment to shoot all the male inhabitants of Nomény, because the population was foolishly attempting to stay the advance of the German troops by force of arms. We broke into the houses and seized all who resisted, in order to execute them according to martial law.

"The houses which had not been already destroyed by the French artillery and our own were set on fire by us, so that nearly the whole town was reduced to ashes. It is a terrible sight when helpless women and children, utterly destitute, are herded together and driven into France." (From the diary of Private Fischer, Eighth Bavarian Regiment of Infantry, Thirty-third Reserve Division.)

"The inhabitants have fled in the village. It was horrible. There was clotted blood on all the beards, and what faces one saw, terrible to behold. The dead, sixty in all, were at once buried. Among them were many old women, some old men, awful to see; three children had clasped each other and died thus." (From

the diary of Lance-corporal Paul Spielmann of the Ersatz, First Brigade of Infantry of the Guard.)

“In the night the inhabitants of Liège became mutinous. Forty persons were shot and fifteen houses demolished; ten soldiers shot. The sights here make you cry.”

The following extract from the diary of an officer calmly records the sacking of a convent and the murder of the inmates. Mark how munitions were conserved:

“Our men came back and said that at the point where the valley joined the Meuse we could not get on any farther as the villagers were shooting at us from every house. We shot the whole lot—sixteen of them. They were drawn up in three ranks—the same shot did for three at a time. . . . The men had already shown their brutal instincts. . . . The sight of the bodies of all the inhabitants who had been shot was indescribable. Every house in the whole village was destroyed. We dragged the villagers one after another out of the most unlikely corners. The men were shot as well as the women and children who were in the convent, since shots had been fired from the convent windows, and we burned it afterward.”

Bombardier Wetzels is an emotionless Hun, if one may judge from these impassive entries in his diary.

“August 8. First fight and set fire to several villages.

“August 9. Returned to old quarters, where we searched all the houses and shot the mayor and shot one man down from the chimney-pot, and then again set fire to the village.

“October 11. We had no fight, but we caught about twenty men and shot them.”



And the Germans are not alone to blame for such atrocities. The wholesale massacres committed by the Turks and Bulgars are too well-known to need more than the merest reminder; we have, in fact, almost grown to disregard them and accept them as a "matter of course"—with imaginable consequences to the Serbs, Montenegrins, Armenians, Syrians, and other temporarily subjugated nationalities! The Austrians have also been guilty of the grossest cruelties and tortures—as a number of photographs and sworn statements show. Professor Reiss, for example, of the University of Lausanne, who went to Serbia and published some of his findings in the *Revue de Paris*, April 7, 1915, says, with regard to the kind of cruelties practised by the Austrian soldiers under the order of their officers:—

“I have observed the following kinds of mutilation and slaughter: the victims were shot, bayoneted to death, their throats were cut with knives, they were violated and then killed, they were stoned, hanged, beaten to death with the butt-ends of rifles or with clubs, were disembowelled or burned alive; their legs or arms were cut off, or torn out, their ears or noses were cut off, their eyes were put out, their breasts were cut off, their skin was cut into strips or their flesh was detached from the bones, and, lastly, a little girl three months old was thrown to the pigs.”

Take, again, the following touching account, which appeared in a French newspaper, and the accuracy of which was vouched for by a number of well-known inhabitants of the districts:—

“Mme. Huard, who at once began to prepare her home to serve as a hospital, was asked to visit a child in a neighbouring village that had also suffered at the

hands of the invaders. The little girl, who was only ten years old, was almost crazed with terror. Mme. Huard says that she found the child in bed, but when her eyes fell upon the uniform of the doctor who accompanied her she sprang into a corner of the room where she cowered, shrieking:

“ ‘I am afraid! I am afraid! Don’t come near me! Don’t, don’t!’ Her little body was quaking, tortured by her spirit.

“The old grandmother darted into the room and, seizing the doctor by the arm, motioned him to come away.

“ ‘Elvire,’ pleaded the broken-hearted mother, ‘Elvire, he’s gone.’

“ ‘But he’ll come back! No! no! I’m afraid. No, don’t let him come, don’t let him touch me.’

“ ‘Elvire,’ I called, my voice shaking with horror and emotion. ‘Elvire, don’t you remember me? Surely—Mme. Huard? Don’t you remember how we used to sing together last spring?’

“A queer choking sound came from her throat. Her eyes softened, but no tears came. There were none left.

“Then followed the hardest moral struggle I ever hope to experience—a full half-hour in which I sought to convince this little fear-cowed animal of my integrity. And when at last I held that tiny heaving body against my breast, saw the eyes close peacefully, I knew that I had won a victory.

“Elvire slept, slept for the first time since the 5th of September. We had already guessed the woeful truth, but to corroborate our direst suppositions, the tales of German cowardice and brutality that mid tears and lamentations we wrung from those grief-bowed

peasant women made me feel that war might pass and peace might come again, but I could never pardon.”\*

How do the Germans attempt to justify such frightful atrocities? They do not attempt to justify them; on the contrary, they glory in them! As a German General wrote in a Berlin newspaper, quoted in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, December 15, 1914:—

“We have nothing to justify, for everything that our soldiers may do to harm the enemy will be well done and justified in advance. If all the architectural masterpieces between our guns and those of the French went to perdition, it would be a matter of perfect indifference to us. . . . They call us barbarians; but we laugh at such nonsense. At the most we might ask ourselves whether we have not some right to the name. Let no one say anything more to us about the Cathedral of Reims or all the churches and palaces that will share its fate, for we do not wish to hear any more about them. If we can only get news from Reims that our troops have made a second triumphal entry, nothing else matters.”

\* How all this has already begun to undermine the mental and physical health of the inhabitants of the German-occupied districts is well pointed-out by Dr. Crile (*A Mechanistic Conception of War and Peace*, pp. 88-89):

“The Belgian exiles whom I have seen show a loss in morale; they are preoccupied, absent-minded, diseased, homesick, weak, dejected, bitter, and broken. They have suffered a permanent loss which is beyond compensation and beyond redemption. Thus millions of men, women, children, and unborn infants have been subjected to a vivisection of unparalleled cruelty unsurpassed in the history of man or of the lower animals. It is as if upon Belgium as a whole, every degree of physical, mental and moral torture had been inflicted without anesthesia. In fact, in the present condition of the Belgian exiles their progressive moral vivisection still continues. . . .”



The Germans are astounded at the indignation with which neutrals regard their conduct, for they have simply obeyed theories which they thought it their duty to apply practically, and they cannot see that there is anything so very surprising about incendiarism and pillage. As Frederick the Great said long ago: "Pillage is not at all the same as theft."

The German officer is treated with enormous respect because of his power in barracks, and, fancying that he is made of finer clay than other people, he recognizes no law but that of the military code. A very typical example of his mentality was furnished by the notorious affair at Zabern, where a Colonel had some thirty civilians, including a magistrate, thrown into a cellar and kept there for twenty-four hours, simply because he did not consider that they had paid him proper respect. He was brought before a military court and was not only unanimously acquitted, but received the congratulations of the Crown Prince as well. Had a similar violation of the law occurred in England, he would have been given a prison sentence or condemned to the gallows.

But for militarism it is different! General Hartmann, for example, says:

"War is by its very nature the negation of the principles upon which civilization and culture depend and of the laws which watch over their development; for it replaces them by a state of things which makes force and individual power lawful. If by civilization we mean the equilibrium of rights and duties which support the social structure of the nations and which guarantee their institutions, the term civilized warfare, as Bluntschli uses it, is scarcely intelligible, for it involves an irreconcilable contradiction.



“It is necessary to inflict and injure the enemy in order to curb and break his will, and the unquestionable justification of such means lies in their efficaciousness, and in the fact that they enable one to make sure of attaining a precisely defined military object.”

Von Blum writes: “Our undertakings should aim above all else at increasing the injury done to the enemy.

“The first method to be employed is the invasion of the enemy provinces, not with any intention of keeping them, but for the purpose of levying contributions of war or merely of laying them waste.”

Hartmann says: “The enemy state must not be spared the anguish and woe inherent in warfare. The burden must be crushing and must remain so. The necessity of imposing it results from the very idea of national warfare. . . . When a national war breaks out terrorism becomes a principle which is necessary from the military standpoint.”

It is certain that in all future wars the nations will be forced to adopt the German methods and to be merciless in their turn, for an army which should obey international Conventions like those of The Hague would be weak indeed when confronted by one which had no concern for such things.

How are we to account for this German doctrine of “frightfulness” which has succeeded in turning the whole world against Germany, and in causing civilized nations to shudder with horror at the wrongs committed? There must be some reason, some motive, behind the German doctrine of terrorism, for otherwise it would be senseless, and everything points to the fact that the whole German conduct of the war, in every other respect, has been far from that. What,

then, have the Germans hoped to gain by this method of warfare; what have they aimed to achieve by their wholesale slaughter of innocent women and children, their atrocities upon the men, their bombing of unfortified and unprotected cities, their general savage attacks upon the civil populations of the enemy countries? Everything points to the fact that these outrages have been well-organized from the first; they are not sporadic outbreaks of rage or drunken lust and anger on the part of the German soldiery. No; these acts have been carried out by order of the German high command,—ruthlessly, relentlessly, from the first, and evidently with a definite object in view. What is that object?

The obvious reply is that it is intended to terrify and subjugate the civilian population of the various enemy countries, to such an extent that they will cry for peace—so to terrify them that they will bring pressure to bear upon their rulers and leaders to end the war, and stop the slaughter of the innocents. But we know that the results have been the very opposite of this! The Zeppelin raids over England had the effect of awakening that country to the reality of the war, and stimulated recruiting more than anything else possibly could have done. Belgium, bled white, not only of her men, but also of her strength and resources, still clings desperately to her ancient faith, with a grim determination and patriotism which has aroused the admiration of the whole world, and will live in history so long as this earth shall last. The same is true of France, Poland, Serbia, and the other invaded districts, which are occupied by Germany or her allies. According to German psychology, these nations or districts should now be crushed,—driven into the arms of Germany by

sheer despair and terror; the populace of England should have been so prostrated by the Zeppelin raids that it would have insisted upon peace, etc. Yet, as we know, all these German psychological calculations have gone astray; the peoples of the world are today more united and more determined than ever to destroy that great evil of Prussian militarism; and this is as true of the districts subject to "terrorism" as of any other. How comes it about, therefore, that the German calculations were so wrong in this connection—that the various nations did not react as they were expected to; and that the German leaders could have committed so colossal a blunder as to have antagonized and embittered the whole world, in order to carry out a false doctrine?

The answer to that puzzling question is simply this: *Such methods would have terrorized the Germans themselves; therefore they thought they would terrorize other peoples in the same manner.* Air raids, the slaying of innocents, fire, rapine and murder, would have so terrified the inhabitants of German cities that they would have acted just as the inhabitants of other nations were supposed to act. In short, they employed against their enemies the very weapons and methods of warfare which would have terrorized themselves. And they cannot understand why other nations are not similarly terrorized—why it is that they react in a different manner. This is due to the fact that the German is incapable of conceiving any one thinking differently than himself. His egotism and vanity is at the root of the whole problem,—and will lose him the war. If he thinks in a certain way about a given problem or fact, every one else must do likewise—if they do not, it is "contrary to rule"—*verboten*—non-under-



standable! This is the root and core of the whole German psychology and their methods of warfare. That they *do* react in the manner I have indicated is amply borne-out by the following account,—recently published,—of the first British reprisal raid, after that policy had been adopted, in retaliation for the repeated Zeppelin raids over London.

This is the account:—

#### GERMANS TERRORIZED BY BRITISH AIR RAIDERS

##### *People of Mannheim Rushed to Street Half Clothed*

“LONDON, Jan. 28.—British airmen who raided Mannheim Thursday night caused unparalleled terror in that city, according to Geneva despatches to the London *Daily Express* today, quoting several travellers from Germany.

“One of these, an injured German, arrived at Basle. Despite police orders, he said, terrorstricken people rushed out of doors half clothed and gathered in the streets. The British raiders scored a direct hit on the barracks.

“After the raid, the travellers declared, crowds assembled and shouted ‘Down with war; give us peace!’ ”

This is what the London crowds were *supposed* to have done, and did *not* do; and the inhabitants of Paris likewise; and the Germans cannot understand why they did not! They cannot understand any mind but their own. Never has national psychology been more forcefully betrayed than in these incidents; never have the temperamental reactions of the various nations been better illustrated than in the present conflict.



And, after all, as M. Le Bon has so well said:—

“The present war is a contest between psychological forces. Irreconcilable ideals are grappling with one another. Individual liberty is drawn up against collective servitude, personal initiative against the tyranny of State Socialism, old habits of international integrity and respect for treaties against the supremacy of the cannon. The ideal of the absolutism of force, whose triumph Germany is now striving to secure, is nothing new, for in antiquity it reigned supreme, and the attempt to substitute another for it has cost Europe a struggle of two thousand years. The victory of the Teutonic theory would carry the nations back to the most distressful periods of their history, back to the eras of violence when the law of the strongest was the sole foundation of justice.

“Men were beginning to forget the dark ages in which the weak were pitilessly crushed, the useless were brutally cast off, and the ideals of the nations were conquest, slaughter, and pillage. But the belief that the progress of civilization had once and for all been destroyed, and barbarous customs of primitive periods, was a dangerous illusion, for new hordes of savages, whose ancestral ferocity the centuries have not mitigated, even now dream of enslaving the world that they may exploit it.

“The ideas which dominate Germany inspire apprehension because they have come to assume a religious form. Like the Arabs of Mohammed’s day, the Teutonic nations are deluded by a dream which makes them fancy that they are a superior race, destined first to conquer the world and then to regenerate it. . . .”\*

\* *The Psychology of the Great War*, pp. 18-19.

It would be easy to give extracts from the writings of the German leaders of thought which prove this.

Here, for instance, are some extracts from a book called *If I Were King*, quoted by *Le Correspondant* of September, 1914:—

“Since Germany is supreme, above all, she has a right to all. Germany aims at the destruction of everything that can obstruct her expansion by blood and iron. England must be destroyed and France must be crushed so that we may take her colonies and such of her territories as are necessary for our safety. The small States of Holland and Belgium must be subjected to the lofty guardianship of Germany; Russia will easily be conquered, and her frontier districts will then become fields for our colonization.”

Bernhardi, in the tenth chapter of his book, says:—

“It is impossible to lay down a written law able to regulate all the differences between nation and nation. . . . In every profession and in every nation we find an individual conception of honour.

“. . . General treaties of arbitration must be particularly pernicious to an ambitious and rising nation, such as Germany, which has not yet reached the highest point in its political and national development. . . . Thus all progress which requires change of territory would be prevented, and the development of strong States would be stopped by the *status quo*—to the advantage of decadent nations.”

Again:—

“Oh! how we thank God for having chosen our great and incomparable Kaiser and his people to accomplish this mighty mission; for has Darwin not said (and no doubt he borrowed this idea from our great German professors) that only the fittest shall survive? And

are the Germans not the fittest in all things? Therefore let all of us Germans say: Perish the carrion! Only the Germans are noble men!" (Quoted in the *Temps*, June 29, 1915.)

Or the following:

"When we have humbled our enemies and confiscated their lands, let but any one of the former natives of the soil, be he English, French, Italian, American, or a man of any other lower race, lift up his voice louder than a sigh, and we will dash him to pieces against the earth!"

It is upon such mental pabulum as this that the Germans have been fed for the past two generations; is it any wonder that they have grown to believe themselves the greatest-of-all, the chosen-of-God, they who shall inherit the earth? In fact, this belief—"Deutschland über alles"—has become a fetich with them, to the extent, as M. Le Bon points out, of being practically a religious dogma. He says:—

"The faith of the Germans in their *Kultur* and in their mission to dominate the world as a chosen people, superior to all those of the past, present, and future, is certainly a real source of strength in war; but it is also a cause of cruelty, especially in its theological or metaphysical form, which tends to give the conflict the character of a religious war. The adversary is not only an enemy, but an excommunicated heretic as well, a miscreant, a *blasphemer* of sacred *Kultur*,—guilty of high treason against the all-holy. To conquer him is not enough; he must be utterly destroyed. The Belgians committed the daring sacrilege of refusing to let the hallowed cohorts of divine *Kultur* pass through their territory. Thus they are guilty of high treason against the all-holy, and are justly punished today, as



they were chastized of old by the Duke of Alba for a similar crime.”

But does this doctrine of ruthless destruction—of suppression, tyranny, rape, famine, torture and vivisection—have the effect desired? Does it succeed in obliterating the spirit of the ravaged nations, as the Germans had hoped? No; it has precisely the opposite effect; and this the Germans cannot understand. Their own minds cannot conceive this, and yet all history shows it to be true! As M. Le Bon has so well said, in his *Psychology of the Great War*, p. 471:—

“When Hannibal destroyed the last of the Roman armies at Cannae, he thought that he had conquered for ever the rival whom his country feared, but he had not made the will of Rome to stoop, and it was Carthage which finally disappeared from the world’s stage.

“Germany has not enfeebled the will of any nation which she has invaded. All of them would rather die than submit.

“Such energy suffices, for today there is no despot so mighty that he can dominate a people which will not obey. Napoleon discovered this in Spain. He took her cities and vanquished her armies, but although he was the greatest soldier in history he did not subjugate her.

“The future depends, beyond all else, upon the continuance of our will. Conquer or die, but never yield! must be the brief watchword of the nations which Germany would enslave. Neither Nature, nor man, nor fate itself, can withstand a strong and steadfast will. I have said it over and over again, and I repeat it once more.”



And Dr. Crile, in his *Mechanistic Conception of War and Peace*, says:—

“But again the question rises: Can a people through force be given action-patterns against their will? Rome never succeeded in Romanizing the world. Rome tried to subjugate Belgium; Belgium is here—Rome has passed. Napoleon failed; the Moors failed; England never assimilated the Irish nor the Scotch; Russia the Poles; nor the Manchus the Chinese. England has learned by a large experience over a considerable period of time that subject-races cannot be altered by force. Germany has not succeeded in extending her doctrine of centralized force into her colonies. Force creates action-patterns of opposition and of hatred. The conquering enemy can never supplant the influence of the hating mother who plants action-patterns in the brains of her children when the shades are drawn.”

## CHAPTER III

### THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE SOLDIER

#### §1. *During Mobilization; In the Cantonments; In the Trenches*

##### A PRAYER IN KHAKI

O Lord, my God, accept my prayer of thanks  
That Thou hast placed me humbly in the ranks  
Where I can do my part, all unafraid—  
A simple soldier in Thy great crusade.

I pray Thee, Lord, let others take command;  
Enough for me, a rifle in my hand,  
Thy blood-red banner ever leading me  
Where I can fight for liberty and Thee.

Give others, God, the glory; mine the right  
To stand beside my comrades in the fight,  
To die, if need be, in some foreign land—  
Absolved and solaced by a soldier's hand.

O Lord, my God, pray hearken to my prayer  
And keep me ever humble, keep me where  
The fight is thickest, where, 'midst steel and flame,  
Thy sons give battle, calling on Thy name.

ROBERT GARLAND.

OF what does the soldier going into battle *think*?  
During those long, weary weeks of waiting and watch-  
ing in the trenches, what occupies the soldier's mind?  
What feelings animate him when he attacks—when he  
fires, charges, or runs his bayonet into the quivering

flesh of an antagonist? These are questions universally asked, but rarely answered! Yet their answers would provide us with unique and valuable scientific knowledge—would supply a chapter in the psychology of the human mind never before studied.

In our endeavour to answer the questions we have just asked, it will be necessary for us to go back to a period prior to the opening of hostilities,—while peace yet reigned in the world (how long ago it seems!), for in this way only can we trace the gradual transition which takes place in the man's mind,—transforming him from a "civilian" to a "soldier"—and trace the subtle change from the civilian-consciousness to the soldier-consciousness.

In one sense, it may be said that the present war was precipitated upon Europe so suddenly that one had hardly time to realize it before war was upon the stricken land; half Germany's plan and power lay in striking quickly! Yet, for some days prior to the opening of hostilities, the tension had been rapidly growing between the opposing countries, and it was becoming more and more evident that a peaceful settlement was not likely or possible. This found its response in a like tension in the mind of our potential soldier; and this tension grew as events became more exciting,—until finally he began "to fizz inside like a bottle of champagne," as one soldier expressed it. The order for mobilization and the ensuing declaration of war came almost as a relief. Emotions had reached the "exploding point," and a state of "mental equilibrium" was found to ensue when this tension was removed,—by certainty, instead of uncertainty,—conviction rather than rumour. From that moment, when the civilian donned his soldier's clothes, and cast his



life into the scales, began a subtle change in his consciousness; the individual became submerged, to a certain extent, in society, in the state; he ceased to be an important element in the community; henceforward he was only a cog in the wheel, an infinitesimal part of the vast human machine which had just begun to move.

Says Dr. George W. Crile, in his *Mechanistic Conception of War and Peace*, pp. 10-11:

“The first effect of the declaration of war was the mobilization of the forces within the body of each individual in the warring countries. In other words, the kinetic system\* of each individual was activated. There was an increased output of adrenalin, of thyreiodin, of glycogen; and an increased mobilization of the Nissl substance in the brain-cells, from all of which there resulted an increased transformation of energy in the form of heat, motion, or chemical action. The individual moved quickly; he sang or prayed, his face was flushed; his heart beat faster; his respiration was quickened and there was usually an increase in his body temperature. Fight gained possession of the final common path; it dispossessed the routine activations of peaceful occupation and human relations. In each individual the organs and tissues of his body mobilized their stores of energy just as each government mobilized its resources of men and material.”

And further, in tracing the effects upon the entire community, he says (pp. 13-14):—

“During the season of mobilization, then, the kinetic

\* The kinetic system is the group of organs in the body by means of which man and animals transform the potential energy contained in food into muscular action, emotion, body heat; in short, it is the system by whose activity life is expressed. It may be compared to the motor of an automobile.



activation of the people is expressed by marching and singing on the part of those going to battle, and by silence or weeping by those left at home. The kinetic systems of those who fight and of those who remain at home are abnormally active; but, in the first stage at least, the activating substances thrown into the blood are more completely utilized by the muscular activity of the marching and singing husband than by the still and sobbing wife. The kinetic systems of the soldiers during mobilization are less strained than are the kinetic systems of those left behind.

“The activation of the soldier in the presence of actual danger as facing an evenly matched enemy is precisely the same as is experienced by men in other situations in life,—in the first encounter with big game; in being held up by a burglar; in a railway accident; or in facing a serious surgical operation; although most of all the activation of battle resembles the hunting of formidable wild beasts.

“Man in war, as a hunting animal, is elusive, resourceful, adaptive, brave, and persistent. When hunted, man turns hunter himself, and like wolves men hunt in packs. Therefore when men are mutually hunting each other their brains are intensely activated to this end, and all other relations of life are dispossessed.”

It must be remembered that man, *en masse*, is a very different being from man individual. I have said above that the soldier, after he enters the army, finds himself “only a cog in the wheel, an infinitesimal part of the vast human machine which has just begun to move.” That being so, his individual mind or consciousness gradually gives way to a collective con-

sciousness—to the “psychology of the crowd”—a very different thing, as we must now show.

Gustav Le Bon, in his classical work on *The Crowd; A Study of the Popular Mind*, says:—

“The most striking peculiarity presented by a psychological crowd is the following: Whoever be the individuals that compose it, however like or unlike be their mode of life, their occupations, their character, or their intelligence, the fact that they have been transformed into a crowd puts them in possession of a sort of collective mind which makes them feel, think, and act in a manner quite different from that in which each individual of them would think, feel and act were he in a state of isolation. There are certain ideas and feelings which do not come into being, or do not transform themselves into acts except in the case of individuals forming a crowd. The psychological crowd is a provisional being formed of heterogeneous elements, which for a moment are combined, exactly as the cells which constitute a living body form by their reunion a new being which displays characteristics very different from those possessed by each of the cells singly. . . .

“In the case of everything that belongs to the realm of sentiment—religion, politics, morality, the affections and antipathies, etc.—the most eminent men seldom surpass the standard of the most ordinary individuals. From the intellectual point-of-view an abyss may exist between a great mathematician and his boot-maker, but from the point-of-view of character the difference is most often slight or non-existent.

“It is precisely these general qualities of character, governed by forces of which we are unconscious, and possessed by the majority of the normal individuals of a race in much the same degree—it is precisely these

qualities, I say, that in crowds become common property. In the collective mind, the individual aptitudes of the individuals, and in consequence their individuality, are weakened. The heterogeneous is swamped by the homogeneous, and the unconscious qualities obtain the upper hand. . . .

“We see, then, that the disappearance of the conscious personality, the predominance of the unconscious personality, the turning by means of suggestion and contagion of feelings and ideas in an identical direction, the tendency to immediately transform the suggested ideas into acts; these, we see, are the principal characteristics of the individual forming part of a crowd. He is no longer himself, but has become an automaton who has ceased to be guided by his will. . . .” (pp. 29-36).

The mentality of men in crowds is absolutely unlike that which they possess when isolated, for an assemblage of men is as different from the individuals of whom it is made-up as is any living being from its component cells.

Reason has very little influence upon the collective mind, which is governed by collective logic, a form strictly peculiar to it. Intellectually collective man always appears inferior to individual man, but may be superior to him in the domain of the feelings; for although certain feelings, like gratitude, for instance, are unknown to the crowd, it possesses others, such as altruism, devotion to the general welfare, and even heroism, which are far more difficult to put in practice. The powers of the average man are increased by joining a collectivity, while those of the superior man are curtailed.

The emotions of the crowd are both intense and



fickle, thus allowing it to change quickly from adoration to hatred, and as it is lacking in the sense of practical possibilities, hope is its principal nourishment. The mysticism with which it is impregnated induces it to attribute magic powers to the leader who beguiles it, and to the brief formulas which synthesize its desires. Mental contagion operates upon isolated individuals as well as upon collectivities, but as the latter do not reason it plays the leading part among them.

The crowd is likewise very receptive of illusions, which acquire the force of truths from the mere fact of becoming collective. The present war furnishes numerous examples of this law.

Collective opinion has a great deal of strength, which is seldom spontaneous, however, for the crowd is really an amorphous organism that is incapable of action unless it has a leader, who influences it by affirmation, repetition, prestige, and contagion, all of them methods of persuasion peculiar to effective logic.

There must always be a leader to create and direct public opinion, even in the case of national conflicts, though this leader need not be a man who harangues the crowd, for his part may be played by beliefs or inherited feelings which certain circumstances have violently inflamed. But the real starting-point of popular opinion is invariably the leader or the great event which acts as his substitute.

It is into this psychological maelstrom that the soldier is plunged; and in it he soon loses his original individual "self" to a very great extent. Inasmuch as the man is psychologically the result, very largely, of his reactions to his environment, and its stimuli, it is only natural that this should be so. When he becomes a cog in the "war machine," he becomes a part of it, as



we have said; he constitutes a part of the army, and is no longer "himself." As one soldier expressed it, writing of his own inner impressions, and his study of his companions in arms:—

"By some astounding miracle, when the reservist puts on his uniform his state of mind suddenly changes, his feeling of individuality weakens, and he acquires the new sense of the collective life. He is no longer a grocer, a blacksmith, or a farmer, but a part of the machine. His personal ideas disappear and some mysterious force impels him to think and act like all the others. If he hears people around him saying, 'The enemy is in a bad way, we'll finish him at a bite,' he is sure that his adversary is a weak, ridiculous creature, altogether to be despised; but if his neighbour tells him the awful secret, 'We are betrayed,' he is equally certain that all his officers sold him to the foe.

"If there comes a shout of 'Every man for himself,' when our soldier is feeling the strong emotions of the battlefield, all his sensible ideas are swept clean out of him, and he takes to his heels like a madman, without a moment's thought and without paying the slightest attention whether the danger is real or not."

We thus see the change which has come over the mind of the soldier, during even the first days of his mobilization and training. He has begun to assume a new character, to be a new being. With his altered environment, with his change of clothing, and the whole routine of his daily life, he gradually loses his former self, and becomes a new man. From the civilian he has been transformed, in short, into a soldier.

From that moment, our soldier enters upon a new life. Little by little, as we shall see, the world he has left fades from his view, and even from his memory.

The past becomes blurred and unreal. The present—the vital present—assumes the place of unique importance. The simple and strict life, the monotony of repeated acts done over and over again, the discipline, the constant straining of the senses, the clouding of the finer sensibilities, the continued fight for life, the lack of all truly intellectual stimulation or companionship, the lack of any possibility of initiative or individual action—so frequent and important in our daily lives—all tend to reduce the mental activities to their lowest possible level, and induce a state of simple childishness and even vacuity which is strongly in contrast to the state of the same man's mind under normal, civil conditions.

Man's hereditary personality is deep-rooted and deep-seated. But he is greatly influenced and changed by exterior conditions and circumstances. His personality may, in fact, be said to be the result of the interplay between his exterior environment and his interior being. As these external circumstances alter, so the man is found to alter also—quickly or gradually, according to the mental make-up of the individual soldier. But he is changed under all circumstances. He must be! And, in the case of the common soldier, this change is profound. No environmental change in his life has ever been so vast and so radical as this. Army manœuvres, which approached it the most nearly, were but feeble in comparison,—and brief rather than protracted. Nothing can disturb the existing environment as war does. For here the surrounding country is destitute, desolate, burned; the railways are torn up; buildings are razed, crops destroyed, and every semblance of order and civilization gone. Nothing short of actual war can possibly imitate this, even

faintly. It is a different world; and this in turn creates a different mental world in the being dwelling within such an altered zone.

All the letters received from the soldiers at the Front indicate how quickly they become accustomed to their new lives. The following shows the part which is played by *habit*, as well as the ease with which the soldier adapts himself to conditions of strife that are quite contrary to his atavistic mentality:—

“Nothing dismays me now; no matter how the shells and bullets may whistle I do not lose my composure as I did in the beginning; and it is the same with all of us. When the first battles took place we engaged too soon; for the bayonet charge was all we thought of, and by making too much haste we got ourselves shot. But now we crawl on our stomachs when we attack and we use the tiniest clod of earth as cover, so that we fire upon the Germans as we like, and sometimes they do not even know where the shots come from. The last time we went into action we had an almost untenable position, and had to repel flank and frontal attacks at the same time; and not one of us flinched.”

Stability of personality is thus seen to depend solely upon permanence of environment, for as soon as a change takes place in the latter, the equilibria of the elements which form an individual's mental life are overthrown, with the result that new equilibria are established and he gains a new personality.

Such transformations of personality constitute a phenomenon which often occurs during revolutionary periods, as has been pointed out, and which the present war permits us to observe without difficulty.

It is impossible to foresee the nature and hence the



behaviour of a personality thus hastily constructed. The men who lived under the Terror have left us many examples of the fact that the mildest individual may become eager to shed blood and, even without going so far afield, we may assert that no one could have predicted either the barbarity of the German intellectuals in the present war or the good qualities of which the French have given proof.

Such changes of personality have been noticed daily during the war, and I shall have occasion to mention several of them which are very striking; but for the present I shall confine myself to a quotation from the remarks made by Rudyard Kipling, after he had paid a visit to the Front:—

“You know, when supreme trial overtakes an acquaintance whom till then we conceived we knew, how the man’s nature sometimes changes past knowledge or belief. He who was altogether such an one as ourselves goes forward simply, even lightly, to heights we thought unattainable. Though he is the very same comrade that lived our small life with us, yet in all things he has become great. So it is with France today. She has discovered the measure of her soul.”

Patriotism, the heritage of the dead, is one of those supreme forces which are created by long ancestral accumulations, and whose strength is revealed at critical moments. It was patriotism which rallied to its banner on the very day war was declared the Pacifists, Syndicalists, Socialists, and others who belonged to parties that were apparently most refractory to its influence; nor could their unanimous support have been won had patriotism not been an unconscious force whose impetus swept every argument aside.

M. Sabatier, in his *Frenchman’s Thoughts on the*



*War*, thus beautifully describes his impressions on the day of mobilization:—

“The two churches of the village were almost empty; and, what was better, so were the cabarets. The great day of mobilization for our district was Monday, the 3rd of August. On this Sunday there were a few isolated departures, but no one knew of them, and I did not see them. On the following day I was cowardly. I should have liked to return to the village, to press the departing soldiers to my heart. My courage failed me. Still obsessed by the memory of 1870, I feared, not scenes of emotion, but a display of distressing patriotism, cries of hatred, stupid boasts and threats, drinking songs alternating with and profaning our national anthems. I climbed a neighbouring hill whence with a pair of binoculars one can plainly see what is happening on a number of the more important highways of the district. It was shortly after three o’clock that I first noticed, on the further side of a deep, narrow valley, something like a long, dark ribbon which seemed to move.

“Then suddenly the *Marseillaise* burst forth, reverberated by all the echoes of the mountain, but there was something reserved and controlled about it; it had almost the accent of a psalm. Overcome by intense feeling, standing alone up there on the crest of the hill, I joined from afar in the song of our soldiers who were leaving for the front, until the moment when the turn of the road hid them from my sight.

“The sun shone out, and on all the other highways other interminable processions were descending towards the railway-stations with the same order, with the slow heavy pace of our peasants when they set out for the days of sowing. And the dear fellows were in-

deed setting forth to sow—to sow the best blood of France. . . .”

As one leaves the life of the city, and approaches the front, one passes through two spheres or “zones.” The foremost is the “war-zone,” which gradually shades off into the “civil zone,” as the rear of the first zone is approached. Insensibly they shade off into one another. When a wounded soldier leaves the firing-line and is transported to the rear, he passes from the war-zone to the civil-zone, and notices the difference at once. At the same time, he carries the atmosphere of the former zone with him (if newly arrived), and particularly is this the case if he is badly wounded, and has had no opportunity of observing the gradual stages of transition through which he has passed. One can see from this, then, the importance of obtaining interviews with soldiers *at once*, upon their return from the front,—for they would be apt, otherwise, to begin to change immediately in their viewpoints, on again emerging into normal life, in the civil zone of activities.

As the soldier leaves the civil zone, on the contrary, and passes to the front, everything becomes altered for him. He notices the altered conditions of the country. Women and children become more and more scarce, and finally disappear altogether. Civil life vanishes; only military life is anywhere encountered. Every one he meets thinks as he does, about the same subjects, in the same way; every one is dressed alike; every one’s thought runs in the same narrow groove. There is no longer the clash of opinion, the interchange of rival thoughts. Gradually, imperceptibly, the images and thoughts of ordinary civil life begin to fade;

thoughts of home, wife, friends, even, begin to grow dim and recede in the memory. The present, the vital present, occupies and grips the mind. Intellect gives way to sense impressions. The mind of the civilian has given place to that of the combatant. Henceforth, we must study the mind of the soldier as a thing apart,—as separate and distinct from that of any other human being. He both thinks and acts differently from any other man on the face of the earth.

In studying the psychology of the soldier, however, we are approaching a big problem; and in order to study it thoroughly and systematically, we must divide-up our subject into three or four sub-headings. We shall first of all see how the mind of the soldier “works” in the camps, or so-called “Cantonments”; then we shall consider the soldier in the general trenches; then in the isolated trenches; and finally we shall come to the mind of the soldier who is actually attacking, and see what is in his mind, under these altered circumstances and conditions.

1. *In the Cantonment.*—The sojourn in the camp or cantonment varies considerably, in point of time, and the character of the soldier’s abode varies proportionately. In France, those which were occupied but a brief time were usually built of branches and twigs; those occupied for considerable periods were quite elaborate, and supplied with drains, electric lights and numerous contrivances for the comfort of the occupants. In these cantonments a unique and intense social life exists. They are probably the most ideally co-operative communities in the world. Each man gives and does what he can for the good of all. The bricklayer builds; the pipe-maker makes pipes (from



the enemy's empty cartridge cases, very often!); the electrician, the plumber, the carpenter—every trade and profession, in fact, finds opportunity to contribute to the common cause and common comfort. Flower-pots are made from exploded shells; pictures are painted by the artist; even journals are edited and printed by the literary members of the community. The cantonment is, in fact, a veritable hive of industrial, manual activity. There is, moreover, in all that is done, an element of joy, of fun, which is lacking at ordinary times. Each man contributes what he can, from what he knows. Generals and privates alike contribute to the general fund or "pool." There is a state of perpetual animation—and yet it is limited animation, strictly circumscribed, admitting of no great change, rarely stepping beyond certain well-defined limits. The work being nearly all manual, the body begins to assume a prominent, even predominant place in the thoughts,—while the mind assumes a second-rate importance. The great regularity and discipline, also, tend to make the mind simple and rhythmical; its even flow is disturbed only by the arrival of some general or high official, for whom special preparations are necessary. This alone breaks the monotony, and places the men in touch,—for a few moments, as it were,—with the outside world. But on their departure, the same monotonous, rigid, rhythmic life begins anew.

All this tends to make the mind simple, primitive, almost vacuous. Original thinking is gradually obliterated, all the thinking is done by the officers. The soldiers have only to obey orders! They gradually fall into this habit of letting others do their thinking for them, and merely follow instructions. Terrible as this picture may appear to the reader, it nevertheless



has its bright side, as we shall presently see; and it may be said that one of the great lessons which the present war has taught us is this: that too great initiative in a soldier is not to be desired. Only on certain occasions is this beneficial; at other times, simple obedience will serve the soldier best.

*It is a psychological fact of great importance and significance, that those at the front have the greatest confidence.* The nearer the front we penetrate, the greater this feeling of confidence becomes. These men know that they can resist the attack of the enemy; they have done so before, and they feel that they can do so again. As one approaches the rear, this feeling of confidence wanes, until we reach its antithesis in the civil zone, where the feeling of personal fearlessness and confidence is almost entirely lacking. It is precisely analogous to the prize-fighter, trained for the ring. He himself is supremely confident of the result of the contest. Only those who have never fought have this feeling of fear, of lack of confidence.

*Physical training gives confidence to a man. His confidence in himself increases in precise ratio to his physical condition.* And this is one of the great reasons why a prolonged system of military training is necessary,—to fit the modern soldier for war. Its effects are mental and moral no less than physical and physiological. Superbly fit, he feels that nothing can withstand him, as he marches off to war. At the same time, this fact should also show us the utter unreasonableness of depending upon a rapidly raised volunteer force to meet veterans trained in war. No matter how bravely they might fight, even in superior numbers, they would be bound to go down in defeat before seasoned veterans, whose training and experience had

caused them to have a profound confidence in their own prowess,—no less than a knowledge of the game of war. Confidence is a state of mind, a matter of thought. Constancy is a state of will, a matter of action.

“Constancy, firmness of mind (which the ancients, remember, placed in the first ranks of the virtues), holds fast to its purpose, whatever may befall; perseveres in its design or its duty; never flinches on the field of battle; never fails in the tasks of civil life, and throws through all its actions the continuous woof of an unchanging will, which no accident has power to break.

“Of this virtue France has afforded many examples, and examples of very different kinds.

“The crowds on the day of mobilization behaved magnificently; for a crowd may behave well in a public place, just as a battalion may behave well in a fighting line. In that solemn moment we saw the storm of the summons pass over them, yet not a cry was heard, not a head was bowed; only in some a quiver of the eyelids, as when the dust rides upon the wind. The multitude hastened to the railway stations, but there were no collisions, no complaints; it was a spectacle of collective dignity which taught me more and moved me more than all the books written upon the past and all the scenes of history.

“A masterpiece of constancy was the attitude of the soldier who, retreating from the bank of the Ardennaise river to Vitry-le-François, defeated on the first day, and then twice victorious, yet retiring in order, finally standing fast, to fall wounded, but still victorious, and this time for good. I am speaking of a soldier who told me the whole story; a soldier who has

a name, but who is like a brother to hundreds of thousands of other soldiers.

“Constancy, again, explains the resignation with which our armies have accepted the life of the trenches. It was not congenial to the French soldier, an open-air soldier, as was his Gaulish ancestor. But he adopted it, sadly at first, then almost gaily, and almost bravely. And I am not sure whether Valerius Maximus has not cited some story of this kind as an example of military constancy.

“It is a virtue of the same order that has been exhibited by so many of our friends in town and country. I should have liked to name them, for they were our masters in the matter of moral duty, and they have succeeded in lighting-up these long months of mourning by the beauty of their actions. This peasant has just harvested, without a word of lamentation, the field which was sown by his dead son. This mother, on receiving the news that her son was killed, went forth to console the wounded who yet lived. This schoolmaster in a bombarded city quietly retired, during the menace of the shells, to a cellar turned into a schoolroom, where he was joined by a flock of still joyous children. This famous professor lost the last son remaining to him, and on receiving the telegram he slowly took his chair to dictate to his pupils the task of the day. And we might cite a thousand facts of the kind.”

To return, however, to our Cantonment. Limited as the men are in their mental horizon, the physical energies, doubled by their healthy outdoor life and simple food, must find vent for their expression. Constant drill, marching and exercising work off part of it; manual work of various kinds also affords an outlet;



but the pent-up energies must find still other channels, and in the enforced absence of sexual life or gratification, this finds its outlet in playfulness,—in gossip, joking, horseplay, pleasantry, gaiety, practical jokes, or at times in fighting, much as school boys would fight among themselves. It forms an outlet for their exuberant energies; there is no deep-seated hatred for the rival. Fortunately, however, these fights are comparatively rare; and the latent energy generally finds a more useful and less dangerous channel for its expenditure.

As the anonymous author of that entertaining little book, *Conscript 2989*, tells us:—

“. . . None of us has grown up. We are all like big boys, and we spend with no thought of the morrow. . . . We mill around with the crowd, and soon are pushed against a counter. Something attracts our eye. We feel a desire to possess it. We buy it, and start milling about the room again until presently we are near the door. Then we step out into the night again and join one of the groups of loiterers or sit about on boxes and piles of lumber, where we devour our purchase, if it happens to be in the line of crackers (as is usually the case), or admire it, if it happens to be a pocket flash-lamp, a fountain pen or something else that we really never have had any use for. . . .”

In these cantonments, many humorous circulars are printed and even weekly journals are issued. They are typical of the mind of the soldier, and represent the collective soul of the combatants. The French particularly have excelled in this. For example, they have issued a periodical, in the Champagne, entitled *Le Poilu*, which defines itself as “A journal, humorous, literary, and artistic, of the life of the troglodytes; to appear when and where it can.” It contains impres-

sions of the war, messages from home, news and bulletins, Rabelaisian sonnets and other material. Another, entitled *La Gazette des Tranchées* (issued in the Argonne), "an organ founded to maintain the spirit of mirth in France," gives scraps of Parisian life, of the Boulevards, etc., in the character of a general "Revue." Another, *L'Echo des Marmites*, has a sub-title, "The only Daily—No connection with Berlin!" Still another, *Le Petit Voisognard*, gay and sprightly in tone, contains a variety of humorous material. The American Army has already begun its own papers, along similar lines. In addition to these periodicals, issued from the camps and trenches, the soldiers have organized concerts, theatricals, "revues," and many other forms of entertainment, to which each contributes something (often excellent talent) and printed programmes are issued for the most ambitious of these.

The soldiers have also invented or coined a number of new words and phrases of their own, so that they now have a regular "jargon,"—all but unintelligible to the uninitiated. Thus, the French have introduced such words as "gring," "pinard," etc.; while the English soldier speaks of "Black Marias," "Jack Johnsons," of being "spiffed," "put in a bag," etc.; and doubtless the Italian and Russian soldiers have done much the same thing. Every trade or profession has coined such words, which the outsider can hardly be expected to know.

While the foregoing may seem to indicate a great fund of surface gaiety among the soldiers (and indeed there is a good deal, at times), there is, nevertheless, a subdued tension and gravity, which runs as an under-current through their entire life. Especially is this

true of the French soldiers. They no longer gather 'round the camp fires and tell stories as they did in the war of 1870. Then, long romances in serial form were narrated by a good story-teller. Now, on the contrary, all this surface pleasantries seems to find expression in writing,—in the periodicals which are circulated in the cantonments and trenches. Now, when the soldiers talk together, it is usually of passing events, simple remarks and pleasantries, originating on the surface, and rarely or never do these conversations touch upon "deep" topics—religious, domestic, emotional, etc. One might be tempted to imagine that, under the existing circumstances, with death so near, men's minds would seem to turn naturally to the more serious phases of life; they do not seem to. The deeply intellectual life seems dormant, entranced, in abeyance. The monotony of the daily occupation has temporarily killed it. Sensory and physical interests have usurped its place. Yet this fact, too, should be noted. Very rarely is the language of the men obscene. It is rather trivial and egoistic. It seems to revolve around each man's own needs—his own feelings and personal safety. Curiously enough, too, but little is said about the war *en bloc* in these cantonments. The soldiers are occupied with their own particular sphere of activity and interests. Broader thinking seems to be left to the superior officers.

Contrary to what one would expect, all the men who have passed a considerable period of time in the cantonments assert that time seems to pass quickly there—in spite of the extreme monotony of the life. It is rarely found to "drag." Probably this is on account of the monotony of the impressions. A cat or a dog does not seem to get "bored" with the length of his



day,—no matter how little he may be busied with life. At such times, men seem to become like these animals—content to live without thinking, with empty minds, living on the impressions of the senses. They do not suffer mentally; only physically. They go to services or mass regularly, even if they are not at all religious, and not in the habit of doing so at home. They display, in short, an extreme docility and lack of personal criticism. They feel sad when the dead are brought in; but feel a curiously detached attitude towards them, and look upon this more as a historical event than as a personal affair, in which they too may be destined soon to play the principal rôle. Each soldier has seen but a small and limited portion of the field of battle, it must be remembered, and for this reason his consciousness is contracted. In nearly all cases this curious state of abstraction or absent-mindedness is noticed among men living in the trenches or cantonments.

In these camps, the soldiers often tend to chafe under the strict discipline enforced, but as soon as the advance begins, these same men instinctively feel its necessity and fall into line readily. With the advance, they adapt themselves at once to war. Even the older men, who—one would think—might be tempted to rebel at the leadership of far younger men than themselves, fail to experience this feeling in the least. Instinctively, the soldier realizes the all-importance of instruction and discipline. Of course, this only holds good in those cases where the officers treat the men fairly and justly, and are honoured and beloved by them. When a case of unjust provocation arises, indignation is at once shown. Fortunately, however, such cases are few in the Allied armies.

We may sum-up, then, by saying that the mind of the average soldier, in the cantonments, undergoes a temporary degeneration, due to the fact that it acts in vacancy, instead of attaching itself to *things*; the monotony of the stimuli acts in a hypnotic manner, causing the mind to become simple and vacuous. The sentiments undergo the same oscillations as the thoughts. Soldiers become like children; they have frequent disputes, which they refer to their officers for settlement. The officer who can settle such disputes justly and satisfactorily to both disputants is adored by his men. While these rules do not, of course, apply to all men alike, it may be said confidently that they represent accurately the mind of the *average* soldier in the cantonment, during periods of relative inaction. We must now study the psychology of the soldier in the trenches—both the inter-communicating and the isolated trenches. This may be said to be a sort of intermediate step between the camp, and the soldier in actual combat.

2. *In the Trenches.*—The movement and noise in the advanced trenches is terrific and incessant. The whistle of bullets, the roar of bursting shells, etc., impinge upon the brain incessantly,—giving it no rest or peace. The mind is in a constant state of excitement. The soldier is continually on the lookout for the enemy. There may be momentary pangs of fear or uncertainty, but these are dispelled by the feeling of proximity of comrades, and in proportion to the familiarity of the environment. Here, as ever, “familiarity breeds contempt.” The soldiers soon become indifferent to the scream of shells and the “whirr” of bullets—as much as they do to the sight of blood or of dead men being

brought in on stretchers. When the moment arrives for the men to advance into the trenches,—to the firing-line,—authority automatically asserts itself. Silence and discipline are at once observed and are continually maintained. The soldiers themselves feel the necessity for this. As death becomes nearer and more real, the feeling of self-preservation becomes stronger and stronger; the soldier feels that his discipline is one of the surest means of escaping death. Instinctively this is observed. Thus, on one occasion, a column was marching down an unfrequented lane, when a shell exploded quite close to it. The column paused for an instant, as if in surprise, then pushed forward again in perfect rhythm and order, “with the gleam of hate on their faces.” The individual had vanished—swallowed up in the group. Personal psychology had given way to the psychology of the crowd—individual to collective consciousness.

As to the light which may be thrown upon the psychology of *fear*, in the present war, there is fortunately little to say. Men assert that they rarely experience this feeling—least of all while on the firing line. Sometimes they run into extreme danger at night, and at dawn are astonished at having escaped almost certain death. Then, sometimes, a shiver of reminiscent apprehension runs through them! But nearly every soldier feels a sort of inner conviction that *he* will not be killed—that *he* will escape, by some miraculous good fortune! Some, it is true, do not experience this feeling; but it is safe to say that the majority *do* experience it.

The first thing which the men do, on occupying new advanced trenches, is to take mental and moral possession of them, no less than physical possession. Al-



most invariably, they criticise the state of the trenches they occupy, and pass uncomplimentary remarks about their former owners, who had left them in such a condition! (It reminds one of moving into a new house!) On settling in the trench, each soldier places his knapsack in a small cut-out hole in front of him, places his rifle and cartridges ready to hand, assures himself that the parapet directly in front of him is safe and in good condition, places boards or pieces of wood at convenient angles, so that he may stand upon them (to keep his feet dry), and takes a general view of the situation, so as to be thoroughly familiar with his surroundings. Of course, in this reconnaissance, he cannot look over the top of the trenches, or peep at the enemy; if he did he would be shot instantly for his pains by the "snipers" in the opposing trenches. Consequently, a temporary *fear of the unknown* sets in, which is dispelled as soon as he becomes oriented to his surroundings, and familiar with the general "lay out" of his trenches. As time passes, and he still cannot see or hear the enemy (whom he knows, nevertheless, to be so near), an overpowering curiosity takes possession of him. He wishes to look—to have "just a peep"—at the opposing earthworks. Some are foolhardy enough to do this, contrary to the strict commands of the officers,—and many a man has been killed in just this way. Others content themselves with testing the proximity of the enemy by displaying caps, helmets, etc., on the end of bayonets, over the edge of the trenches,—and usually seeing a hole shot in them instantly! Still others endeavour to observe the enemy-positions by the aid of "trench-periscopes," but these are generally shattered by the enemy rifle fire. (Their own well-placed snipers are, of course, doing the same

thing in the case of the enemy.) But the majority of the men try to conquer this all-pervading curiosity. They either resist the temptation until it is their turn to observe from the observation-post; or, failing this, they question others likely to know,—the wounded, the doctors, the incoming snipers,—and display, as one soldier expressed it, “more curiosity than a woman” as to the movements and disposition of the enemy. In these trenches, silence is often the rule; the men are not allowed to talk; but this rule is not always obeyed. Constant alertness is essential. If the men talk, it is usually about immediate and relatively inconsequential things—the country, the weather, a late adventure, etc. As one sergeant said, speaking of his soldiers: “Nothing interests them; they are absorbed in every little thing which comes up.” They live, in short, *in the senses*,—which are trained to be constantly on the alert. If a gun is fired, the soldiers follow the course of the shell and observe the volume of smoke it throws up; if an aeroplane is seen, its flight is watched with bated breath; the men count the number of bombs it drops; the number of shrapnel-shells bursting round it, etc. This is repeated, no matter how many times a day the same event takes place. The men even repeat the same words, make the same gestures, etc., on each occasion, without knowing that they do so. They display no signs of uneasiness; on the contrary, a feeling of absolute assurance seems to pervade the trenches. If the soldier is given food and a plentiful supply of tobacco, he gives himself up to the sensuous life completely, and henceforth ceases to be “a thinking animal.”

It is the officer upon whom falls the responsibility for his men; he it is who must do the thinking for the

entire army. The men look to him for everything. *The importance of having trained and experienced officers is thus very apparent*—men whose intellect is of high order, and whose mental and moral forces are at their highest point of efficiency at the opening of hostilities.

Occasionally, in slack times, the men engage in some occupation, to keep themselves employed; but these are always manual occupations, easily performed with the hands. Conversation becomes less and less frequent as the days go by; and when it does occur, it is always about simple things. Living, as he does, in a new world, in constant danger of immediate death, the soldier feels detached from other men, from the world, and even from his own family. He begins to feel that, after all, *he* is the important and essential factor in the community; that the world centres about him and observes his actions. This feeling is not consciously egotistical; the soldier merely feels himself to be the centre of interest. Each man lives only for himself, in his inner thoughts,—his own interests, as distinct from those of others. He feels no interests in his past work or profession or its future possibilities. He simply cannot think of it; he now lives in a different world entirely. Letters from home, and journals, as they arrive, afford some slight mental stir and commotion, for a time; but even these seem to leave no durable trace upon the mind, and their images and memories are soon obliterated. Thus, a young corporal, in trying to analyze his impressions at the time, said:

“I am not sure that I thought of my family particularly, even when writing home! There seemed



somehow to be a veil between us, shutting off all communion of feeling and interest.”

The curious form of fatalism which seems to take possession of the soldiers at the front is well illustrated by the following letter from Lieutenant Newhall, of the American Expeditionary Army in France, written to his father, and published by him in the *Minneapolis Tribune*. He says in part:—

“Don’t be unhappy, even if something happens to me. The Japanese point of view always appealed to me. They are proud when one of their relatives is lost in a patriotic struggle, and put on festival clothes instead of going into mourning. I was pleased to see it suggested in the *Chicago Tribune* that we adopt the custom of wearing a badge, such as a star, instead of black.

“When we think of the bigness of the work at hand—and it is more than merely defeating Germany—any man can feel that even being killed is a small price to pay for having an active part in this great step forward, which the world is taking.

“It is the welding together of the liberty-loving peoples into a great co-operating society—which is to be the triumph that will follow an Allied victory.

“The great weakness of our democracies has been that this liberty of which they were so boastful was a mere individualism which allowed every man to compete unscrupulously with all his neighbours. Now in the face of this German menace we are trying to learn how to curtail some of our individual ‘liberties’ in order to secure a national unity.

“Germany and Japan have secured the spirit of co-operation through the action of autocracies. It is now for us to show that it can be achieved as well and in

less dangerous form through democracy. Perhaps it can't be. If that be so, it is better to be killed before that impossibility has been demonstrated. If it can be, then any one who contributes toward the achievement of that end can be proud in proportion to his contribution. Don't be anxious then. Be happy that I am over here as I am, despite the mournful tone of some of my letters."

In the military journals, the men seek to find encouraging or favourable results; they are not interested in military movements and manœuvres, as such; only in the results actually accomplished. They think little of war in the abstract; or (curiously enough) of the enemy. They think rather of themselves. They do not forget the enemy; they simply do not think of him. (This, of course, is when they are not actively engaged in observing.) All the men questioned agree upon these three essential points: viz., (1) That they do not speak of the enemy or think of him, except when an alarm is given; (2) or after an attack; or (3) when the patrols return; that is, each time his presence is vividly recalled to consciousness. At such times, the same acts and ideas are repeated on nearly every occasion.

When the trenches are under fire from the enemy, the mind centres upon one thing—how to defend the trench and resist the adversary. The men fire, as it were, to protect themselves, as much as to kill. For this reason they often fire badly,—especially at first. They have a sort of subconscious impression that this noise will terrify the enemy; and seek to add to this din in all sorts of ways—by cries, shouts, incessant firing, etc. And there is no doubt that all this does

have a certain mental and moral effect upon the enemy, in nearly all cases.

Says Dr. G. W. Crile:—

“The nearer the trenches, the more desperate and intense is the fighting. In trench fighting both sides have adopted every variety of flame, acid, and explosive that ingenuity can devise. Every ruse, every stratagem, is employed in the close personal contact. It is as if one were contending all day and all night with a murderer in one’s own house.

“Under these conditions the personalities of the men become altered; they become fatalists and think no longer of their personal affairs, their friends, or their homes. Their intensified attention is directed solely to their hostile *vis-à-vis*. They look neither to the right, to the left, nor behind. The gaze of each is fixed upon the end of the hostile gun, which may hold for him—his future!

“To indicate the fierceness of the struggle in the Argonne, I know of one instance in which an officer who had been wounded on the ‘hell-strip,’ ‘No-Man’s Land,’ that red lane between the German and the French advance trenches, lay there for six and one-half days, then died. Neither rescue nor capture was permitted. Flashlights played over this wounded man at night, and food was thrown to him from the trenches by day. Dead bodies lie on this strip or dangle on barbed wires for days and weeks and months. . . .

“In the first impact of war many men in all of the armies became insane; many underwent nervous breakdown; some became hysterical; but the great majority became seasoned and maintained a state of good health.” (*A Mechanistic Conception of War and Peace*, pp. 14-15.)



*Artillery Fire*

In contrast to the *vis-à-vis* trench fighting with rifles and hand grenades and dynamite, artillery fire is more severe when only concentrated, and the concussive effect of bursting shells brings other forms of injury. The sudden explosion of the shell shocks the ear, frequently breaking the ear drum; it shakes the body, and often produces a molecular change in nervous tissue. The rarefaction and condensation of the air cause such violent changes in the gaseous tension in the blood as to rupture blood vessels in the central nervous system—thereby producing an injury in a vital part and causing sudden death. The process is in a measure comparable to “caisson disease” or “bends” in workmen labouring under atmospheric pressure in tunnels under water. But artillery fire is less personal than the rifle or bayonet. The artilleryman rarely sees the object of his fire; he has no personal contact with the enemy, but suddenly finds himself in a scorching fire, from a source which he cannot ascertain, from an enemy he cannot see. It is like quarrelling by telegraph.

Although they cannot see one another, the men frequently hurl threats back and forth,—between the opposing trenches. Thus, the French soldiers will call out, “Bring your Emperor William over here!” To which the German soldiers reply, “À Paris; à Paris!” The French call back, “You will never get to Paris, you Boches!” The idea of “Paris” affects soldiers from all parts of France equally. The simple word seems to have an effect upon them which is paralleled by none other.

In the trenches, every one knows every one else; and good and bad rumours soon spread. The men are fond

of music, but are not particular; and while the *Marseillaise* stirs the French, they have been known to advance with patriotic fervour to some popular music-hall song, such as "*Embrasse-moi, Ninette!*"

*In the Isolated Trenches.*—In these advanced positions the men seem to form a more united and homogeneous group. They are swayed more readily by one impulse, by a single word, or gesture. The example of the commanding officer here is of the supremest importance. In these trenches, the men do not know what is going on to the right or the left of them, in front or to the rear. They might be utterly abandoned by the rest of the army, for all they know. This thought—they have been abandoned—is apt to cause temporary demoralization in soldiers newly arrived at the front who enter these positions for the first time. M. Lahy points out the importance of keeping the soldiers in these trenches in touch with the rest of the army, and particularly with their near-by comrades. At the moment of attack this is especially essential. At such times, M. Lahy insists, the soldier should know what support he is having, and the object of his attack. Were this support given him, his morale would be greatly heightened.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE SOLDIER (*Continued*)

#### §2. *During the Attack; Pain; Shell-Shock; Dreams; Fatigue, etc.*

##### THE ASSAULT

A sudden thrill—  
"Fix bayonets!"  
Gods! we have our fill  
Of fear, hysteria, exultation, rage,  
Rage to kill.  
My heart burns hot, whiter and whiter,  
Contracts tighter and tighter,  
Until I stifle with the will  
Long forged, now used  
(Tho utterly strained)—  
O pounding heart,  
Baffled, confused,  
Heart panged, head singing, dizzily pained—  
To do my part.

Blindness a moment. Sick.  
There the men are!  
Bayonets ready: click!  
Time goes quick;  
A stumbled prayer . . . somehow a blazing star  
In a blue night . . . where?  
Again prayer.  
The tongue trips. Start:  
How's time? Soon now. Two minutes or less.  
The gun's fury mounting higher . . .  
Their utmost. I lift a silent hand. Unseen I bless.



Those hearts will follow me.  
 And beautifully,  
 Now beautifully my will grips.  
 Soul calm and round and filmed and white!

ROBERT NICHOLS.

**THE ATTACK.**—Of all the events of the war, it is this which persists most strongly in the mind of the soldier. The impressions are the most vivid, and doubtless the traces are most deeply imprinted upon the nervous system,—hence the depth of the impressions. At such times, the soldiers seem to be sustained and inspired by lofty but purely subconscious feelings and impressions—country, family, God, all are there in spirit, and form a background of superior emotions and feelings;—none of which, however, are sensed *consciously*. If a soldier who has actually taken part in an attack be questioned as to his state of mind at the time, he invariably replies that he was not conscious of any images or impressions outside those which had reference to the immediate object of the offensive—no matter what the duration of the struggle may have been. The mind remains attached to the sole image or impression of the possible “mortal shock,”—and the means of escaping it! In other words, the instinct of self-preservation has assumed supreme sway. The following case will give an example of this:—

A young sergeant (who in consequence was later made an adjutant) was sent to observe a German trench. He advanced confidently to within about ten metres of it (at night) when he was suddenly subjected to a terrific rain of bullets. He had been discovered! Surprised, and suddenly seized with uncontrollable terror, he rushed back to the French trenches, but, owing to the storm of fire, dared not climb over

the parapet. For *three hours* he was obliged to lie flat on the ground, crouched and flattened against the projecting earthwork. *During all that time*, when he expected death every minute, he thought neither of his family, his friends, of God, duty, nor patriotism,—but only of how to escape death (yet he was naturally a religious man, and devoted to his family). His reason never deserted him for one instant; he spoke to his comrades constantly on the other side of the trench, and received encouragement and consolation from them. But his mind clung to the one thought—how to escape and attain shelter! This instructive incident shows us the extremely primitive state of mind reached by the soldier on the battlefield, and should serve to dispel many sentimental illusions as to the “agony of soul” from which the soldier on the battlefield is supposed to suffer!

A critic might object, here, that such a case is exceptional; or that this man may have suffered from an illusion of memory,—and *really* thought of many more things than he thought he did. However, practically every soldier tells the same story; and if they think of anything else, these thoughts do not rise into the *conscious* mind with sufficient strength to be recognized. Such a state of mind as that noticed is characterized by its unity,—by its fixed limits,—in which one image, and one only, fills the mind. This is technically termed a state of “*monoideism*.” In such a state thought seems to follow the bodily action instead of *vice versa*. It is the body which has become supreme; and the mind a mere “epiphenomenon.”

Just prior to the attack, on the other hand, the mind reaches a certain state of tension, which finds its only avenue of expression in bodily activity. Thought

must find relief in action! Thus, one soldier who had risen above the trench and become a mark for the enemy, experienced what he called a brief "lucid interval," followed by an overwhelming desire to leap over the parapet and attack the enemy! Just before an attack, the officers frequently have to calm the men, restrain them, to keep them in check. At the moment of the attack, the soldier thinks nothing but, "We must go, we must go—now, we go!" As they climb over the parapet, their only thought is to get at the enemy as quickly as possible—not so much with the object of killing him, strange to say, as from the desire of saving their own skins. They sweep across the fire-swept ground, thinking only of taking cover, if any offers itself, or of reaching the enemy as quickly as possible. In a bayonet attack a man becomes for the time being a "beast-brute." All his higher feelings and instincts are in abeyance. He becomes simply an instinctive animal, bent on preserving his own life, by killing as many of the enemy as possible. At such times the crisis of excitement runs high; the men cry out, they shout, they brandish their arms. When the action is keen, the feelings of the different parts of the body seem to become diffused; they become unified only in the brain. One idea, and one only, floods the consciousness and the whole being of the soldier; self-preservation. This sweep of a single state of consciousness over the entire being of the attacking soldier is rendered easier by reason of the previous empty mental life which he has led in the cantonments and trenches. There the soldier has become so used to being monopolized by a single idea that it takes place quite naturally, and without the internal resistance which would be exercised by a man "new at the game." As this



feeling surges through him, he also feels that he masters danger; in the same way that an expert feels the master of some sport in which he has excelled. And as he experiences this, the feeling of danger vanishes.

The following interesting letter will give a vivid account of the psychology of the American soldier; and is one of the first received in this country which actually does so. It appeared in the evening edition of the *New York Sun*, February 27, 1918, and is as follows:—

#### WON MEDAL ON FIRST TRIP OVER THE TOP

*Corporal Hal B. Donnelly, Company B, Fifth Canadian Mounted Rifles Battalion, is from Asbury Park, N. J. He enlisted with the Canadians in 1916 in time to take part in the Somme action, of which this letter is a partial narrative. He won the Military Medal for bravery in this fight, but on this subject the letter is modestly silent.*

“DEAR MOTHER: I guess you get tired of my short uninteresting letters, and so I am going to relate my first ideas and impressions when I arrived in France and thus relieve the monotony of my short notes, ‘I am well,’ etc.

“Now when a man first comes to this country to fight the wily Hun he is not thrown immediately into the fray, but by gradual processes he makes his way from the ‘base’ to the trenches. In that period he goes through intensive training at the ‘base’; then some more behind the line, where he becomes accustomed to the artillery, and by contact with ‘old timers’ he learns the meaning of the various terms applied to shells, trenches, attacks, and picks up many hints on trench

conduct. If the man is of the right sort he learns a great deal not taught in training camps. Then, perhaps, he goes up close behind the line some night on a working party and gets his first view of star shells. He learns the difference between one of ours going over and one of the Hun's coming our way (shells, I mean).

"He gets wised up; also the first few times he gets his 'wind up'; but getting used to it all he gradually learns that all shells are not aimed at him. Then finally he goes to the battalion and into the front line, where he comes to the conclusion that most of the men who write in the papers and numerous others who trained him are the biggest liars on earth. But a day eventually comes when all of the horrors, all of the misery, the injustice and the terrors come home to him, and he realizes that there was to a certain extent method in his training.

"My case was a little different from the one I just outlined. I came over from the States to Canada and made a few inquiries; found out a battalion that was to depart for England right away. I did not fancy too much training, but was like the 'Scotty' who wanted to enlist. He said to the officer, 'Gie me a horse and let me awa' to the trenches.'

"I just happened to get to England shortly after a certain famous battle in which they lost heavily and were in sore need of men to fill up the ranks of those battalions which bore the brunt of it all, so my stay in England was short. I did the usual rifle range, where I made a fairly good score—and bingo! I shipped to France.

"It would surprise you, how anxious these Canadians are 'to go to it.' I was the same; I wanted to get into it and have done with my conjectures as to what

it was like. But I had to go through some very intensive training before departing for the line. Bayonet practice and trench digging, barb wire and musketry practice, jumping trenches and wire, lectures—and presto! I was bloodthirsty; I wanted to pin a Hun on my trusty bayonet.

“Oh, I sure had my wind up when we were lectured by a man who knew the methods used by Fritz, and since then, although I have ceased to be bloodthirsty, deep down in me rankles a hatred for all things German. We find out by actual experience that the atrocities we were told of are actual facts.

“The President says we are not fighting the Germans but Prussianism. But if he had seen what I have he would class all Huns as Huns and fight them tooth and nail. No, they are the same, collectively and individually—though no doubt they are the product of what they have been taught through a number of generations. But we take them as we find them, and if possible leave them so that they will never do any more harm. When we shall have won this war we will prove to the Hun conclusively that his teaching was all wrong. After that, perhaps in two or three generations, he may develop into a rational, peace loving, little Hun.

“But to continue about myself. I was bloodthirsty. I bought a file to sharpen my bayonet (which is strictly against the Hague convention, but is according to Hun interpretation of it). I purchased a beautiful bit of steel for a puttee knife; this instrument is carried in the puttee, and in case you lose your rifle in an encounter or come to grips you slash or perhaps dig, and then convince the Hun that there is a ‘war on.’ This knife I used to finger with loving pride; it was very



sharp. I was there all right, but I found later that I was not half as ferocious as I thought at the time. I finally reached my objective 'up the line,' but did not immediately go to trenches, but was with a reserve battalion doing working parties. I soon picked up the meaning of the many strange noises in the back areas; I could differentiate between one of our guns firing and a Hun crump landing. I could soon tell one of our planes from Fritzie's; I also learned that souvenir collecting was dangerous, because sometimes an old grenade or 'nose cap' still had a sting.

"I was a month doing working parties, mostly at night to the time of machine gun bullets and there were shots on the road going and coming which were quite hot at times. But I had not reached the line. Gee! How I admired those mud stained troops coming out and those others going in! They were actually in it and how I would hold my tongue and listen when they would speak of bays, and traverse, rumjars, minnie-wurfers, listening posts and stand-to! These men had actually seen life; they were veterans and how wonderful that they could 'go in' and come out. Why, some of them had been in France a year. I thought a man was lucky if he did not get napooed first trip in.

"Then my ideas began to change. I saw fellows who had nerve to write home for things that would not come for over two months and they would in that time make several trips to the line. Gee! I thought, what a splendid lot of optimists. I was learning and what I learned from these 'old timers' was of great value to me later when I became a 'dweller in trenches.'

"I will write a little conversation I heard; the lesson it taught is obvious.

" "Hey, Bill, where's Charles?"

“ ‘Napoo.’

“ ‘What?’

“ ‘Yes. He was out on a listening post and lit a cigarette. Sniper got him.’

“ ‘Damn fool!’

“ ‘Remember Jim T——? Well, he got his last trip; kept bobbing his head over the parapet. If he had only taken a look in a slow, easy manner he would be alright today.’

“ ‘Yes. That’s how old Bill got his. Ain’t it?’

“ ‘Yep.’

“ ‘Say, you know that place at B. B. Corner, where Fritz played his machine guns?’

“ ‘Sure.’

“ ‘Well, he’s ranged about knee high and got quite a number of our lads in the leg. Dandy blighties, but one fellow, he got scared and tried to crawl across. Yep, he’s napoo now. Too bad.’

“ ‘I learned right here that smoking on post furnished too good a target; that I could look over a parapet if I gradually raised myself and remained stationary, then slowly withdrew my head; that it was better to keep on my legs when M. G. bullets (M. G.—machine gun) were kicking up the dust. And so it went; a hint here and a warning there. I filed them away for future reference.

“ ‘But to carry on with the war: the day finally came when I was to be one of these men myself, and not only that, but we were going over the top in the morning. Never to be forgotten night before! I was detailed to get this, and when I got back I headed off again for something else.

“ ‘I was loaded down like a dromedary; I looked like a Christmas tree all hung. Rifle, bayonet (keen

edged), grenades, a pick and shovel, umpty rounds ammunition, two packs of rations. All dressed up and nowhere to go! And as luck would have it we got lost and prowled around half the night looking for our sector of trenches. We finally hit the front line and had to go along it for quite a distance. We had been shelled considerably in the 'communication trenches and had a number of casualties. This was war; I was finally in it. I cannot say that I was not excited, but I don't think I was afraid; only sort of apprehensive. Thank God! it was night, and I overlooked a great many horrors; those patches of black here and there on parapet and paradore, I learned what they were later.

“ ‘Please step high and over here. Thanks.’ ”

“ ‘What's matter? Wounded?’ ”

“ ‘No. My pal is dying.’ ”

“A little further on a fellow lying on his back and looking straight up—and many such. Something seemed to grip me; I wanted to run, but those fellows ahead of me were cool enough; they were not afraid. Then we reached the ‘jump over trench.’ Our battalion is scheduled to start at 6:30 A. M.

“We were to have a barrage. Now I know all about a barrage, but had never seen one in action. Everything was quiet after 3 A. M.; not a shot was fired. Fritz was sending up lots of star shells, but that's his way. Six-fifteen, 6:25, 6:30. My God! all hell turned loose; my heart lost several beats and then caught up and overdid itself. Some one shouted ‘Let's at them!’ ”

“Oh, it was a dandy barrage, and we walked over behind it without much opposition and took our objective. I threw my grenades at a couple of Huns in a bay and when they exploded (both Huns and grenades)



I slid into a trench and, according to plan, rebuilt the firing step. I prepared myself in case of counter attack. I did not get a chance to use my lovely bayonet. Fact is, I have never had a rifle from that day to this, but came near using my knife, and then finally used it many times. You see as a stretcher bearer I found that long, keen blade far more suitable for cutting away clothing than a pair of shears. And I found out I had been kidding myself when I thought I was of the ferocious, bloodthirsty breed. Oh, a fellow sure gets acquainted with himself over here.

“Well, anyhow we lost three of our first aid men going over and the fourth was put out of action an hour afterward when Fritz started ‘strafing’ us. The sergeant-major asked for volunteers, and I ceased to be counted as a fighting man. Well, I answered the call all that day and not only dressed men but with another fellow carried them out to a sheltered spot in a sunken road. About 4 o’clock in the afternoon an officer came to me and said: ‘There’s a Hun lying in the trench up a ways. Will you get him out?’

“Then I got tough. ‘Yes, I will get him out. I’ll slit his throat.’ And I drew my big knife, already blood-stained. ‘Yes, I’ll get him out.’

“I went up to the Hun—a big blue-eyed Saxon. He looked up at me and said: ‘Wilst du ich ous mocht?’ (Will you get me out?) One look at the poor devil and I dressed his wounds and carried him the first lap on his journey to the hospital.

“And thus died the last spark of frightfulness that was in me. I was not made of the same stuff the Hun was. A Hun will show no mercy to either an unarmed or wounded man. I know this to be the truth.

“I have been a stretcher bearer ever since and al-

ways take good care of wounded, only ours come first; Fritz must wait. And so I learned what I was made of, and with two exceptions I have endeavoured to save life rather than to take it away.

“We were relieved after two days and proudly marched out with our trophies; helmets, bayonets, water bottles, and other souvenirs of our successful trip. I did not have to wonder what it was like or how I would act under fire. I knew, and the wonderful thing was that I lived through it. I expected as thousands do that I would get mine first trip over.

“Now, mother dear, this is a long letter from your one and only son. It is all ancient history now, but I have never written to you before of this and I thought you would be interested in my transformation—or was it that I was mesmerized for a short period? But, honest, I did think I was going to be some guy with my keen edged tools. Such is life.

“Love to you and apologies for length to censor.”

An unusually gripping description of the soldier's mind, in battle, is given by a young lieutenant on the French front in an article entitled, “The Soul of a Combatant,” printed in *La Revue Franco-Macédonienne*, one of the trench newspapers. He writes:

“How are we to describe the soul of the combatants during the attack, in the battle? The minutes are so intense, the pre-occupation of the aim to attain so absorbing that even the man most inclined to self-analysis abandons all thought for action. The atmosphere is so exceptional that even immediately after some difficult phases one does not recover his soul.

“There is first a period of preparation: building of trenches and shelters, of ammunition stores and posts

for the command; the men work day and night. The pre-occupations about comfort become attenuated; out of the enormous efforts, results of which we see daily, confidence is born; a kind of cheerfulness, vague, not much talked about—the instinct of a bee in a hive, the sentiment of complete solidarity, the joy of being artisans of a formidable work which shall be perfect only if every one gives all his strength, all his life. The acceptance of the sacrifice insinuates, then imposes itself on all.

“I shall perhaps never see again such a prodigious moral spectacle as the one given by our bivouacs during the three days preceding the attack of September 25.

“In the orders given since long weeks the mysterious day of the attack was designated by the letter N. On September 22 we learned suddenly that this was the day, N-3. Everybody prepared himself. Letters to the loved ones, letters of business and different interests filled the bags of the postmen.”

Weapons were carefully oiled, the big guns prepared, the men affecting unconcern and laughing loudly at the slightest provocation. The artillery of the enemy thundered loudly. And then:

“When, at ten o’clock in the evening of the 24th, we started forward toward the furnace, we left behind in the bivouacs, with the ashes of the letters burned before our departure, our old soul, made of troubles, hope, fear, and love, and we put on at the same time as our equipment our soul of combat.

“From that moment we live only in the present. The probability of death eclipses the past and forbids the future. Such a state, lasting days and days, would be inconceivable and also unbearable if the circum-



stances did not make it easier by lessening greatly the sensibility.

“First, there is the noise. Then after the noise the fatigue which breaks our limbs, the hunger, the thirst, the want of warm food which provokes a kind of contraction of the stomach, really painful. But above all, that which enables a man to remain in the fight without being demoralized by the losses, by certain sights, is sleep; in the first hours there is no rest, and an immense expense of physical and especially moral strength; then, after a certain time, all disappears before an irresistible need of sleep. Every minute of quiet, under the rain, in a hole, in an open field, under a violent bombardment, we lie down and sleep! Don’t think it is a painful sleep; it is delicious. As soon as you allow your nerves to relax a soft warmth penetrates you, flows in your veins; you squat in your ditch with little childish gestures, and right away, in a second, like a stone in a pit, you fall in the most profound, the most blissful sleep.”

With the waking the dream continues, and here, according to the lieutenant, the strange psychological experience begins when one seems to witness, as another individuality, the acts of oneself. Says the writer:

“There is a kind of duality in you—the physical person who creeps, falls in the mud, lies down under the fire of the mitrailleuses, sneaks from one tree to another, and the moral person who observes these strange proceedings, orders them, and enjoys an astonishing lucidness.

“Dream and lucidness here are the two words which seem to me to express best the soul of the combatant.

“Dream, this small wood, chopped by the fire and

through which, in a hellish noise, pale men glide, creeping on their knees and elbows.

“Dream, this continual bombardment, which shakes the ground, crushes men and throws others on the earth, their faces down.

“And in that dream what clearness of thought! This you must do, just this and nothing else. No hesitation. Responsibility, far from hindering the officer, sustains him, raises him up; what could he fear, when he is surrounded by his *poilus*, ready to act without hesitation on a gesture, on a word? What tenderness he feels for these men of all ages whom he calls “my children,” unforgettable minutes which create between all a total and definitive solidarity!

“One idea alone haunts the brain, where it tinkles like a bell. ‘You must advance! You must advance!’ It imposes itself not as a duty, but as an evidence. And we advance, and we fall. The goal is that tree over there, or that lump of earth. I do not see anything beyond; I must reach it, and nothing, nothing, nothing shall keep me away from that tree or that lump!

“All fighting has an end; at night it calms down; silence and shadow shroud and still everything. The wounded, the dead are taken up; on the conquered ground, guarded by a few sentinels, every one sleeps—a sleep without dream; the soldiers have the immobility of corpses. Sleep, and sleep well; the task has been accomplished. One thought to the fallen comrade, then the total oblivion of sleep!

“After the offensive we come back to the hospital trenches; we wake up again to the normal life, to all the small preoccupations of old. The days of fever and fight are already far away; all the details are minutely engraved in our minds, but our soul still wan-

ders; we can't recover it. A kind of depression subsists after the return to the physical plenitude."

Pushing our analysis of the soldier's internal life a little deeper, we perceive, perhaps, the true nature of *heroism*. In some cases, to be sure, it may be conscious valour; but in the majority of cases it is almost certainly not so. The man who performs some heroic feat is unaware at the time that he is doing anything extraordinarily brave. Certain psychical elements have found themselves so stimulated by action, after the continued inaction, that the feat is performed almost without knowledge; the man is carried out of himself by the very excess of his vitality. And this effect is still further heightened by the psychology of the crowd—of joint action. "When we all advance, no one is afraid," a soldier once said. There may be the passing thought, "Am I going to be killed?" but he advances without fear, none the less.

Courage is resistance to the natural fear of danger. It is compounded of various elements which make up a complex whole that appears under different aspects. It may be accidental, and in that case is comparatively easy to practise; but when it assumes a continuous form it is a more difficult matter, except when habit makes it almost unconscious.

The European War gives us the opportunity of making a great many very interesting psychological reflections on the subject of courage, for the observations recorded on the various battlefields are most instructive. Among the letters which I have received from the Front, I have selected the following one, written by M. de B——, the artillery officer whom I have already quoted:—



“With regard to gallantry the war has made me distinguish a whole great gamut of qualities which I had before lumped together in more or less confusion.

“In the first place I have come to realize the truth of the Spanish expression which says of a man, ‘He was brave on such and such a day.’

“The most admirable quality in gallantry is that which impels a man to leave a place of safety, although he is not under the excitement of battle, and to plunge with cool calculation into some danger which he knows and has estimated to its full extent.

“True courage is prudent and limits itself strictly to what is necessary; nor does it ever bluster, unless men are wavering and have to be carried along by the force of example.

“The courage of one and the same body of men is all or nothing according to circumstances, a fact which is especially true for the very suggestible French Temperament. A body of Germans would certainly vary less in this respect.

“The men’s confidence in their officers is a most important factor, for the very same soldiers will succeed or fail under identical circumstances, simply according to the way they are led.”

The following lines were written by a French officer, and published in the *Eclair* of November 29, 1914:—

“Our idea of courage has changed. It has not lessened, but it has become more modest, more reserved, more humble, in a word, more moral. There was something brilliant and aristocratic about the old form of courage. The men who were brave stepped out from the ranks and were distinguished in the eyes of every

one. From the first moment they were seen to be the flower of the army, and there were visible signs to show that they were an exception to the general rule. But where there is no crowd there can be no exception, and in the trenches there are only one's two neighbours to be impressed by one's courage, and that is as much as to say, nobody. Trench courage is unaccompanied by fame, is indeed often unconscious of itself, and has no longer any spectacular element. It consists almost entirely in keeping cool and in giving brain and will free play for the performance of their functions. Those who have lived through the battles of Ypres will find glory enough in the fact that they are neither madmen nor candidates for the madhouse.

“This is the glory that we have won hitherto, and it is not the reflected light of a few individuals who are privileged by character of circumstances, but a result of qualities which are shared by our whole race.”

An officer, who has been more than two years at the front, writes:—

“In these muddy ditches, carpeted with wet straw, where our soldiers live, they truly attain the maximum limit of human suffering, of the misery which is entailed by privation and icy cold, of strain which continues day after day, and of distress which knows no end. But it must be confessed that one's ideas of a thing are perhaps sometimes worse than the thing itself, and besides, one grows accustomed to anything. I never heard a single complaint, and it was not from bashfulness, for these soldiers of ours are not bashful in the least. And I not only did not hear any complaints, but, although the conditions of life were as hard as they could possibly be, I saw none save cheerful men, whose cheerfulness was drawn from the deep-

est wellsprings of the national temperament, and was compounded of confidence, optimism, and determination.”

Another soldier writes:—

“On the evening of the 24th we were suddenly sent to a trench in the firing-line near Ypres, and there we stayed underground for thirteen nights and twelve days—I was wounded on the thirteenth day. We were covered with mud, drenched by fog at night and numb from sitting still, while the furious hail of bullets, shrapnel, and howitzer shells never stopped either day or night for so much as a quarter of an hour.

“ . . . It was good-bye to all our dreams of theatrical heroism, sweeping charges, and bayonets reddened with the blood of the hated enemy. Instead of all this we were choked with the smoke of bursting shells, were deafened by their din, buried under their fragments, heard the cries of the wounded, though powerless to move to their aid, were hit in the face by one comrade’s brains, saw the arm of another fly into space, picked up a third whose feet were crushed, and carried off a fourth with a shattered chest. All this we had to see and hear, and though we might shudder, we must not quail. We had stolen a march upon the fate which would one day lay us in our graves, for we were buried alive and a prey to nightmare-dreams of infernal torments.”

Crile, in discussing the physiological factors involved in this waiting under fire, says:—

“In mechanistic terms the phenomena manifested by the soldier waiting under fire may be interpreted as follows: His brain is activated by the approach of the enemy. The activated brain in turn stimulates the adrenals, the thyroid, the liver. In consequence thy-



reiodin, adrenalin, and glycogen are thrown into the blood in more than normal quantities. These activating substances are for the purpose of facilitating attack or escape. As the secretions thus mobilized are utilized in neither attack nor escape, heat and the muscular actions of shaking and trembling are produced. The rapid transformation of energy causes a correspondingly rapid production of acid by-products. These increased acid by-products stimulate the respiratory centre to greater activity to eliminate the carbonic acid gas. The increased adrenalin output mobilizes the circulation in the limbs; withdraws blood from the abdominal area; causes increased heart action and dilatation of the pupils. In addition, the increased acidity causes increased sweating, increased thirst, and increased urinary output, all of these water phenomena being adaptation for the neutralization of acidity.

“Thus the intense activation of the soldier waiting under fire for orders is explained on mechanistic grounds, and the resultant changes in the brain, the adrenals, and the liver are easily demonstrable. It is this strong stimulation of the kinetic system to fight or to flight that in the first experience sometimes results in fleeing. The subsequent stimulus is never so intense as the primary stimulus, and with experience the kinetic system is progressively less driven, until at last the soldier is said to be ‘steady under fire.’”  
*(A Mechanistic Conception of War and Peace, pp. 19-20.)*

An under-officer, in discussing the mind of the soldier, said to me not long ago: “When a man advances, he is as though he were pushed forward in spite of himself; it may be displeasing, but he does it. There

is a motor force in one, which drives one forward. There is an unconscious desire to place oneself in the right place. We find our right places and keep them, as the result of previous discipline."

The influence of the officer is all-important at the moment of attack. He determines the mental and moral tone of his soldiers. The soldier, for his part, seeks only to perform those acts which seem to him most suited to gain the desired end. He falls into place automatically; he refuses to make a *detour*, except when necessary; he has a stern sense of duty. This, and his desire to execute orders—even at the risk of his life—makes the ideal soldier. One who stops and questions is acting contrary to his own best interests,—no less than to those of his country. The soldier reflects and should reflect but little. Ideas of patriotism come only upon reflection. Heroic acts are rarely or never due to this feeling. Such influences are doubtless unconsciously at work in the soldier, but he does not perceive them. On the contrary, one idea which is most important is the constantly increasing hatred of the enemy. In the case of the French soldiers, and more particularly the English, at the beginning of the present war, there was but little personal animosity; but, as time went on, and the soldiers perceived the frightful wrongs which had been perpetrated by the enemy, and the evils which had befallen their own country, the feeling of hate has gradually increased, until today it is certainly a formidable force—though of relatively recent origin.

As Maeterlinck (in *The Light Beyond*, p. 295) says:—

"It is nevertheless the fact that, in the moment of supreme peril, little remains of all these distinctions

and that no force in the world can drive to its death a people which does not bear within itself the strength to confront it. Our soldiers make no mistake upon this point. Question the men returning from the trenches: they detest the enemy, they abhor the aggressor, the unjust and the arrogant aggressor, uncouth, too often cruel and treacherous; but they do not hate the man: they do him justice; they pity him; and, after the battle, in the defenceless wounded soldier or disarmed prisoner they recognize, with astonishment, a brother in misfortune who, like themselves, is submitting to duties and laws which, like themselves, he too believes lofty and necessary. Under the insufferable enemy they see an unhappy man who likewise is bearing the burden of life. They forget the things which divide them to recall only those which unite them in a common destiny; and they teach us a great lesson."

In making a bayonet attack, the end and aim of every soldier is the complete destruction of the enemy. They look upon their actions in such circumstances as praiseworthy, moral and perfectly justifiable, and have no thought of murder or homicide in connection with them. When it is pointed out that this same action on their part in times of peace would be considered a crime, they seem quite "taken aback." They have been trained so long to kill that it has become second nature to them. They reason thus: "Each soldier killed lessens my own chance of being killed. Hence it is perfectly justifiable; I kill in self-defence." A soldier always attacks the whole *group* of the enemy, —not any individual in that group. He feels no individual animosity, and no individual pity for the man he has killed. In a fight, the object he wishes to obtain



is that of killing off the entire enemy-group. When this is accomplished he feels that a good piece of work has been done.

Crile goes so far as to say that:—

“Soldiers say that they find relief in any muscular action; but the supreme bliss of forgetfulness is in an orgy of lustful, satisfying killing in a hand-to-hand bayonet action, when the grunted breath of the enemy is heard, and his blood flows warm on the hand. This is a fling back in phylogeny to the period when man had not controlled fire, had not fashioned weapons; when in mad embrace he tore the flesh with his angry teeth and felt the warm blood flow over his thirsty face.\* In the hand-to-hand fight the soldier sees neither to the right nor to the left. His eyes are fastened on one man—his man. In this lust-satisfying encounter injuries are not felt, all is exhilaration; injury and death alike are painless. A life-sized photograph giving each detail of the face of a soldier thus transformed in the supreme moment of hand-to-hand combat would give the key to the origin of war” (pp. 20-21).

“At the end of the first year of the war it was estimated that ten million soldiers had been killed, wounded, or were missing.

“The common causes of death are: (a) fragmentation of the body—a sudden, painless exit; (b) shock—a violent, restless exit; (c) hemorrhage—a quiescent, fading exit; (d) infections—blood poisoning, gas gangrene, and tetanus. These are the wider avenues through which the soldier marches into oblivion.”

\* See, in this connection, my article on “The Occult Significance of Blood,” *Azoth*, Oct., 1917.

I questioned a man not long ago as to his sensations and impressions during an actual bayonet fight. "What were your feelings," I said, "when you drove your bayonet into the soft flesh of your antagonist? Did you feel horrified and revolted?" "Not at all," he replied, "I had a curious sensation in my arms as I felt the soft body, and I grew fatigued with continued fighting. But the action was of such short duration, and I felt all the time that I was fighting for my life, and seeking only to preserve myself, by killing the enemy, that I gave no thought to him." *The act of killing does not shock*; that is established beyond doubt. Even humanitarian men feel no repugnance at the moment of killing an adversary in this manner. "One kills without pain or fear," said another soldier to me; "a man simply feels that he is defending himself." The feelings of the non-combatant seem useless and silly to the soldier in time of action.

It is probable that the average soldier has but little time or inclination to make psychological analyses at the moment he is attacking an enemy with a bayonet! The attack must be made so quickly, and is over so soon—that one has hardly realized it.

Such examples as these serve to show us the relative emptiness of the soldier's mind—the vacuity of thought and feeling—at the moment of making an attack. Intuition, custom, duty, discipline, take the place of reason. The soldier feels that the more he kills the less chance he himself has of being killed. Thus, the fighter's mind may be divided, psychologically, into three states or divisions: (1) *Monoideism*, or the presence of images recalling a single idea; (2) *moral exaltation*; and (3) *subordination to discipline*. In

some ways, then, it may be seen that the more machine-like the soldier the better.

### *Pain*

It has frequently been noted that soldiers while under the mental and emotional stimulus of combat do not feel pain; and the cause of this has long remained a mystery to us. Writing on this subject, Dr. Crile says:—

“Pain as a phenomenon of war exhibits several variations of great interest, the key to which is found in the conception of pain as a part of an adaptive muscular action. Identical injuries inflicted under varying conditions yield pain of unequal intensity. . . .

“We can now offer a mechanistic explanation of these exceptions to the general rule that bodily injury causes pain. During the overwhelming activation in a charge, the stimulus of the sight of the enemy is so intense that no other stimulus can obtain possession of the final common path of the brain—the path of action. We have elsewhere shown that pain is inevitably associated with muscular action; therefore if a bullet or bayonet wound is inflicted at the moment when this injury cannot obtain possession of the final common path, it can excite no muscular action and consequently no pain. Hunters attacked by wild beasts (Livingstone) testify to the fact that the tearing of the flesh by claws and teeth cannot dispossess the excessive activation of the brain by the realization of danger. For this reason the teeth and claws of the beast do not cause any adaptive muscular response and therefore there is no pain. In like manner the emotion of fear in the soldier holds possession of the final com-



mon path so that muscular action against local flesh injuries is prevented. Not only in war does emotion overcome pain; so does great anger; so does the exaltation of religious fanatics in their emotional rites. . . .”

### *Shell-Shock*

With regard to the psycho-physiological, or purely physiological effects of the war upon soldiers, much has been written, mostly of a technical nature, and largely in medical journals. Such material lies outside the province of this book; but there are certain phenomena which might appropriately be discussed,—among which we might mention the after-effects of shell-shock, the mental reactions following a battle or an attack, dreams of soldiers, etc. Doubtless much valuable psychological *data* of this description could be gathered at the front, did occasion permit, and it is earnestly to be hoped that this task will be undertaken by some one competent for the work. For the present, we must content ourselves with a few brief notes regarding these conditions, hoping that this may in some small degree stimulate others to investigate more deeply this interesting field of investigation.

Dr. E. Murray Auer, who for some time was attached to the 22nd General Hospital of the British Expeditionary Force, in a recent paper read before the Philadelphia Neurological Society, and printed in the *Medical Record*, drew attention to many cases of this character, the after-effects of shell-shock, of explosions, men who had been buried by mine explosions, and afterwards rescued, etc.,—and stated that, in his opinion, these accidents or shocks often leave more

or less permanent effects upon the men who undergo them.

In practically all the cases which were observed by Dr. Auer, the patient had received no appreciable physical injury,—the effect being purely mental. One such instance cited by the physician was found in a boy nineteen years old. This boy had been for three days under a sustained and heavy shell fire. At the end of that time he was threatened by his sergeant with court-martial for sleeping while on sentry duty. This led to an examination, and the sending of the boy to the hospital. He was in a stupor for ten days. The same was true of another soldier who had seen his chum blown to pieces.

During the time of this coma, which in some cases lasted more than a week, the soldiers gave the impression that they again were living through the experiences which had caused the stupor to come on. This was evidenced by their terrified expressions. They crouched, started and stared wildly when spoken to. One such man rose from his bed in the middle of the night and recited in a one-sided conversation his experience of a charge, and burial by a mine explosion, and then relapsed into his stuporous state.

Another result of shock, according to Dr. Auer's observations, is a continued shaking of the entire body, accompanied by various pains and unusually severe headaches. In some cases this shaking has been observed to last several days, and even weeks, although in most instances its duration is a few hours. In one instance this trembling came after a soldier had twice been buried in a mine explosion, had been through a charge and under heavy bombardment in a trench, and finally was hit by a piece of rock, which, while not in-

juring him, knocked him down. In his case the tremor of the head was marked, and lasted for some time.

Temporary loss of memory is a common thing with the men who have been through some extremely trying period or have suffered a sudden shock. In such instances the recovery of memory is as sudden as its loss. One such soldier, after being near a shell which exploded, could remember nothing that happened to him until he came to himself, walking along a lane, some time later. Another man in the hospital thought himself back in the trenches and became violent, moving his cupboard about as though it were a machine gun and pointing it at his enemies. When he suddenly returned to a normal state, he could remember nothing of his experience.

### *Dreams*

One of the most common, and at the same time most pitiful, of the many mental results of the struggle is the inability to sleep soundly and recurrence of so-called "trench dreams." It is not uncommon, Dr. Auer said, to see soldiers start from their beds in the middle of the night, crying out and weeping,—the bodies bathed in perspiration as they dream of being chased by Germans with bayonets, or of being buried under débris, following a mine explosion, and of losing the trench in a fog,—and being unable to get back.

Dr. G. W. Crile, in writing of the dreams which soldiers experience, says:—

"The harmony of the sleep of the exhausted soldier has but one discordant note, and that is the dream of battle. The dream is always the same, always of the enemy. It is never a pleasant pastoral dream, or a dream of home, but a dream of the charge, of the



bursting shell, of the bayonet thrust! Again and again in camp and in hospital wards, in spite of the great desire to sleep, a desire so great that the dressing of a compound fracture would not be felt, men sprang up with a battle cry, and reached for their rifles, the dream outcry startling their comrades, whose thresholds were excessively low to the stimuli of attack.

“In the hospital wards, battle nightmares were common, and severely wounded men would often spring out of their beds. An unexpected analogy to this battle nightmare was found in the anæsthetic dreams. Precisely the same battle nightmare, that occurred in sleep, occurred when soldiers were going under or coming out of anæsthesia, when they would often struggle valiantly,—for the anæsthetic dream like the sleep dream related not to a home scene, not to some dominating activation of peaceful days, but always to the enemy, and usually to a surprise attack.

“One day a French soldier, in the first stage of anæsthesia, broke the stillness of the operating room, transfixing every one, while in low, beautiful tones, and with intense feeling, he sang the *Marseillaise*.” (*Ib.*, pp. 27-28.)

The fear which is commonly found is not the kind which a layman would expect. The soldiers do not fear injury to themselves. They are rather afraid of doing something wrong, a fear of an emergency in which one may fail and lose the confidence of his comrades. In one instance the patient was afraid to go to sleep, for fear he would not awake. One man who had no fear of being wounded had a wild desire to get away from the din of battle, and seemed really afraid of the noise.

Blindness and deafness are frequently found, but one of the most unusual of the phenomena, in this connection, is the presence of "photophobia," the fear of looking. In many instances men are found who complain that they cannot see. In such instances, when their eyes are opened for them, they can see without any difficulty. One instance of this came as the result of a trench dream in which the soldier again lived through his burial by a mine explosion four weeks before. When he awoke, he complained that he could not see, and imagined that his sight had been lost as a result of the explosion. When the eyelids were raised, however, he could see as well as ever.

### *Methods of Cure*

One of the most interesting of the medical discoveries which have resulted from the tending of the wounded and disabled is the value of hypnotic suggestion in the cure of men broken under the constant physical and nervous strain of modern warfare.

In the conditions known as "shell-shock," in which the sufferer, though not actually hit by a shell, has suffered from temporary loss of memory, sight, smell, and taste as the result of concussion, hypnotic suggestion has been the most potent remedy of the physician in charge.

Describing the treatment of these shell-shock cases, a physician at one of the London Army hospitals in describing the treatment stated recently:—

"The patient is seated in a chair and is brought by the operator into a slight degree of hypnosis in the ordinary way. He is told to clear his mind of all other thoughts and to concentrate on the single subject of

his cure. If, as often happens, his vision is affected, he is told quietly and firmly by the operator that the defect has been cured and that once again he can see clearly. In some cases a single séance is enough; in others, the treatment may have to be repeated several times. In practically all cases, however, great improvement, if not a complete cure, has eventually resulted."

In this connection, it is interesting to learn that as an outcome of an offer he made a little time ago to the War Office, to decorate a hospital ward as an experiment, Mr. H. Kemp Prosser, a "colour specialist," has been engaged in preparing a colour ward for shell-shock and nerve patients in Miss McCaul's hospital for officers in Welbeck Street, London. Explaining his ideas to an *Evening News* representative, Mr. Prosser said:—

"Shell-shock is a disease of the tissues of the brain,\* and I hold that the right vibrations of colour will help to build them up. I do away with the sense of the

\* The newer view of the facts is that practically all cases of shell-shock are primarily mental or emotional in character; and not due to lesions of the nervous system, as was thought at first. The fact of the matter is that a definite conclusion has not been reached upon this vital point, as applied to all cases. Says Dr. George de Sweitowchowski, of King's College Hospital, London—one of the largest and most modern hospitals in the world:—

"It is remarkable that the more civilized combatants have been better able to withstand shell-shock than the natives of semi-civilized countries. . . . Various nerve-complaints have been met, thus far, that are yet to be cleared up. Thus, it is still an open question whether some of them are to be regarded as the outcome of an actual damage to the body, or whether they are the effect of the horrors of war on the human mind. Cases of 'miraculous cures' are numerous. . . . In the days immediately following the conclusion of peace there will be an opportunity of studying the results



confinement of four walls, which so affect the nerves by introducing the colour vibrations of outdoors. I open the ceiling up to the sky by decorating it in the colour of the firmament-blue. The walls are thrown open by being the colour of the sunlight: lemon yellow. I use the green of buds just bursting, for it is that light the nerve-patient needs, and I have violet rays, which have already been proved so useful to 'nerves.' . . .

"Brown furniture is sometimes used in hospitals; that is the colour of decay. Nerve patients do not want to be surrounded by autumn, they must be in the spring. Some of them will be conscious of colour, some unconscious, and others subconscious, but all are affected by it. In small-pox, rays of red light on a patient prevent him from being marked, showing one effect of colour.

"I shall only have one picture—of spring, in a lemon-yellow frame—which will be part of the room. The effect will be harmony. The curtains will be on brackets, so that a patient who needs a violet light will have that coloured curtain drawn-out towards him, and one who needs sunlight a yellow curtain. achieved. The overwhelming material offered by the war will be of incalculable value to future medical and surgical science. . . ." (And, I may add, to psychological science also).

It will thus be seen that there is still a division of opinion as to the primary cause of many cases of this character; and, although some of this confusion may have arisen from the habit of stating psychological terms in terms of physiology (as is so often done in the case of memory, *e.g.*)—yet it is doubtless true that the tendency is to regard such cases, more and more, from the standpoint of mental and emotional lesions, rather than anatomical lesions; and further, to seek for the innate susceptibility to shell-shock in earlier emotional stresses in the patient thus shocked. To this end, psycho-analysis has been employed to good effect—although all kinds of psychotherapeutic measures have been employed to advantage.

Presently they will probably be able to stand stronger vibrations, such as orange.”

The therapeutic value of colour is now becoming more generally recognized. Different colours emanate different forms of vibration. These vibrations react on the brain and nervous system in a remarkable and very real manner, especially in the case of a very sensitive person, and claims have been made of extraordinary cures effected by this treatment. The experiments of Mr. Prosser will, therefore, be awaited with considerable interest, and if they are successful, a pamphlet explaining the procedure is to be sent to all the military hospitals.

### *Sleep: Fatigue*

‘Soldiers are of course subject, at times, to long periods of intense effort and activity, fatigue, loss of sleep, exhaustion, etc.; and though the body can in a measure accommodate itself to these conditions, and an amount of hardship and fatigue can be undergone by the trained soldier which would have been impossible for that man before his training had begun, nevertheless, the body ultimately reacts, demands rest and sleep; and, if this is not supplied, a nervous and mental breakdown follows. Says Crile:

“In the retreat from Mons to the Marne we have an extraordinary human experiment, in which several hundred thousand men secured little sleep during nine days, and in addition made forced marches and fought one of the greatest battles in history.

“How then did these men survive nine days apparently without opportunity for sleep? They did an extraordinary thing,—*they slept while they marched!* Sheer fatigue slowed down their pace to a rate that

would permit them to sleep while walking. 'When they halted they fell asleep. They slept in water, and on rough ground, when suffering the pangs of hunger and of thirst, and even when severely wounded. They cared not for capture, not even for death, if only they could sleep.'

The complete exhaustion of the men in this retreat from Mons to the Marne is vividly told by Dr. Gros of the American Ambulance, who with others went to the battlefield of the Marne to collect the wounded. On their way to Meaux they met many troops fleeing, all hurriedly glancing back, looking more like hunted animals than men, intent only on reaching a haven of safety.

When the ambulances arrived at Meaux at midnight they found the town in utter darkness. Not a sound was heard in the street, not a light was seen. The only living things were hundreds of cats. They called, they shouted, in vain they tried to arouse some one. At last they succeeded in arousing the mayor, to whom they said: "Can you tell us in what city we will find the wounded? We were told there were many here." The mayor replied: "My village is full of wounded. I will show you." With the aid of a flickering lamp, they threaded their way through the dark streets to a dilapidated school building. Not a light! Not a sound! There was the stillness of death! They rapped louder, there was no response! Pushing open the door, they found the building packed with wounded—over five hundred—with all kinds of wounds. Some were dying, some dead, but every one was in a deep sleep. Bleeding, yet asleep; legs shattered, yet asleep; abdomen and chest torn wide open, yet asleep. They were lying



on the hard floor or on bits of straw. Not a groan, not a motion, not a complaint—only sleep!

To sum up, then: The mental activity of the soldier is considerably lessened by his life in the cantonments; and is still further reduced by his life in the trenches. Here even manual work is very rarely undertaken; conversation is limited, and bodily or physical acts occupy the place of prime importance. The senses and the attention must be constantly on the alert and keen—though certain “oscillations” naturally take place here also. Nevertheless, the soldier constantly strains to keep them intact. His personal salvation, as well as the lives of his comrades, depends upon his ability to do so. When he attacks, this tension of the inner being reaches its climax; and the mind becomes almost empty. Such reasoning as takes place is of the most simple and primitive character—such as how best to save his own life, seek shelter, etc. At such moments the value of example—the effects of imitation—are all-important; hence the necessity of carefully trained officers. Threats or brutality of language will not stir the men at such times; what the officer should seek to do is to throw into the minds of his men, at the psychological moment, an idea or image capable of invading the entire consciousness, and taking possession of the very being. The officer thus stands for the country, for the flag, for patriotism, for everything impelling. An example of bravery on the part of an officer will inspire his men as nothing else will or can. The men obey their commanding officers implicitly,—feeling that their own lives depend largely upon following orders. They feel that they are as liable to be killed in any one place as in another, but that, if they

obey orders, these chances may perhaps be diminished,—and then, too, the soldier will die doing his duty—a feeling which remains very keen among all the men at the front, on whatever battle-line.

When the soldier has been in the trenches for some time he gradually loses his good manners. Cleanliness, personal care, etc., are largely disregarded; but these moral feelings very quickly revive upon the return of the soldier to the civil zone, and the activities of normal life. As one soldier expressed it, “it is like being born again.” Nevertheless, it is possible that the habits of inactivity and relative idleness which have been engendered in the soldier may persist more or less through life; and if this is found to be the case, it will certainly have a detrimental effect upon the community inhabited by him.

The psychology of the combatant may, therefore, be summed up as follows: life in the trenches tends to make the mind childish, simple, vacuous; the senses are stimulated; the will rendered intense; the thoughts are centred upon one idea—of dominating the enemy. Aspirations, regrets, ideas, all find their place taken by bodily sensations and activities. The soldier stands ready to execute his orders at the right moment, without reflection. In whatever he does, his acts and thoughts become one. The most primitive of all our instincts—the instinct of self-preservation—that which we share equally with everything that lives—comes to the fore, and assumes a vital, a dominating position. All the centuries of intervening civilization are swept away in an instant; and we see before us, not the cultured gentleman of yesterday, but the primitive brute-beast, fighting for his existence and his life in precisely the same way that his ancestors fought—and with no

other, higher ideals in mind! It shows us at once and graphically the effects upon the mind of War—and proves to us that it leads, not only to material destruction, and to mental and moral deterioration, but also to the very extinction of the spirit of man himself—in the almost instant reversion of civilized man to savagery.

[NOTE. Since the above chapter was written, several important books have appeared, which, unfortunately, I cannot do more than refer to. The first of these is that of Lieutenant Coningsby Dawson,—whose book *The Glory of the Trenches*, throws some valuable sidelights on the psychology of the soldier, and particularly upon the nature and mechanism of fear. The second book is Elliot-Smith and Pear's work on *Shell Shock*,—which gives an illuminating account of the genesis, nature and treatment of this distressing malady,—and fully bears out the remarks made in my Footnote, on pp. 91-92.]





**PART II**  
**SUPERNORMAL**

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## CHAPTER V

### PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA, SCIENCE, AND THE WAR

WE have now studied the mind of the soldier from the moment he left his home, during mobilization, while in the cantonments, the trenches, and during the attack—to that moment when he has met death at the hands of the enemy; and it now becomes our duty to endeavour to trace that noble soul beyond the grave, and to show that he is still active, that he still possesses the same memory and characteristics we associated with him in life, and which we knew and loved. This portion of our task is more difficult. Not only are we now confronted with the innate difficulties of the task itself, but with the prejudices and opposition of mankind;—also, unfortunately, by fraud and error—which so often creep into our observations in this field. However, we must do our best to pierce through these conventions and difficulties, and to study the facts as we find them. Before we can do that, however, there are certain fundamental principles which must be understood, for it is upon their appreciation that the whole of the succeeding argument is based. This will, I hope, become clearer as we proceed.

The staggering incomprehensibility of the present world-war has, of course, appalled humanity, and its ravages and after-effects will certainly be felt for generations to come. When we come to ask ourselves the

question: How could such a catastrophe overcome the world at the present stage of our civilization and culture? we are confronted with a serious problem, but one which is, nevertheless, comprehensible, when we understand humanity and its motives. For, analyzed down to its core, does not the present conflict offer us the most convincing proof possible that it is the prevalence of the doctrine of materialism which has brought it about? Is it not ultimately due to the international jealousies and strife for material power and gain which precipitated and rendered possible the present conflict? I do not say that many nations had not a high motive for entering the world war—Belgium and France to protect their countries; Great Britain to succour Belgium, and live up to her treaty obligations; America, to safeguard the lives of her citizens, which were being murdered; and Serbia and other countries for similar defensive reasons. But behind and beyond all this lies the motivation of the war, as especially conceived by the Central Powers; and that was to increase their worldly power and fulfil their materialistic ambitions. It is the doctrine of materialism which is at the root of the entire matter. Did men but realize that they are spiritually *one*; that the things of the spirit are really the things that count; and that there are other things besides money and power in this world—did they but realize these things, such a war as the present would have been impossible; men would live together in harmony and happiness, furthering their common good, by common means, for common ends; and Peace would reign upon this earth, instead of the bloody convulsions of humanity which we see being enacted before us.

And the answer of the riddle has just been pointed

out. It is because we in the West—though we may accept the fact that we are or “have” a soul or spirit of some sort—do not accept this belief in any vital manner; we rather dally with it in a dilettante fashion, as a sort of intellectual curiosity, without for a moment realizing that it has a great and vital meaning for us, and is an experience which we ourselves must one day undergo. When Mr. John R. Meader and I wrote our book on *Death: Its Causes and Phenomena*, some years ago, we drew attention to the curious lack of interest which seemed to be manifested, on all hands, regarding this question of death and the after-life, and the possible fate of the soul. Everywhere we turned we seemed to find this remarkable indifference to the subject, or that curious ostrich philosophy which refuses to discuss it at all. With the young, this might perhaps be considered a healthy sign; but for the mature and thoughtful mind to refuse to consider it, is indeed a paradox. As Professor Fournier D’Albe so well says, in his *New Light on Immortality* (pp. 1-3):

“The twentieth century is too busy to occupy itself much with the problems presented by death and what follows it. The man of the world makes his will, insures his life, and dismisses his own death with the scantiest forms of politeness. The churches, once chiefly interested in the ultimate fate of the soul after death, now devote the bulk of their energies to moral instruction and social amelioration. Death is all but dead as an overshadowing doom and an all-absorbing subject of controversy.

“The spectacle of 2,000,000,000 human beings rushing to their doom, with no definite knowledge of what that doom may be, and yet taking life as it comes, happily and merrily enough as a rule, seems strange



and almost unaccountable. The spectacle somewhat resembles that inside a prison during the reign of terror, when prisoners passed their time in animated and even gay converse, not knowing who would be called out next to be trundled to the scaffold.

“Every year some 40,000,000 human corpses are consigned to the earth. A million tons of human flesh and blood and bone are discarded as of no further service to humanity, to be gradually transformed into other substances, and perhaps other forms of life. Meanwhile the human race, in its myriad forms, lives and thrives. . . . The individual perishes, the species survives. . . .”\*

And Professor F. C. S. Schiller, of Oxford University, has also said (*Humanism, and Other Essays*, pp. 284-86):

“Death is a topic on which philosophers have been astonishingly commonplace. . . . Spinoza was right in maintaining that there is no subject concerning which the sage thinks less than about death,—which, nevertheless, is a great pity, for the sage is surely wrong. There is no subject concerning which he, if he is an idealist and has the courage of his opinion, *ought* to think more, and *ought* to have more interesting things to say. . . .”

The reason for all this, of course, as so often insisted upon before, is that we are all *practically* materialists, though we may be religious or philosophical idealists. We do not, like the Hindus, let the fact of immortality permeate our lives, and colour and influence them. In the orient, this *is* so. They *live* their religion, as well as profess it. They regard the “realities” of life as the

\* These figures were of course covering ante-war days; at present they must be very materially increased.

unseen things, and the material things the transitory and shallow ones. We of the west, on the other hand, regard their beliefs as mere "superstition"; and consequently each regards the other as a dreamer, and a man striving after vain and foolish things. Never is the essential truth of Kipling's "For East is East and West is West, and never the twain shall meet" brought home to us more forcefully than in considering these problems; for it will be observed that there is no common ground or starting-point from which they can both emerge, upon which they can both stand. One believes he is spirit, and has a transitory material body; the other, that he is here in this world of reality, which is the only thing he is sure of, and that the world of spirit is too far-off and unreal, too tenuous and uncertain, for him to worry his head about just at present. He may passively adhere to some creed or formula, which assures him he has an "Immortal soul," but it is no part of his daily life and thoughts; it is no essential part of his being.

And which is right? Is man essentially spirit, or body? Is the spirit permanent and the body transitory, or is the body the important thing, and the mind and soul a mere "epiphenomenon"?

This is a question of fact. It is one which cannot be settled by dogmatic opinion, either for or against. It should be capable of scientific solution, just as any other question of fact is capable of solution, and in much the same manner. Philosophical arguments are useless and worthless, for solving this great question of a future life. Orthodox religion is similarly helpless. Those who *believe* will of course say that they *know* that the future life is a fact; but they are offset by the free-thinkers and the atheists who insist, with

equal certainty, that they *know* that it is not! And when we come to examine their arguments, we find them both equally valueless,—for the simple reason that they express merely personal opinions, and not knowledge, based upon facts, at all. The one base their belief upon tradition and the Bible,—the others upon the *negative* conclusions of modern science—and logic shows us that it is impossible to prove a negative. Thus both merely express their personal opinions,—orthodox or the reverse,—without any scientific justification to back up their statements or beliefs.

And, when we come to think of it, Christianity itself is based neither upon its ethical teachings nor its specific evidences; but rather upon a *fact*—a psychical phenomenon. That phenomenon is the resurrection of Christ. St. Paul himself said (I. Cor., 15:14): “If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.” This is a frank admission that the Christian faith is based upon a psychical phenomenon, and not upon anything resembling tradition or belief. These much-disputed and much-despised psychic phenomena, therefore, form the basis, or, as Mr. Myers so well said, “the preamble to all religions.” They are the root and foundation of them all. Without them—without some tangible proof that a spiritual world of some sort exists—man would soon lapse into materialism; and it is only because these manifestations so constantly happen, because so many men and women have experienced occurrences of the kind, spontaneously and otherwise, that they feel that materialism does not, in fact, cover all the facts of life, but that there are others, not included in its philosophy, which point to the persistence of the soul of man, and the



actuality of a spiritual world, and which render that world a very real and a very near reality.

These questions are all the more pressing and imperative to us, just now, by reason of the great world-war which is raging in Europe. Every day, thousands of human souls are being sent, either into some spiritual world, or into oblivion. For those who witness such a spectacle, no less than to the men themselves, it is assuredly a fundamentally important question to settle, one way or the other. Is man immortal, or does he die like an animal? Shall we see those we love, and who sacrifice their lives on the altar of liberty, for the cause of justice and humanity, again; or shall we bid them good-bye forever, and see them vanish like a dream?

Various religions have given us definite answers to these questions; but the answers have varied according to the religion. Perhaps, too, the practical mind of today is no longer satisfied with vague assurances, but seeks verifiable fact. And when we ask for such facts, the proof is lacking. The inner conviction to mankind—that the spirit of man will survive—still remains almost as strong as ever, for the majority; but the evidence for that conviction seems to be strangely lacking; and when the heart is torn by anguish, when pain and sorrow rise up and blind us till we sink into the black depths of despair, then, in very truth, we seek something more substantial than mere authority, more comforting than pious platitudes; we seek to know and to prove to ourselves beyond all shadow of a doubt that the one we loved is still living; that he still loves and is happy, and that his soul has found a fit dwelling place of light, where peace and contentment and harmony prevail.

We seek to know the truth; but, with Pilate, "What is truth?" Can we find our answer to these perplexing problems in the disputed realm of spiritualism and psychical research?

Let me begin by positively warning the reader that if he attempts to satisfy himself upon these questions by running about from one medium to another, he will gain nothing but disappointment, and find little more than fraud or self-deception. Good mediums are rare. Unfortunately, a vast amount of fraud is practised in this field; then, too, mediums may be honest, but misguided; they may give "messages" which they honestly believe to be obtained from "spirits of the departed"; whereas, as a matter of fact, they have originated only in the depths of their own subconscious minds. Chance-coincidence, aided by shrewd common-sense and a knowledge of human nature, have aided much; until we finally arrive at that small residuum of truth, which is so difficult to find, and which, in the majority of cases, is perhaps lacking altogether.

Striking evidence of survival—anything like proof that the "dead" still survive and talk to us—is afforded by only a very few mediums; and it is upon the utterances of these mediums that the case rests. These are the psychics who are responsible for the conversion of such eminent scientists as Lodge, Doyle, Crookes, Wallace, Myers, James, Hyslop, and a host of others. Any one wishing to know the actual *facts* must read the reports based upon their sittings. But to attempt to derive actual proof of the kind from the various advertising mediums which infest our cities would lead only to disappointment; and no one desiring anything like crucial proof would attempt to obtain it in this manner.

I do not say this to discourage the reader. Good psychics are to be found; and good evidence is occasionally obtained through private persons,—sometimes through those who have never given a sitting before in their lives. I am only warning the too-credulous investigator away from the quacks and frauds which live among us; and also warning him that “all is not gold that glitters,” and that much that might seem evidence of survival to the tyro turns out, upon examination, to be nothing but subconscious mental activity,—aided, perhaps, by telepathy or traces of mind-reading from the sitter’s mind.

For instance, if a planchette board moves under the hands of the sitters, it is undoubtedly unconscious muscular action which moves the board; the sitters push it themselves. But that is not the point. Suppose the board spells out: “At this moment, your sister has been run into and killed on Broadway and Forty-second street,” how is that piece of knowledge derived? It is not the movement of the board which is the mystery; but the information which it imparts. And there is no reasonable doubt that much extraordinary information of this kind, unknown to any of the sitters present, *has* been imparted, at spiritualistic séances.

*Physical* manifestations—which are so associated in the public mind with spiritualism—much to the detriment of that misunderstood subject—can rarely or never afford us conclusive evidence for survival; it is only the *mental* manifestations which do so. These are obtained by trance utterance, automatic writing, or by direct vision of the other world. And those who are not mediums themselves must depend, for



their information, upon the statements of those who are thus endowed.

“But why,” you will say, “are mediums necessary at all? Why cannot I myself obtain messages from the great beyond? Surely, if my dead son would return to any one, it would be to me, who knew and loved him so well—rather than through some stranger, an illiterate medium who can hardly speak or write the English language?” Well; the answer to this is simple. Why does electricity travel along a copper wire, and not a board fence? Because the copper wire is a conductor of electricity, and the board fence is not. Similarly, peculiarly constituted individuals seem to possess that peculiar quality or make-up which enables them to perceive or receive messages from the other world, while this is lacking in most of us. A great medium is certainly as rare as a great mathematician or a great painter or a great poet. His genius runs to psychical sensitiveness, in the same way that the genius, in the other cases mentioned, ran to mathematics or poetry or art.

And the ability to communicate may be just as rare. Not every one who wishes to send messages from the “other side”—even assuming that he continues to persist, and longs passionately to do so—can manage to transmit his message through a psychic or medium. The ability to impart messages in this manner is probably just as rare a gift as mediumship on our side; and only when two such kindred souls get into touch with one another, under the most advantageous circumstances, can clear messages come to us from the great beyond.

And this explains to us why it is that more messages have not been sent than have actually been received.

The answer is just this: That *the ability to communicate may be rare*,—no matter how much the departed one may wish to send word to those still in the body. There are doubtless many “difficulties of communication” which must be taken into account—and these have figured largely in discussions published in technical psychical books, and in the *Journals* and *Proceedings* of the Societies for Psychical Research. Intra-Cosmic difficulties; the difficulty of controlling the brain and nervous system of the medium; of influencing the mind of the medium; of regulating and controlling the automatic flow of thought of the communicator; the tendency, apparently, for the communicator to lapse into a dreamy, confused mental state, while communicating, owing to the difficulties involved—these and many more obstacles have been described and discussed; and the interested reader is referred to the literature upon the subject for the details. Suffice it to say here that there are doubtless great difficulties—so great, indeed, that many cannot overcome them at all; and only certain individuals, under certain conditions, succeed in overcoming them completely, and forcing a message through to us in this world.

Again, it has been stated that a man, who is suddenly killed, experiences considerable difficulty in gathering himself together, as it were, mentally, after his arrival on the “other side,” and that it often takes him days or even weeks—as measured by our time here—to recover himself completely.

There is nothing irrational in all this: in fact, it is precisely what we should expect, judging by analogy. If a man were in a train wreck, and knocked unconscious in the accident; and if, after a time, he gradually regained consciousness, things would only return

and assume their proper appearance gradually and with great difficulty. In a letter which I published in the *S. P. R. Journal*, March, 1908, dealing with this very topic, I said:—

“ . . . After several hours, he would return to the first dim consciousness of his surroundings. Gradually he would revive. Objects would present themselves to his eyesight vaguely, indistinctly; he would ‘see men as trees walking.’ Sounds would be heard, but indistinctly; there would be a vague jumble of noises, and no definite and articulate sounds would be recognized at first, and until consciousness had been more fully restored. Tactile sensations, smell and touch, would probably come last, and be least powerful of all; they would not be even distinguishable until consciousness was almost completely normal. All intellectual interests would be abolished, only the most loving and tender thoughts would be entertained or tolerable, and these would be swallowed up, very largely, in the great central fact that the head and body were in great pain; that the memory was impaired, and that everything like normal thinking and a normal grasp of the organism was impossible. Thoughts would be scattered, incoherent, and only the strongest stimuli would focus the attention on any definite object for longer than a few moments at a time, and perhaps even these would fail. . . .

“Now, when we come to die, the departure of the soul from the body must be a great strain and stress upon the surviving consciousness, and must shock it tremendously—just as the accident shocked it in the case given above. Certainly this would be so in the case of all *sudden deaths*. *Death must be a tremendous shock to the living consciousness; the greatest shock that any*



given consciousness could receive in the course of its natural existence. But after a time, the spirit is supposed to live and get over this initial shock, and to regain its normal functions and faculties. In its normal life, it is then supposed to be once more free and unhampered by any of the bodily conditions which rendered its manifestations on earth defective. . . .”

On the physical side, however, it has now been definitely established that there is practically no *pain* at the moment of death, under normal circumstances. The pains of dying are the pains of living,—not of death itself. Death is painless. I collected a quantity of evidence upon this point, which I published in our book *Death: Its Causes and Phenomena* under the sections devoted to “Pain at the Moment of Death,” and “The Consciousness of Dying”; and I am glad to say that Dr. Robert Mac Kenna, in his recent and interesting volume, *The Adventure of Death*, confirms this view, and adduces considerable new evidence in favour of this statement. The wound from which a soldier suffers may be painful; but not death resulting from that wound.

It is a remarkable fact that clear consciousness may be, and in fact often *is*, maintained up to the very moment of death; the mind seems as clear as ever, even though the body be shattered and torn, or wasted by disease. This, surely, is a great proof of the power of spirit to manifest itself through matter; for if consciousness were being actually *obliterated*, it would be difficult to believe that it could be conscious of its own obliteration. If, on the other hand, it were merely being *withdrawn* from the body, the facts would readily fall into place; and this would also enable us to understand many puzzling phenomena in connection

with epilepsy, states of unconsciousness, etc., which are extremely difficult to account for, on any materialistic basis.\*

The fear of death should no longer exist, save that it represents a plunge into the Great Unknown. In that sense, truly, death is a "Great Adventure." But can we doubt that death—the twin brother of sleep—will prove all and more than we had ever hoped it to be? We are born into this world helpless, completely dependent upon others for our sustenance; we find those here who are ready to help us. May it not be that there are those who will likewise help us when we too cross the "Great Divide," and pass into the next sphere of activity? Psychical science and the doctrine of spiritism say that this *is* so. Psychical science tells us that there is an ethereal body—a sort of spiritual counterpart of the physical body, and that this leaves the gross body, at death, and passes into the spirit-world by a process which has been minutely investigated. Scenes of tremendous activity are being enacted, we are told, over a battlefield; for thither the souls of fallen heroes return to help those who have just "died." † Help and assistance are given to newly-arrived spirits in this way.

But of all this, of course, orthodox science knows nothing, any more than orthodox theology. To science, death is the end of all,—the end of life, of mind, of consciousness, of the one we knew and loved. To science, as understood today, life becomes extinct, at the moment of death, just as a candle-flame becomes ex-

\* See the article on "The Consciousness of Dying," by Dr. J. H. Hyslop, in the *Journal*, S.P.R., June, 1898.

† See my article, "What Happens in the Astral or Spirit World Over a Battlefield," in the *Occult Review*, July, 1915.

inct when the candle is snuffed. Life being supposedly dependent upon chemical combustion for its energy and existence, it of course ceases with the cessation of the activity which generated and maintained it! And although there are many facts, viewed only from the purely physiological side, which seem difficult to account for on this view, or are even wholly opposed to it, as I have elsewhere endeavoured to show,\* this is nevertheless the view all but universally held; and such a view, being essentially materialistic, at once excludes all possibility of life existing apart from the physical body with which it was formerly associated.

In order that the reader may appreciate more fully the value of the facts, and the necessity for providing scientific evidence of the kind, it will be necessary, just here, to state, very briefly, the position of materialism with regard to this question of a future life, and the views generally entertained by scientific men of the present day regarding it.

Every one who endeavours to keep his intellectual fingers upon the pulse of the times must perceive that a great wave of intellectual materialism has swept over the land, and that there is a rapidly increasing growth of thought in that direction. Professor James H. Leuba, in his recent work, *The Belief in God and Immortality*, points out the fact that our Universities turn out more and more men who profess a partial or complete disbelief in both these doctrines—and we know that William James once said that religion proper depended upon two pillars, without which it means nothing—*viz.*, belief in a personal God and the immortality of the soul. Some of Professor Leuba's figures are thus very instructive. He shows us that, among soci-

\* *Vitality, Fasting and Nutrition*, pp. 225-303.



ologists, professors and non-professors together, about 46.3 per cent. are believers in God and 53.3 per cent. in immortality. In the same way, among psychologists, only about 24.2 per cent. believe in God and 19.8 per cent. in immortality. Among physical scientists, about 43.9 per cent. believe in God and 50.7 per cent. in immortality; while, among the biologists, only 30.5 per cent. believe in God and 37 per cent. in immortality.

All the more orthodox sciences of today are, of course, materialistic. No one thinks, now-a-days, of suggesting that "God" has anything to do with a problem in chemistry or physics—though the inner essence of the forces utilized and employed in these reactions are unknown. Even in biology, where we trench upon the sacred province of life itself, the distinct tendency is towards some possible chemico-physical explanation—though it must be admitted that the doctrine of "vitalism" has of late years also revived and raised its head threateningly. Still, as before said, the tendency of the age, in all these fields, is toward a materialistic scheme of things—and only philosophers and theologians are to be found holding back, and contending that there may be something else in the world, after all, beyond matter and energy.

Psychology has likewise come to be more and more materialistic in tone, with the gradual acceptance of the doctrine that "the mind is a function of the brain," and dependent wholly upon it. Abnormal psychology has supported this doctrine, and completely upset Plato's idea of the essential unity of the soul. In short, there is no department of science, as organized today, which can claim any knowledge or any proofs

of the soul's survival, while the general tendency of its teaching is all the other way.

The simple argument of science runs as follows: "Wherever we find life, it is invariably associated with a material (living) organism, a body. When that body is destroyed, the life functioning within it is destroyed also. It becomes extinct, goes out like the flame of the candle, and is no more. If you choose to *believe* that life persists after the destruction of the body, well and good; but where is your *proof* that it does so? Until such proof be adduced, I shall refuse to believe that it actually does so—just as I refuse to believe anything else, in the absence of facts." And this position is one which no amount of philosophizing and hair-splitting sophistry can overcome, or answer.

How is this position to be refuted? How answered? Only by meeting the scientific man upon his own grounds, and producing the evidence he demands. And this evidence can be obtained in one way and in one way only—by the establishment of psychic phenomena which *prove* that life and consciousness continue to persist after the death of the body. Could we produce evidence that life and mind actually *do* persist, in this manner, we should have answered the scientist,—since we should have produced the facts he demands; and at the same time answered many metaphysical questions, depending for their solution upon this fundamental problem.

And how are we to prove the persistence of this individual being, after his body is no more? In life, we never come into touch with the actual man—only with his outer body or expression. We converse by means of signs, sounds or symbols; and we reach and know one another by these and these alone. The

actual man we never know or see; and if it be true that "no man hath seen God," it is equally true that no man hath seen man. The invisible being, the mental or spiritual man, we have never seen; we have inferred him only from his expressions and his bodily actions.

And when this body is no more, we can only hope to prove the reality and continued activity of the spiritual being beyond, by obtaining proof of his *personal identity*. And this is established in much the same manner that anything else is established—namely, by isolating it and proving its reality, of and by itself.

When Lord Rayleigh discovered argon in the atmosphere, in 1894, he proved its existence by isolating it, and showing that such an element was present; and Ramsey proceeded in much the same manner, when he isolated and proved the existence of four other rare elements, hitherto unsuspected, in our atmosphere. He proved that argon existed, *i.e.*, by isolating it and actually coming into touch with it. In much this same way we must prove the persistence of individual consciousness, or "personal identity," after the death of the body. We also must isolate it and in some manner get into touch with it—allowing it thus to prove itself to be the personality we once knew.

And how is this proof of personal identity to be obtained? In much the same manner that the personal identity of a friend is established now,—only in a more roundabout manner. We cannot see, hear or touch our correspondent, when once he has "shuffled off this mortal coil"; but, assuming that he exists at all, he still possesses the same "self" we knew here,—the same personality, memories and associations: death changes nothing, in this respect; he is essentially the same man we knew here on earth, only disembodied.



We must rid our minds, once for all, of the idea that men and women who have passed into the great beyond are changed in any essential attribute. They are "just folks," as they are here. No worse, and for a time at least no better. They gradually learn by experience, gravitating to the surroundings which are in harmony with their own mental make-up,—thus constituting their own Hell or Heaven. This is the teaching which has come to us from those who have "passed on," and who assert that they speak with authority. And, this being so, we can see that the best, and in fact the *only* way in which the personal identity of the speaker or "communicator" can be proved, is by obtaining from that personality certain facts and details which he alone knew when alive. And the more detailed and trivial and personal these facts the better.

Suppose you are conversing with some one over a telephone. You cannot see or touch that individual; you can only hear him—indirectly, through the instrumentality of the mechanism or instrument through which you are talking. The voice talking to you over the wire says he is John Smith. How do you know it is John Smith? He says so! But suppose a doubt arises in your mind as to his identity; you would then say to him: "How do I know that you are John Smith? Go ahead and prove to me that you are really he." The speaker would then be compelled to tell you certain facts which only John Smith would be supposed to know—which only you and he might know, or perhaps he alone, and you would have to verify afterward. Remarks about the weather, philosophical or moral disquisitions would not do; any one might give them. You would want decisive and conclusive proof that

the person claiming to be John Smith was really there, talking; and detailed personal facts relating to the memory and personal identity of that individual would be the only kind of evidence which would convince you that he was really there. If detailed enough and convincing enough evidence of this character were obtained, you would probably say: "Yes, that's John Smith all right! No one else could know that! He is surely at the other end of this wire, talking to me!"

And this is precisely the sort of evidence we require in our psychical investigations. We require trivial, personal details, relating to the personality we once knew; perhaps some sign or password; and if all this were obtained, we should feel that we really had proof that the person claiming to be there was actually there, —communicating with us,—through the instrumentality of the psychic or medium we were employing for the experiment.

If we can prove the persistence of individual human consciousness in this manner, then a spiritual world of some sort is established; and communication with that world is likewise established.

But here we meet objections, and have to face and answer other possible interpretations of the facts which have been advanced, in order to explain them. Does not *telepathy* account for the facts? we are asked. Might not the results be due to simple mind-reading, and have nothing to do with the so-called "spirits" at all? We know that thought-transference is a fact; and, that being so, we might suppose that the medium obtained the facts from your mind, or from some other mind, and gave them forth as a genuine "spirit communication." How can we guard against such an interpretation of the case?

Indeed, it is often extremely hard to do so; and here is, indeed, the whole *crux* of the problem of psychical research—the definite establishment of the nature of the intelligence lying behind and instigating these phenomena. Every one who has investigated the facts at all now admits that genuine supernormal manifestations take place; and that the old theories of “fraud” and “humbug” no longer apply. No; supernormal phenomena occur; but the intelligence producing them—is that the spirit it claims to be; or is it some lying and deceiving intelligence; or is it the subconsciousness of the medium which, by the aid of telepathy, clairvoyance, and other supernormal powers, is enabled to perform these apparent miracles? As before said, that is the problem: and a very difficult problem it is indeed, in the majority of cases.

Various tests and ingenious experiments have been made, in an endeavour to overcome these difficulties, and afford conclusive tests of spirit-communication. The specific, detailed facts supplied form the material for the discussion. Many of these facts might have been in the conscious mind of the sitter—hence they might conceivably have been obtained telepathically. More of them might have been in his subconsciousness—hence obtained in a similar manner, though unknown to the sitter. But there are many cases on record where facts have been stated which the sitter certainly never knew and never could have known; so that this theory breaks down also. But perhaps some living person knew the facts—and the medium’s subliminal self, endowed with extraordinary powers during the trance state, had the ability of gathering this material from any living mind, anywhere in the world, and skilfully weaving it together into a semblance of the per-



sonality we once knew? It is conceivable; but highly improbable; and we have as yet no scientific evidence that anything of the sort can take place. Still, let us grant its possibility. What further tests can we apply to dispose of the sceptic's objections?

First of all, what are known as "post mortem letters" have been devised. That is, an individual writes a letter, telling no one what it contains. He is, therefore, the only living human being who knows its contents. This letter is sealed, and sent to the Society for Psychical Research, where it is deposited in the safe deposit vaults. After a time, this man dies. Some days, weeks, or years later, he apparently returns through a medium, and states that he is so-and-so, the writer of the said letter, and that its contents is so-and-so. The letter is now opened and the contents compared. If there is identity or even similarity of contents between the messages, here is pretty good evidence that the same mind had written both—that the same mind was active still, and remembered the contents of the letter, written before death.

Several such letters have been written, and in one or two of them there was a striking similarity between the two messages,—though none of them have been identical, so far as I am aware. Several of them have failed. There are a number of letters of this character on file in the offices of the Society, waiting for their writers to die! Within a few years from now, opportunity should be offered to test a number of messages in this manner.

It will be obvious to the reader, however, that even *this* would not be a conclusive test to the sceptic,—for he might contend that, in such cases, the writer had unconsciously "passed on" the information, telepathi-

cally, to other minds, before he died; or that the medium's subliminal consciousness had in some manner read the letter by direct *clairvoyance*; and hence this would not be conclusive evidence of "spirit return"—though it would certainly be very striking evidence, of a kind, and evidence not to be lightly set aside.

Again, there is the question of knowledge or scholarship displayed by the medium, during trance, which she did not possess, and apparently could not have acquired, in any normal manner. Many instances of this have been recorded—one recently by the Hon. G. W. Balfour, in the English *Proceedings*. In this case, the medium, while not an illiterate woman, was certainly far from a classical scholar; she was, moreover, a lady in private life, not a professional medium, who had no desire to defraud her sitters, even had it been possible. The "communicators" were Dr. A. W. Verrall and Prof. Butcher, and the amount of classical scholarship displayed was such that even classical scholars themselves had great difficulty in verifying the allusions and statements made, which were found to have a personal application to the *soi-disant* "communicators." The evidence cannot be adduced here, or even summarized; but it is very striking, and is certainly one of the most impressive pieces of evidence ever presented, in favour of spirit return.

Still another method, which the psychical researchers have applied, consists in the so-called "cross correspondences." That is, to obtain, through different and widely separated mediums, fragments of parts of messages, which in themselves mean nothing; but which, pieced together, make a complete and readily-understood whole. (This is to offset the danger of telepathy between the various mediums employed.)

Thus, suppose one medium in London wrote *Monday* and *Thursday*; one in Bombay, India, *Wednesday* and *Friday*; one in Boston, *Tuesday* and *Saturday*; and one in New York, "*Sunday—this completes the list; see my messages obtained on such and such dates through so-and-so*"; we should have pretty good evidence that one single mind was endeavouring to enumerate the days of the week, and had planned and carried out this endeavour, through various psychics; and *not* that the subconsciousness of the various mediums had done it—since no one of the messages itself made sense.

Now, no such simple and direct message as this has been obtained; but fragmentary messages of just this character have been obtained through mediums, as widely separated as I have indicated above, unknown to one another; and these messages, pieced together, have afforded us very strong evidence that some communicator was actually there, in each instance, endeavouring to give a portion of a message,—other portions of which had been given elsewhere; and further, that this mind was the same one in every case; and was consciously and carefully planning the whole operation, as a proof of his identity.

Then there is the evidence furnished by "apparitions" of the dying man, or one long dead. It has now been definitely established, mathematically, as Prof. Sidgwick's Committee stated, in their *Report* on the "Census of Hallucinations," that: "*between deaths and apparitions of the dying person a connection exists which is not due to chance alone. This we hold as a proved fact.*" (*Proceedings S. P. R.*, Vol. X., p. 394). If the coincidence in time be exact, or nearly so, we might assume some form of telepathy from the dying



man; and in fact we actually *do* so; but when the apparition appears many hours or even days or weeks after the death, we can hardly suppose this to be the case. In such instances, it would certainly appear that something is persisting still, and endeavouring to manifest itself after this length of time—either in some locality—this constituting a “haunted house”—or to some person. There is abundant and good evidence for cases of this character; and such cases certainly indicate the presence and continued activity of some portion of the departed person’s spirit. A number of cases of this description are to be found in the pages that follow.\*

Then, again, we have those remarkable cases of premonitions, warnings, etc., which so often seem to foreshadow danger. Such cases seem to indicate the possession by man of faculties or powers unnecessary to his present existence upon this planet; and it is difficult to see how they could have been developed by ordinary terrene evolution. They point, rather, to the possession, by man, of powers and potentialities which, while useless from a practical point-of-view here, may yet be of value in some other sphere of activity—a spirit world, in short; and this is the opinion of many eminent men who have made a special study of these supernormal powers for many years. Cases of this character are also to be found in the present book.

These, then, are some of the methods by which we psychical researchers have endeavoured to prove personal identity, and the persistence of the individual human soul after death. And the evidence presented has become increasingly more and more striking and

\* See also my little book, *True Ghost Stories*, for a number of cases of this character.

convincing, of late years, until it is safe to say that nearly every one who has studied the facts carefully, and at first hand, is now convinced that spirit return is a fact, and that the thinking soul of man does continue to live after the change called death.

This, if true, is a striking, a momentous, conclusion. For it affords us actual proof, not only that such a world exists, but that communication with it is at times possible; and that it actually takes place. We thus have the proof desired: viz., scientific evidence of survival.

The cold logic here presented, while it may strike some readers as formal, impersonal, and lacking in that "warmth and intimacy" which James said belongs to all thoughts of our own, nevertheless presents the facts, and the argument as it would present itself to the scientific mind,—demanding strict proof and actual evidence. Science, which depoetizes everything, and feeds only on the dry husks of facts, must have pabulum of its own choosing, in order to be convinced—to gain nutriment from the experiences of mankind. To such, this evidence must appeal. There are others, on the other hand, who will feel that such strict and stringent evidence is unnecessary; but that the intuitive faith and feeling of the human race must be sufficient guarantee that a future life exists; and that man survives and is happy thereafter. The opposite, they contend, is inconceivable. Such persons are not possessed of "the essentially scientific mind"; but they can feel some satisfaction, perhaps, in knowing that the latest researches and experiments in this field have but served to confirm their intuitive beliefs; and that the further we penetrate this vast and shadowy realm, the more certain do we become that psychical phe-

nomena are real, and that a spiritual world in very truth exists, in which all souls find rest and peace and harmony, as well as vital, real life; that progress and happiness are there eternally, for those who achieve them, and that, even though a soul be sent into the spiritual world, all unprepared, and in the prime of life—still, death for all of us is inevitable; it will come one day sooner or later; and it is perhaps better, as Stevenson has said, in his *Aes Triplex*, that:

“Even if death catch people like an open pitfall and in mid-career, laying out vast projects and planning monstrous foundations flushed with hope, . . . should they be at once tripped and silenced, is there not something brave and splendid in such a termination? and does not life go down with a better grace, foaming in full body over a precipice, than miserably straggling to an end in sandy deltas? When the Greeks made their fine saying that those whom the Gods love die young, I cannot help believing that they had this sort of death also in their eye. For surely, at whatever age it overtakes a man, this is to die young. Death has not been suffered to take so much as an illusion from his heart. In the hot-fit of life, a-tiptoe on the highest point of being, he passes at a bound onto the other side. The noise of the mallet and chisel is scarcely quenched, the trumpets are hardly done blowing, when, trailing with him clouds of glory, this happy-starred, full-blooded spirit shoots into the spiritual world.”



## CHAPTER VI

### PSYCHIC PHENOMENA AMIDST THE WARRING NATIONS

*(A Brief Account of Psychic Investigation, as Conducted by the Various Nations Now at War)*

EACH nation has its own special and particular method of investigation of things psychic—just as it has a distinct school in art, in literature and in orthodox science. Each one approaches these problems from an entirely different “angle,” and studies the facts from a particular point-of-view. The present war will doubtless put a stop, for the time being, to much of this research; men who would ordinarily be engaged in investigations of this character are now at the front, fighting for their country and their flag. The grim realities of life and the horrors of war have eclipsed all else; speculative and theoretical work must be put aside for the time being; metaphysics finds no place on the battlefield.

At the same time, it must not be forgotten that the present war will come to an end at some future date; and the occupations of life—even the most *dilettante* ones—will again find their adherents. A résumé of what the various nations have accomplished in this little-known field may serve to bring the facts “up to date,” and place before the student the evidence as it stands today. One other factor must not be lost sight of, however, and that is that psychic research

is the only science which attempts to answer the question: What is man's future? Evolution studies his past; the more orthodox sciences study his present—man himself and his environment; psychic research attempts to investigate his future. And to many of us there is no reason why this inquiry cannot be conducted in precisely the same scientific spirit as pertains in all other branches of knowledge. It is no more "superstitious" than they—rightly understood.

FRANCE.—French investigators have specialized, for the most part, in the phenomena of so-called "magnetism." I do not mean by this physical magnetism—related to electricity—but "human magnetism"—thought to be present in the human body, and capable of being radiated from it, into space, upon occasion. This is the "Magnetic School," finding its centre in the "Magnetic Society" of France. It does not proceed along the lines, or employ the psychological methods, of either the English or American Societies; nor the physical and physiological methods employed by the Italian investigators (to be detailed later). Its method of approach is somewhat as follows:—

These investigators believe that the majority of so-called "psychic phenomena" can be explained by powers hidden in man—the supernormal use of the Will, and the existence and use of this magnetic "fluid," resembling life or vitality. A combination of these two explains the facts. (It is interesting, and also curious, to note that these were the two factors employed by the mediæval magicians, and also by "witches," and said to lie at the basis of their manifestations.) But the modern school has established its belief upon strictly scientific principles. Thus, instruments have been devised which automatically check the "externaliza-

tion" of this force, when directed by the will; experiments have been conducted in the "externalization of sensibility," as it is called—in which the power of *feeling* is projected beyond the normal limits of the body, etc. Healing is also accomplished by these means. Photographic plates have been impressed by these psychic emanations; sensitive chemical and electrical instruments have been constructed to catch and detect them, etc. In fact, all the methods of modern science have been brought to bear upon the problem, in the attempt to prove scientifically the real existence of this "fluid," and its power to affect material objects. This—and the application of delicate instruments—is the chief distinctive work of note of the French investigators.

Upon the psychological side, they have specialized in the study of the "collective mind"—the mentality which is (apparently) formed and manifested at séances. The majority of the French observers do not believe that the intelligence which manifests at the ordinary spiritistic séance is the spirit of a departed person. They believe, on the contrary, that it is a sort of collective composite mentality, formed from the minds of those present, and consolidated into a single Unit, which represents a Mind of its own. It is well known that there is a special "mind of the crowd." They believe that this is a real *thing*, and that, on a lesser scale, the same Thing is created at séances. The study of how this mind is generated, in what it consists, how it manifests itself, etc.—points too technical for discussion here—have occupied the French observers for some years.

GERMANY.—Psychic investigation is less general in Germany than France,—owing doubtless to the ortho-



dox or materialistic trend of the people. Still, there is much to interest in various fields. The famous "thinking horses" of Elberfeld are, of course, German, —Elberfeld being quite close to the Belgian border. These horses—which are able to read, write and calculate complicated mathematical problems—are so well-known that I shall not do more than mention them here. Even more extraordinary is the famous educated dog Rolf, of Mannheim, Bavaria,—capable of figuring, receiving lessons in geography, of writing letters on his own initiative, and performing other actions which appear even more incredible! I shall not dwell upon the facts of this case here, since they are so remarkable they cannot call for belief, unless the facts are given in detail. I have mentioned them only to show that in Germany "animal experimentation" of this character occupies a large share of the student's attention.

Then, too, "dowsing," or the finding of underground water by means of a twig held in the hand of the water-finder, has been studied at great length by various scientific committees, and the conclusion arrived at that the main facts are undoubted. Water *can* be located in this way when every other means has failed. The committee, when last heard from, was concentrating its attention upon the actual underlying causes involved, in the hope of discovering them. Whether the explanation be physical, physiological or psychological remains to be seen. Opinions differ!

It should be noted, in this connection, however, that the British army had occasion to test the practical value of "dowsing" in their Gallipoli campaign. Here, water being so precious, the finding of it by this means was a Godsend to the troops; in fact, it might almost

be said that, had it not been for this, the Suvla Bay expedition would have been impossible. Mr. Ralph Shirley, the able editor of the *Occult Review*, in an editorial, published August, 1916, says regarding this:

“It will interest the British public in especial to know that the situation at Suvla Bay was saved at a very critical moment by the services of Sapper Kelly, of the 3rd Light Horse Brigade, Australian Expeditionary Force, in his capacity of water-diviner. The absence of water was one of the greatest difficulties in connection with the holding of the position on the Gallipoli Peninsula. The Turks, in fact, boasted that it was untenable by a large body of troops for this very reason. The arrangements accordingly made by the authorities for water distribution were on a vast scale. It was actually brought from Malta, being towed in huge barges to the improvised piers at Anzac. On the beach a large steam-pumping plant was erected, which pumped the water from the barges to large tanks on both the right and the left of the Anzac position. The difficulties of supplying water under these conditions were grave in the extreme, especially as the heat was intense, and the least hitch in the organization led to a shortage of the supply. Matters had become very serious, and a complete breakdown was threatened, when the attention of the generals in command was drawn to Sapper Kelly’s reputation as a dowser. He was sent to headquarters, and asked to endeavour to discover if there were any indications of underground water in the area. Early next morning Kelly started on his investigations, and very soon located water within a hundred yards of Divisional Headquarters. On being opened up by the engineers, the well was found to give a volume of over 2,000 gallons of

pure cold artesian water per hour. Two other wells were subsequently opened-up in the immediate vicinity. By six o'clock that evening every man in the section had his water-bottle filled, and within a week Kelly had located the positions of over thirty-two wells, on which pumps were subsequently erected. The water supply obtained in consequence was calculated to be sufficient for 100,000 men with one gallon per day per man. It must be remembered that not only did the troops require water, but there were also thousands of mules which also required watering, and that one mule will drink as much water as twenty men. The instrument used by Sapper Kelly was a small piece of copper which he held in his hands and by which he ascertained the depths at which the water was to be found and also whether it was a "pocket" of water, a spring, or an underground river. Previous to these experiments the engineers in their endeavours to find water had sunk shafts within fifty yards of the spot indicated by Kelly and had gone considerably lower in the earth than he found necessary, but without success."

But the most dramatic and extraordinary German evidence that has come before psychic students for many a long day hails from Munich. Here Baron von Schrenck-Notzing, who is also a physician—well-known for his writings on hypnotism and abnormal psychology—has brought forward evidence of the most extraordinary and striking character. For four years past he had carried on a systematic investigation of so-called "materialization" phenomena. He has published an enormous work on the subject, which has created a stir throughout the length and breadth of the land. His "medium" apparently succeeded in produc-



ing, under the most stringent conditions, forms, or parts of forms, which have been photographed, and even moving pictures taken of their gradual development and disappearance! Cameras were placed inside and outside the cabinet; the light was good; the séances were held in Dr. Schrenck-Notzing's own house or laboratory; the medium was medically searched and examined before and after each séance. Occasionally the medium gave the séance completely nude—as a test—to prove that nothing was concealed about her. Nevertheless complete forms issued from the cabinet, and a peculiar slimy, cold substance, which Dr. Schrenck-Notzing termed "teleplasm" issued from the medium's body, and was seen and felt by him. Naturally, the publication of such facts led to a bitter controversy; and this was still going on when the war broke out, and effectually ended it for the time being.

AUSTRIA.—Southern Austria and the North Balkan States constitute, of course, the home of the "Vampire." The peasants of these countries still implicitly believe in the reality of such gruesome beings, which leave their newly-made graves, to come and suck the life-blood of those still living. Terrible stories are told of these creatures—as also of werwolves, black magicians, etc.! It is earnestly to be hoped that, some day, a committee of psychic investigators may be appointed, which will thoroughly investigate these stories, and ascertain what truth—if any—there be in such narratives.

The real scientific work in this field, which Austria contributed, has been the interpretation of dreams, and the exploration of the subconscious mind, as elaborated by Sigmund Freud, of Vienna. He argued, in his remarkable work, that most dreams represent a

suppressed wish, and that many of them have a sexual significance. He has also contributed much to the systematic symbolic interpretation of dreams. While much of his work is disputed and suggests an attempt to prove a particular hypothesis rather than to ascertain the true bearing of the evidence, some of it is doubtless sound.

RUSSIA.—In certain educated circles in Russia, “spiritualistic phenomena” have been very carefully and scientifically studied. Count Alexander Aksakof spent practically his whole life on this subject, and published an enormous work, in two volumes, *Animism and Spiritism*, which may well be considered a classic. Count Solovovo—Hon. Secretary of the English Society for Russia—has also contributed a number of careful studies, and in particular carried out some very curious experiments with a medium (now dead) named Sambour, who had the power (apparently) of passing “matter through matter” in a mysterious way! For instance, the sitter and the medium would take one another’s hands; they would not let go for a second. In the dark, the medium would then succeed in “threading” a chair on to the arms of the sitter—that is, in passing the chair on to the extended arm—as one would normally hang it on a peg. The hole in the chair was too small for the medium’s body to pass through; the hands were never released; the lights were only turned down *after* the hands were so held. Short of the actual miracle, one can only assume some exceedingly clever trick, plus much cleverness of deception; but though this medium was tested for a number of consecutive weeks, his secret was never discovered.

Far and away the most important work in this field

of psychic investigation, however, comes to us from Russian Poland, where Dr. Ochorowicz had been experimenting for a number of years with a young medium, named Mlle. Tomczyk, who passes into trance, and in that state has the power, apparently, of moving solid objects without contact; of impressing photographic plates merely by placing her hands upon them; of causing her thoughts to be photographed; of projecting her "etheric body," so that it can be photographed, and even more marvellous things. These phenomena, many of them, seem well established—as Dr. Ochorowicz is known, not only as a careful and cautious student, but one who has a thorough knowledge of the difficulties involved, and has spent a number of years experimenting with the same subject. Two committees of Polish scientists investigated and endorsed his facts. (Some of these I have reviewed and explained in my *Problems of Psychical Research*, pp. 53-66.)

GREAT BRITAIN.—The work of the English Society for Psychical Research is well-known the world over. Its members include as many eminent scientists as are to be found in any similar body in the world; its investigations are always made with extreme caution; its treatment of the subject-matter is eminently sane. The chief interest of this Society, for a number of years past, has been the detailed psychological study of the automatic writing of certain mediums—such as Mrs. Piper, Mrs. Holland, Mrs. Forbes, etc.—who have apparently produced striking evidence of the influence of spirits of the departed. Direct personal evidence is studied; also what has come to be known as "cross-correspondences"—that is, the experimental verification of the *same* facts through two or more



mediums; independent receipt of information through several mediums, unknown to one another; securing of literary and scientific material beyond the conscious powers of the medium; obtaining the contents of sealed letters, written by members before death, and only opened after their contents has been given through the automatic writing, etc. It will be seen at once that their work has been almost entirely along the psychological—rather than the physiological or physical—lines; they have dealt mainly with the mental problems, and chiefly with the evidence for survival. This has received very adequate, yet cautious, treatment. In addition, dreams, apparitions, haunted houses, premonitions and similar phenomena are constantly being examined. The English Society has been unfortunate in its investigations of the “physical phenomena”; and recent experiments have again proved inconclusive. Those who are interested in the mental manifestations—and particularly in what evidence there may be of a scientific character for the persistence of the human soul after bodily death—will find this problem treated more fully by the British Society than anywhere else. The evidence is, of course, far too lengthy and prolix to even summarize here.

ITALY.—Italy, on the other hand, seems to breed physical mediums; they appear indigenous to the soil! The famous Eusapia Palladino comes from Naples; Sordi, Carancici, Politi, and other “physical” mediums all hail from Italian shores. The work in this country has naturally turned very largely upon the detailed study of these mediums—mainly from the physical and clinical points-of-view. Thus, Lombroso and Morselli, —the eminent psychiatrist of Genoa,—both studied mediumship from its physiological and pathological sides.

After establishing the fact that certain persons can produce what appear to be physical miracles, they studied the psychic medically, during, before and after the production of these phenomena. In this way, many remarkably interesting facts have been brought to light. Thus, we have learned (what we should have guessed already) that practically all mediums suffer from mental dissociation; many of them are hystericals; some present remarkable pathological symptoms. All this, of course, does not affect their mediumship—save that it shows the connection between abnormal and supernormal phenomena (a point which I personally have always contended for very strongly). Outside of Lombroso, practically none of the Italian group of observers are spiritists; they believe, rather, in the supernormal powers of the subconscious, plus the ability of the medium to “externalize” a semi-fluid substance from the body, and mould this in space, to resemble a human figure. In this way they attempt to account for “materializations.” Psychological research, in Italy, is almost entirely devoted to the physical phenomena.

BELGIUM.—Belgium has produced few scientific investigators. A remarkable series of experiments was made some years ago, in a private family, and the results published. They dealt with the phenomena of so-called “materialization,” or the creation of phantom forms. The sitters were not professional mediums, in any sense of the word. Professor Delbœuf, of Liège, devoted many years to this subject, and studied induced hallucinations, hypnotic phenomena, the cure of warts by suggestion, the appreciation of time by somnambulists, etc. Maurice Maeterlinck is also a close and ardent student of these questions,—

as his recent books on *Death*, *The Unknown Guest*, *The Light Beyond*, etc., show.

HOLLAND.—Dr. Frederick van Eeden, founder of the first hypnotic clinic in that country, is an active worker in these problems, and has made the name of Holland famous by his original researches. For fifteen years he has experimented with his own dreams, and apparently succeeded, finally, in freeing his “dream-body” from his physical body, during sleep, and “projecting” it—causing it to take journeys in space on its own account, and see and hear things actually transpiring at a distance. His paper, published in the *Proceedings* of the Society for Psychical Research, is extremely interesting and profoundly suggestive. He believes that we can in time gain such power of control over this body that it can affect other people, move material objects, etc. If this be true, it will, of course, cause a profound change not only in our belief as to the inseparable tie between body and mind, but also as to the causes of dreams.

In Holland, too, Drs. Malta and Zaalberg van Zelst, two Dutch physicists, have contrived several delicate instruments by whose aid, they believe, they are able to get into direct communication with the spirits of the departed without the aid of a “medium” at all; that is, the instrument itself will act as a medium—an intermediary—and render direct instrumental communication possible. They are well-known as careful physicists, and their arguments are certainly plausible.

AMERICA.—The American Society for Psychical Research, of which Dr. James H. Hyslop is the Secretary, and with which I was actively associated during the first two years of its organization, has published a great variety of valuable material, dealing with



physical, mental and spiritistic phenomena. The *Proceedings* and *Journals* of the Society, issued each year, constitute a veritable mine of psychical material of high quality, though the publications are more spiritistic in tone than the English Society's *Proceedings*, owing to the convictions of the Editor in this direction. Mediumistic phenomena occupy a large part of the Society's publications—unfortunately, confined too largely to one medium. The collective value of the material is, however, undoubted.

In Canada, there is a Psychological Research Society, in Toronto, of which Dr. John King is the President. No official publications have been issued, so far as I am aware, detailing the activities of this body.

It is unfortunate, to say the least, that the present war will put an effective stop to this investigation—at least for the time being—just when conclusions were being reached and facts of far-reaching significance obtained. It is earnestly to be hoped that, after the present war has been concluded, the research will be continued with ever-increasing enthusiasm; and that a mass of valuable *data* will have been gathered, as the result of careful psychological investigations conducted at the front by competent investigators.

## CHAPTER VII

### PROPHECIES AND PREMONITIONS

SOON after the commencement of the Great War, a number of European journals published accounts of prophecies, which were said to have been made, all the way from three days to three hundred years before,—showing, so it was claimed, that the war had been foreseen with exactitude by numerous seers, at various times in the past; and that the present war had been foretold in detail by them. It must be admitted, at once, that the majority of these prophecies are either totally unconvincing, or were afterwards shown to be fraudulent, or of so general a character that they are valueless from the evidential point-of-view. The prophecy of "Brother Johannes," e.g., which created quite a stir at the time of its publication, has since been shown to be a forgery; while those contained in the various astrological almanacs are extremely vague, and might be stretched to cover almost any event of unusual magnitude. *After* the war had started, many astoundingly accurate "prophecies" were of course forthcoming; but it is unfortunate, to say the least, that none of these should have been produced *before* its outbreak. The interested reader is referred to a little book entitled *Prophecies and Omens of the Great War*, compiled by Mr. Ralph Shirley, editor of the *Occult Review*, for the most striking cases of the kind for which reasonable testimony has

been adduced; and to Herbert Thurston's book *The War and the Prophets*, for a negative criticism of these cases. Professor F. C. S. Schiller has also contributed a paper to the *Journal* of the English Society for Psychical Research, *War Prophecies*, in which much the same criticism of these cases is adduced (June, 1916).

There are, however, a few cases which deserve special mention, either because of their detail, or because of the authority of those who are responsible for them, or because of the fact they were not only written down, but seen and testified to, by independent witnesses, before the outbreak of the war. One of the best of these, perhaps, is the following, which was obtained through Professor Charles Richet, one of the most eminent physiologists of France, and a *savant* of indisputable authority. Here are the details:—

On June 3d, 1914, at a time when Europe was undisturbed by any thought of the terrible war avalanche which was soon to burst upon her, Professor Charles Richet handed to a M. de Vesme a manuscript written by Dr. Amedee Tardieu, in which the latter gave particulars of a prophecy made by a friend of his, a M. Léon Sonrel, as far back as 1870, that war would break out in France in 1914.

M. Sonrel had made other prophecies of future events, all of which had been fulfilled, and a curious feature about them was that his predictions in regard to national matters synchronized with many other predictions he had made in regard to his own private life and that of his friends. Dr. Tardieu writes that he was walking with Léon Sonrel in the Luxembourg Gardens, Paris, when the latter seemed to have a kind of prophetic vision. In this he saw clearly certain events



in regard to the war of 1870, all of which came to pass in due course, including the French defeat at Sedan, the siege of Paris and the revolution. The visionary predicted at the same time his own early death, and that his wife would give birth to a posthumous child.

Added to this, he predicted many events in Dr. Tardieu's life which all in due course came to pass. He announced that France would be at war once more, soon after certain events in Dr. Tardieu's life were fulfilled. The precise nature of these private events Dr. Tardieu did not publish, but he announced to his friends that war was due before September, 1914, because the events of his own life, with which the prediction synchronized, were fulfilled in May of that year. All Dr. Tardieu's friends bear witness of the latter's prediction in regard to the war.

It is interesting to note in this connection that Sonrel predicted that the war of 1914 would be a victorious one for France. To quote the words of the prophet:

"France is saved, she extends to the Rhine. O my beloved country, you are triumphant—you are Queen of the nations!"

The fact that attention was drawn to this prophecy two months before the beginning of the war makes it worthy of special notice.

However vague and indefinite its wording may be, Dr. Tardieu evidently had no difficulty in interpreting its full meaning, enlightened as he was by the fulfilled predictions relating to himself, upon which the fulfillment of the prophecy in regard to France as a nation was made to depend.

In the *Occult Review* for December, 1915, Mr. Ralph Shirley gives the following case, which must be acknowledged to have some interest, were it only for

the fact that it embodies the supposed date for the ending of the war. Mr. Shirley says:

“In writing of predictions that are in process of fulfillment, or may possibly yet be fulfilled, I should like here to quote the Model’s Prophecy, the story of the Breton who forecasted his own fate. This has not yet appeared, and I think deserves mention, though I am not in a position to vouch for its *bona fides*. It appeared in the French newspapers some considerable time ago, in the early part of the war, and runs as follows:—

“For several years a well-known French painter of battles and military life whose name is not given, but whom it should surely be possible to identify, employed a native of Brittany for his model. One day in July, 1914, about a fortnight before the outbreak of the war, the model, who was of a psychic temperament, arrived at the artist’s studio in a very dejected state of mind. On the painter inquiring what it was that troubled him, he announced that the country was on the brink of war. The painter pooh-pooed his fears and expressed a desire to start on his work. But his model was not to be turned from his fateful prognostication. ‘War,’ he said, ‘will be declared on August 2.’ The artist promptly retorted that if his model knew when the war would begin he was also probably aware of the date on which it would end. Yes, was the reply, I know this too, the war will end on May 22. The artist hereupon invited him to come and see him on May 23 and share a bottle of wine in celebration of the fulfillment of his prediction. ‘Impossible!’ replied the other, ‘I could not come. I shall be killed in the second half of November.’ The story goes on to state that the model fell on the battlefield

on November 27. No mention, it may be observed, was made of the year, but only of the day and month on which the war was to terminate, and apparently the artist forgot to inquire. . . .”

One of the most remarkable prophecies, however, relates to the fate of Serbia, and for this we have the authority of Count Miyatovich, former Premier of Serbia and at present envoy extraordinary to Great Britain and the United States, on behalf of that stricken country. This prophecy was made, apparently, in 1868, and has formed part of the secret archives of Serbia ever since. Practically everything then foretold has since come to pass, it is said; while many of his statements relate to the future, and are still unfulfilled. In his interesting account, in the *Occult Review* (February, 1916), Count Miyatovich tells us how this prophecy came into being. He says:—

“Three or four miles from the town of Ujitsa—(I may here add that the district of Ujitsa is adjoining the Sandjak of Novi Pazar, and is the most mountainous part of Serbia, a sort of Serbian Scotland)—lies the small village of Kremna. On the afternoon of May 29, 1868, a peasant of that village came in a great hurry to Ujitsa, the district’s principal town, and running through the street and the market, shouted in great agitation: ‘Help, O brethren, help! They are murdering our Prince!’ The police, thinking that he must have gone mad, or was drunk, arrested him. Two hours later a telegram arrived from Belgrade announcing the assassination of Prince Michæl in the Park of Topchidere on that afternoon. The police then thought the peasant—whose Christian name was Matha—must have known something of the conspiracy to assassinate the Prince, and commenced criminal



proceedings against him. The poor fellow swore that he did not know anything about the conspiracy, but he explained that he suffered from a 'peculiar malady' which caused him from time to time to see visions, which visions, sooner or later, became confirmed by real happenings. Asked if he had visions concerning future events in Serbia, he answered affirmatively, and at the request of the President of the Court of Justice and the Prefect of the District, he described what visions he had, his descriptions being taken down in writing by the Secretary of the Court. The original minutes of his statements are still preserved in the Archives of the Court of Justice at Ujitsa."

Count Miyatovich then relates how Matha foretold the use of the telephone; stated that Nish would be Serbian; that Serbia would have a king; the wars of Turkey and Bulgaria, the activities of King Milan, his divorce from his wife, his exile and his dying broken-hearted abroad, and then goes on to narrate the following interesting story:—

"In the beginning of the year 1889, I happened to be the Secretary for Foreign Affairs in the Cabinet of the venerable Nichola Christich (whose daughter-in-law, Mme. Elizabeth Christich, and Miss Jane Christich, are well known as Serbian patriotic ladies in London society, and in journalistic circles). Now I must tell here an historical episode.

"On February 19, 1889, the Prime Minister called all the Ministers to a sitting of the Council, and to our utter astonishment and dismay, told us that the King had expressed to him his firm resolution to abdicate the crown on the occasion of the national festival on February 22, that is to say, in three days! On my proposal we went at once *in corpore* to the palace to

try to dissuade the King from his fatal and unworthy intention. Every Minister spoke, and implored the King to abandon so unfortunate a decision. I, who had been not only a loyal subject but also a personal friend to the King, spoke with undisguised indignation. Having exhausted all the arguments, the Ministers waited to hear what the King had to say. King Milan then replied, thanking the Ministers for their loyalty to him, and acknowledged that their arguments were unanswerable, but that he had been considering abdication from all points, and came to the conclusion that he could not do otherwise than abdicate. Then he added: 'I am not surprised, gentlemen, at your endeavours to dissuade me from the contemplated step, but I am astonished that Miyatovich talks with such violence, when he knows, as well as I do, that my abdication must take place!'

"The moment we left the King's presence the Prime Minister invited us to come to his room for consultation. There he addressed the Ministers somewhat in these words: 'Gentlemen, you have all heard the King say that Mr. Miyatovich knows. I think we have a right to ask our colleague to explain why he never said a word to any one of us with regard to the King's intention to abdicate?'

"I then told them that fourteen years before King Milan and I heard together many details of the prophecy of Matha of Kremna, that among those details the abdication of King Milan was also foretold, and that the King's remark referred to that prophecy. The Minister of Public Education, Dr. Vladan Gyorgyevich, protested against such a ridiculous explanation on my part, and said that probably Matha of Kremna and his prophecy never existed.

“Then, to my own pleasure and surprise, our old and universally-respected Prime Minister took up my defence against Dr. Vladan. ‘You will remember, gentlemen (he said), that in 1868 I had the misfortune of being the Home Minister, when Prince Michæl was assassinated. The Prefect of Ujitsa reported to me about the strange visions of the peasant Matha of Kremna, and it was I myself who ordered the Prefect to take down formal minutes of the statements of this peasant concerning his visions of coming events. A copy of these minutes has been forwarded to me, I have read it myself, and I believe it will be found here in the next room, among the documents of the Secret Archives of that year (1868).’

“Thus the existence of the prophecy of Matha of Kremna was confirmed by the Prime Minister Christich, a man well-known for his earnestness, cool judgment, and absolute honesty.

“The third statement of Matha of Kremna concerns the present events in Serbia, regarding the whole country: ‘The people will be most unhappy and suffer terribly, so much, indeed, that men and women passing a churchyard will exclaim: “Oh, how happy you are, who are dead, and do not suffer as we do now!” But after some time a man will arise in the midst of the people, will drive away the foreign army, and then unite all the Serbian countries into one state. An era of prosperity and happiness will then ensue, so that men and women passing a churchyard will exclaim: “What a pity you died, and are not living to share this happiness which we now enjoy!” . . .’”



## PREMONITIONS

Leaving the above cases to speak for themselves—and it must be admitted that, while some of them are curious, none of them taken individually is completely convincing—we may now turn our attention for a few moments to cases of individual premonitory warnings; and here, I think, the evidence becomes very striking, in many instances. It should perhaps be pointed out, parenthetically, that a great amount of evidence has already been published on this subject in the past; Mrs. Henry Sidgwick's paper "On the Evidence for Premonitions," in *Proceedings*, Vol. V.; Mr. F. W. H. Myers' long article on "Precognition" in Volume XI; cases scattered throughout psychic journals and other publications; Dr. Bozzano's book (in Italian) on premonitions—here and elsewhere a mass of evidence may be found, tending to prove that man *does* at times lift, at least partially and fitfully, the veil which conceals the future, and learns what is about to happen to him, or sees some event which afterwards actually transpires

It is not the place here to enter into any discussion as to the *causes* at work—supposing genuine premonition to be a fact. Some have contended that there is a species of clairvoyance *in time*, as there is in space; some that discarnate spirits assist in the picturing of some future event; some believe that "coming events cast their shadows before," and that present events have already shaped or predestined future steps in the cosmic evolution, and that these happenings are somehow stamped or impressed upon some plastic or etheric substance, and thence read or interpreted by the seer; some believe that the future is al-

ready present, in some sense, only not yet known or perceived by us as "present"; some that the subconscious mind of the seer, by its own heightened powers of perception, is enabled to perceive tendencies more readily than the normal mind, and hence registers them ahead of their registration by the normal consciousness—these and other theories might be given at length, and their various *pros* and *cons* discussed; but such discussion would not here profit us. We need only record the fact—for fact it appears to be—that men and women, under certain stresses of the mind or of the emotions, or in certain peculiar and ill-understood states, which often seem to appear quite spontaneously,—do in fact partially and dimly vision the future; and that, inasmuch as this faculty is apparently not the result of terrene evolution, it indicates to us, very strongly, the existence in man of powers which are destined for use in some higher sphere of activity,—where these psychic and supernormal powers are in fact employed.

The present war has furnished many cases of this character; and from those which might be given, the following will at least act as samples, illustrative of the rest. In some cases, the soldier has foreseen his own death; in others, he has been enabled to prevent it; in still others, his death has been foreseen by those near and dear to him at home; in still others, a general vision or picture has been shown—in which, naturally, the seer plays a prominent part—as he would in his own dreams. Take for example the following case, for which I am indebted to Rosa Stuart's little book *Dreams and Visions of the War*.\* We might call it—

\* *Dreams and Visions of the War*, by Rosa Stuart; with a Preface by Estelle Stead. Arthur Pearson and Co., London. 1/- net.

*A Premonition of Death*

“A striking case took place during the campaign on the Gallipoli Peninsula in 1915. It is a case not likely to be easily forgotten by the mates of Private Reynolds,—the chief actor in this touching little drama of the war. The following is the story as related by his comrade, Private Pugh. It is interesting to know, too, that its authenticity is vouched for by the Captain of the regiment to which the two men belonged.

“It was a stifling hot summer’s night on the Gallipoli Peninsula. Fighting had taken place intermittently during the day. For a time, however, the cannon had stopped their booming and activity of stray snipers had relaxed, so the little company of New Zealanders who had held their ground so bravely were snatching a welcome half-hour’s sleep.

“Suddenly Private Reynolds awoke with a start. All sleepiness had left him. His sudden movement succeeded in waking his neighbour, Private Pugh, also, and as the latter raised himself on his elbow to see what could be amiss, he saw that Reynolds was staring up at the sky with a startled look in his eyes.

“‘What’s the matter, mate? You look kind o’ scared,’ he said.

“‘There was silence for a moment. The night was calm, still and impressive. In the firmament of blue above gleamed myriads of golden points of light. Afar, the gentle, soothing lap of the waves against the rocks could be heard. Then Private Reynolds spoke:

“‘I shall have to go on Listening Post duty at midnight on the 25th of June, and I shall be shot through the head,’ he said.

“‘But what makes you think that?’ asked his com-



panion, impressed in spite of himself by the deep, calm tones of conviction in which Reynolds' startling announcement had been made.

“‘Only this,’ was the reply. ‘I had a dream just now, and in that dream I saw my mother reading a newspaper. She looked up from it suddenly, and her face was so white and her eyes so horror-struck that I found myself looking over her shoulder to see what she had been reading, and there in the ‘Roll of honour’ my name stood out—‘Private Reynolds, shot through the head while on Listening Post duty on June 25th,’ is what I read.’

“Private Pugh laughed at his friend for his ‘fit of the blues,’ as he called it, and so did all his other chums. They said the dream was the result of a disordered mind aggravated by poor rations and physical fatigue,—in short that the general war conditions had got on his nerves. He was told to ‘buck up,’ and put all thought of it out of his head.

“But they couldn't help recalling the dream premonition at which they had scoffed when Private Reynolds was called out on Listening Post duty with five of his companions two days later, on June 25th, the very day which his dream had foretold.

“Only two of the six men came back. These reported that the party had been taken in ambush by the Turks at midnight. Private Reynolds, with three of his mates, had been shot through the head. Thus in every detail had his dream been fulfilled.”

### *A Fulfilled Prophecy*

Another remarkable example of a case of this kind is to be found in the experience of William Roberts, who fought at Suvla Bay.

“In May, 1912, Roberts was a merchant seaman, and it was just about this time that he had a dream which puzzled him a great deal.

“For he dreamt that he was in the khaki uniform of a soldier taking part in a skirmish, in the course of which the men on his side were being pressed back. Soon afterwards he found himself alone and confronted by two dark-visaged enemy officers, one of whom engaged him and clearly had the upper hand. He cut at Roberts’ head a few times, though Roberts succeeded in parrying these cuts; then he made a thrust at his right side, which practically disabled him and made him cry out in pain. Finding him helpless and at their mercy, his attackers took away his equipment and weapons from him. At this point he awoke; but the dream left an impression upon him for some time, and he related it to several people. ‘Funny thing that a sailor should dream of fighting on land,’ he said.

“His dream was fulfilled in a curious way. Upon the outbreak of war he decided to enter the Army instead of going into the Navy, as he knew that just then soldiers were the nation’s foremost need. He was amongst those who went to Suvla Bay, and on November 25, 1915, at the ‘Green Knoll,’ Suvla, took place the very fight he had witnessed in his dream.

“Shortly after sunset his company had come out of the front line trench. They took up a new position, and had only been digging themselves in a short while, when the Turks were upon them, rushing their left flank. They were compelled to fall back man by man to avoid being trapped. Roberts, the last man on the right flank, received a bullet through the side. He had no sooner fallen than two dark-visaged Turks rushed upon him. One attacked him with a sword bayonet, a

kind of weapon which each of them carried. He made several cuts at Roberts' head, cuts, however, which the latter managed to parry. Then the Turks commenced thrusting at his right side. The first thrust disabled Roberts and made him cry out with pain. Between them the two Turks despoiled him of his arms and equipment and then retreated quickly, as the British had started a bomb attack.

“Judge of the amazement of the wounded man when suddenly he realized that the spot on which this incident had taken place was the very spot pictured in his dream. He had been attacked and wounded in the right side by two dark-visaged men, exactly as he had dreamt he would be three years before at a time when the thought of donning the King's uniform had never so much as entered his head.”

### *Foresaw Own Death.*

It is not unusual for a soldier to have a deeply-rooted impression of impending death upon the battlefield; but seldom is a premonition fulfilled in regard to the smallest detail, as in the case of a lieutenant in the 1st Battalion Somerset Light Infantry, a young man of twenty-two, who met his death at the front in July, 1916.

Before he adopted the uniform at the beginning of the war, he was an assistant master of the Choir School of a well-known church in London, with the help of the clergy of which church he was studying for Holy Orders. Grave, quiet and peace-loving by nature, his strong sense of duty urged him to resign his duties for the time being and answer the call of his country; but



from the first he seemed convinced that he would not survive the war.

Later he was able to foretell how he was going to die. "I shall be wounded four times, and my fourth wound will kill me," he told his friends. Things happened exactly as he said. On three different occasions he was wounded and came home on sick leave. The last time before he returned to the front he bade his people an impressive farewell.

"You will not see me again," he gravely said.

And he never returned, for in the second half of July he was once more wounded in action, this time very dangerously, for he had a fracture at the back of the skull. They took him to hospital at Rouen, where two days later he passed away.

### *An Appeal That Was Heard*

In the following case the relatives of the sick man seemed to be apprised of his illness just before or at about the time he was delirious and at his worst. The case—though older than those just given—is interesting, and was thoroughly investigated at the time. The father's testimony is as follows:—

"On Sunday night, 25th May, I had a most extraordinary dream. I dreamt that my son A., a young officer in a regiment at Gibraltar, was lying very ill there with the fever, and was calling out to me, 'Father, father, come over and let me see you or my mother.' The next morning I went to see the Rev. G., the well-known coach, living near me. On entering his room he exclaimed, 'Do you believe in "dream-waves"?' I replied, No, I did not. He remarked that just as I was entering the room, he was on the point of sitting down

before his desk and commencing a letter to me, asking me to come over and see him. I then said, 'I had a curious dream last night. I saw before me my son A., down with fever at Gibraltar, imploring me to come over and see him.' As I had that morning a letter from him, written in good spirits, I thought it was curious, and gave the dream no further thought.

"On Tuesday, the 27th May, I went to Ramsgate with my second son, for change. On the 29th May, one of my family here wired to me to return home, as news had arrived from Gibraltar that my son A. was very ill with Rock fever. I returned in a few hours. I read over my letters from Gibraltar. It appears that on the 17th May, my son fell ill, and was placed on the sick list. The attack turned out to be Rock fever. He gradually got worse; on the 24th he was delirious, and on the 25th his brother officers had to get a nurse, Mrs. S., to take charge of the patient. On the 23rd a second doctor was called in consultation. So bad was the news that I received from Gibraltar by letter and telegrams, that I left London on the 4th June, and reached it on the 9th. I found the patient doing well, but very weak. I had to remain there until the 3rd July, the attack of fever continuing, and we both returned home on the 8th July.

"I mentioned to the nurse my curious dream of 25th May. She said she was placed in charge of the patient on the afternoon of that day. He was very delirious all that night, and was constantly calling out, 'Oh, mother, mother, do come over to see me'; and as he probably remembered how delicate she was, that she could not take a sea voyage across the Bay of Biscay, he also called out, 'Father, father, come and comfort me, and let me see you again.'

“It was months after our return home before the fever left him, and he did not quite get rid of it till November. . . .”

In conversation, Colonel V. stated that he dreamed very little, and scarcely ever had distressing dreams; and that, quite apart from the confirmation, this dream would have been very exceptional in its character. Mrs. S., who was an excellent nurse, and whom Colonel V. regards as entirely trustworthy, has left Gibraltar, and gone, he thinks, to Morocco.

### *A True Vision*

A somewhat striking instance of a mother's prophetic dream is to be found in the experience of the Derry lady, whose son, belonging to the Canadian Mounted Rifles, was away at the time doing his bit “at the front.”

In her dream she saw her son standing with his back towards her. He had evidently lost both his uniform and his equipment, for his sole garment seemed to consist of an odd-looking purple robe with a number of folds, that had been wrapped around him. As she looked at him she noticed that he held his arms above his head in the attitude of surrender. And then she awoke.

“I feel sure that our boy has been taken a prisoner by the Germans,” she said to her husband the next morning, after relating her dream. She told it to several other people, describing also the position of a canal, the house near by, and a group of willows at the scene of the capture. An officer who had been at the front recognized it from her description as a portion of the country round Hooge.



Until the night of her dream her son had sent his mother a postcard regularly every week. Her anxiety was great when for three weeks no card came, and she felt sure her dream had been a true one.

This belief was confirmed when three weeks later she received the Canadian Record Officer's intimation that her son was reported missing since the night of June 2, 1916, the very night of her dream. Next day she received a card from her son with the information that he was a prisoner of war in Germany. Three weeks later his first letter came. In the course of this he said:

"I will not tell you of the terrible hours previous to my capture, except to say it is a miracle that I am alive. I was taken on the night of June 2nd, and when captured I was practically naked, being without cap, coat, or boots. My captors, however, were very decent, and supplied me with most of what I needed when I reached here."

Thus to the very date of the capture of her son, the mother's remarkable dream was fulfilled. She is waiting until the end of the war to learn more fully of its almost uncanny accuracy.

### *Saved From Death*

The premonitory warning may take the form of a picture, a voice, a form, a restraining hand, or merely a more or less vague impression to do a certain thing at a certain time. These are merely the various ways in which the subconscious mind externalizes its information, or in which that knowledge is imparted to it. In the following incident, for example, the soldier saw a vision of his mother, and this apparently saved him

from certain death. Writing home to his mother, he says:—

“One night while carrying bombs, I had occasion to take cover when about twenty yards off I saw you looking towards me as plain as life. Leaving my bombs I crawled nearly to the place where your vision appeared, when a German shell dropped on them, and—well—I had to return for some more. But had it not been for you, I certainly would have been reported ‘missing.’

“ . . . You’ll turn up again, won’t you, mother, next time a shell is coming?”

### *Foresaw Own Death*

There seems to be a general impression among soldiers stationed in certain parts of the front that Lord Kitchener knew that his own death would be on sea and not on land, and many tales are told to the effect that Kitchener himself mentioned this on more than one occasion. The following account, quoted admittedly at second or third hand, seems to bear this out. A recent publication states that—

“An officer in the French Army, who was in the great General’s company when the latter visited France shortly before his death, related how one day when they were going together through the danger zone at the front, a shell burst very near them. The French officer was alarmed for the safety of the man upon whom so much depended, but Lord Kitchener did not flinch:

“ ‘There is nothing here that will harm me,’ he said confidently. ‘Somehow I seem to know that it will be on sea, and not on land, that I shall meet my end.’

“Barely a month later his premonition was fulfilled, for on a stormy night in a wild sea, off the rocky coast of the Orkneys, the *Hampshire*, on which Lord Kitchener and his staff had set out for Russia, was wrecked two hours after sailing, and so it was on the sea and not on land that one of the greatest soldiers of modern times met his death.”

It may perhaps be said that, out of all the thousands of men who are daily giving up their lives at the front, and whose relatives are thinking about them, with anxious thoughts, there must be many coincidences, and that “coincidence” alone is sufficient to account for the cases presented, or those hitherto gathered and published. In this connection, however, it should be pointed out that no amount of thinking about a person, however near and dear he may be, would be sufficient in itself to present to the subconscious mind a prophetic picture of the actual circumstances of the death—that is, the actual and accurate facts in the case.

Take, for example, the following instance, given in *Dreams and Visions of the War*:—

#### *A Vision of Death*

“A case in point came to my knowledge quite recently. It is the tragic experience of Mrs. Parker of London, whose son enlisted in the Army in November, 1915, and went to Chatham for his training. In this case I may say at once that the element of anxiety was conspicuously lacking. Private Parker was in training at a home station. There was no prospect of his being called to actual danger for some months at least. His mother had not the slightest ground for worrying



about him at all. And she didn't worry about him. Far back in the recesses of her mind was the thought of the time when he would join the other lads in the trenches in Flanders,—a time when she would never hear the postman's knock upon the door without a feeling of dread; but bravely she put these thoughts away from her, for she knew by experience that 'Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof,' is a very useful motto to act up to in time of war.

"And then, just after he had been three months in training, she had her dream. Just a day or so before she had received a letter from him in which he told her he was in splendid health and spirits, and she was perfectly happy about him. 'The life will do the lad a power of good,' she would say to the neighbours again and again.

"Yet on the night of the 4th of February, 1916, a date which will ever live in her memory, she dreamt that she saw a coffin brought home by four soldiers and placed on two chairs just inside the hall by the front door. Standing near the soldiers was a man in mufti, who looked at her gravely with an air of commiseration upon his face. Then he advanced slowly and raised the coffin lid in order that she might glance at the corpse within. She gave a scream of agony and terror as in the cold, waxen, lifeless features she recognized the face of her son. Overcome with horror and grief she awoke, feeling sure that such a dream was a presage of evil, although, as I have said before, her son was presumably in no danger, for he was still training at Chatham, and there was no prospect of his being sent out to France for three months at least.

"That night, as she said afterwards, was for her a

night of grim terror, though she did her best to persuade herself that it was foolish to worry over a dream, that in fact there was no reason of any kind for her to worry at all.

“But on the following morning she received a wire from the officer commanding the Military Hospital at Chatham, saying her son was seriously ill. Three days later he died, and his body was brought up from Chatham by military escort for burial in London. And now comes the strangest part of the whole experience. The coffin containing the corpse *was* carried into the house of the grief-stricken mother by four soldiers, who set it down upon two chairs in the hall. It was then that the undertaker, the man in mufti in her dream, came forward and removed the coffin-lid in order that she might take a last look at her son’s features before the coffin was finally screwed down.”

### *Prophetic Dreams*

The following premonitory dreams, relating to Zepelin raids, were published in the *Journal S. P. R.*, October-November, 1917. Writing editorially, Mrs. Salter says:—

In the following case the percipient, Miss W., dreamt vividly of an air raid at a time when one was actually in progress at a distance. On the first occasion it is possible that Miss W.— may have received some intimation of the raid by normal means during her sleep; on the second occasion this hypothesis does not seem tenable. In view of the frequency with which air-raids occurred during the month of September, and of the degree of expectation which was thereby aroused, it is worth while to call attention to the fact that at the

time of Miss W——'s dream she had no special reason to anticipate a raid.

The first report we received was in a letter from Miss W——, as follows:

*August 23, 1917.*

I do not know whether you will consider the following incident worth recording. In the night of Tuesday last, August 23d-24th, there was an air-raid alarm in this town. The warning is only given by lights going out, and as I was already in bed I knew nothing of it until I went down to breakfast in the morning. Our night nurse was sitting up with my mother; she is very nervous, and in previous alarms and raids had been much frightened. However, this time, because we had had such an anxious time, she put a great compulsion on herself and did not call me, but she has been saying ever since that she cannot understand how she was able to do it—she did not seem to be herself at all. The effect on me was that I had a very vivid dream of a raid: I saw the Zeppelin (in my dream) and discussed with my brother whether it was our own or hostile; I saw the men prepare to drop a bomb, and saw (but did not hear) the bomb drop and explode. On that I awoke, and it was six-thirty A. M. Some bombs were dropped on villages near the Humber, I see by the papers. No remarks had been made about Zeppelins for a long time previously, and the general impression was that we had finished with them. In spite of being in innumerable alarms at Hull and here, I have never dreamt of an air-raid before.

M—— S. W——.

We then wrote to Miss W—— asking if she had related her dream to any one before she knew of the



raid and if a statement could be obtained from the nurse. We also asked whether there was any possibility that Miss W—— could have heard the bombs in her sleep. Miss W—— replied as follows:

*August 25, 1917.*

I will try and answer the questions in your letter.

Unfortunately I did not mention my dream before hearing of the alarm. I most probably should have done so, but I had no opportunity. On going down to breakfast about 8.20 I met Mrs. Mercer (the night nurse) on the stairs, and as soon as ever she saw me she said, "Do you know there has been an alarm in the night?" I replied, "That is curious, because I have had such a vivid dream of a raid"—or words to that effect. She was the first person I saw that morning. I enclose her statement.

*Saturday, August 25, 1917.*

Mrs. W——'s night nurse met Miss W—— on the stairs about 8.20 a. m. Wednesday morning, 22nd (August), saying: "There has been a raid" (to which she replied), "Well, I have been dreaming about a raid and Zepps and bombs dropping." I then said to Miss W——: "I would not call you or any one, until I heard the men coming to call up," feeling very cool and not nervous, very unusual for me.

A. MERCER.

The following is the official report of the raid, which appeared in the *Times* of August 23, 1917:

The following communiqué was issued by the Field-Marshal, Commander-in-Chief, Home Forces, yesterday (August 22), 11.15 a. m.:

Enemy airships—numbers not definitely ascertained

—appeared off the Yorkshire coast last night (August 21-22).

One of the raiders attacked the mouth of the Humber, and was fired on by anti-aircraft guns. She dropped some bombs and then made off to sea.

The damage so far reported is slight, but one man was injured.

4.10 p. m.

Latest reports show that, although a number of enemy airships approached the Yorkshire coast last night, only one, or at most two, ventured to come overland. Twelve high explosive and 13 incendiary bombs were dropped at three small villages near the coast; a chapel was wrecked and several small houses damaged. One man was injured.

Our correspondent in a Northeast Coast town telegraphs that after some months' immunity from raids a Zeppelin appeared on Tuesday night. One aged man was injured and was removed to the infirmary. At a seaside resort in the district there was an alarm, but no damage was done.

It will be seen from the above report that this was the first Zeppelin raid which had taken place for some time. Although it is possible that Miss W——'s dream was occasioned by her hearing and interpreting . . . in sleep the sound of the "relief-buzzer," this does not appear very probable, since she was not familiar with the sound, and her dream did not occur until nearly three hours after the relief signal was given.

Shortly afterwards we had a further communication from Miss W——, as follows:

*September 3, 1917.*

Last night (the night of September 2-3) I again had the same vivid dream of an air-raid as the one I re-

ported to you about 12 days ago. I saw the bomb drop, and saw, and this time also heard, it explode. When I awoke it was 4 A. M. A cousin was sharing my room, and when she awoke about 7.45, I told her of my dream; I had not been downstairs or seen any one else. We rather smiled to think of my having dreamt the dream on a night so unlikely, as we thought, for a raid. There was a brilliant moon and a high barometer. On getting into the town about 11 we saw the notice of the raid on the Kentish coast chalked outside the newspaper office. No one else heard any noise or explosion during the night.

M. S. W——.

A corroborative account was received from Miss W——'s cousin—A—— M. F——.

The following official report of the raid appeared in the *Times* of September 3, 1917:

The following communiqué, issued by the Field-Marshal, Commander-in-Chief, Home Forces, at 11.50 last night, was received at the Press Bureau at 1 o'clock this morning, and forwarded to the Press at 1.30:—

Hostile aeroplanes crossed the East Kent coast at about 11.15 tonight (September 2, 1917) and flew seawards a few minutes later.

A few bombs were dropped.

There is no detailed information as regards casualties, but they are believed to be small.

A message from the southeast coast early this morning reported that a single enemy aeroplane flew over the coast about midnight. The night was beautifully fine. The moon was full, and the wind had fallen somewhat. It is stated that six bombs were dropped, and that two persons were injured.



Another report gives the number of injured persons as five but they are not serious cases. The raid is described as having lasted a few minutes only.

This was the first of the "moonlight" raids which became so common in the latter part of September. The earlier Zeppelin raids—it will be remembered—usually took place on moonless nights. Miss W— had therefore no reason to expect a raid on that particular night, and since the raid was in Kent, it does not seem that she could have become aware of it during the night by any normal means.

In her original letter Miss W— states that these were the only occasions upon which she had dreamt of an air-raid. This statement she repeated on October 4, 1917, as follows:—

Yes, it is quite correct to say that I have never except on those two occasions dreamt of an air-raid, or of anything connected with one. I am always (except just that once) called up when there is an alarm at either York or Hull, so, of course, that diminished the opportunity of dreaming.

M. S. W—.

#### *An Accurate Premonition*

The following case is narrated in a contemporary publication:—

"An interesting case is that of a Pagham lady who dreamt she saw her son coming down the garden path with a coloured shirt on. He was walking in a curious way, in that he kept his left side turned from her, and that is what puzzled her about her dream.

"Very shortly afterwards her son arrived unexpectedly from France. He had been wounded in the

left side of his face and shoulder, and was wearing the coloured shirt of her dream, which she had never seen before, and indeed which he had only just bought two or three hours before.

“Very similar to this is the experience of a Northumberland lady named Dodd. In 1915 she received a card from her husband, who was in France, saying that he was ill, but that there was nothing to worry about. She fretted a good deal, as she felt sure he was keeping the worst from her, and making light of his illness, whatever it was. That same night she had a dream in which she thought she saw her husband at home hopping about on his right foot. In her dream she said to him, ‘I thought people could not sing when they had been gassed.’

“‘I have not been gassed, but my left foot is very sore,’ he replied.

“The next morning she related her dream to a neighbour, and to use her own words, they both thought ‘there was something in it.’ Curiously enough a letter soon afterwards arrived from her husband, to say that he was in a hospital in Liverpool, suffering from septic poisoning in the left ankle and foot.”

### *Saved by a Vision*

In many instances, the warnings seem to assume a semi-religious character, as in the following, where a “still, small voice” seemed to speak from within. This is particularly true after the emotional nature has been deeply stirred by some act of barbarism—of which, unfortunately, the present war offers too many examples.

In 1870 the German Army pillaged, murdered and

raped even as they do now. Only in 1870 the world would not believe what every French man and woman knew. The officer commanding the Prussians tried to outrage a nun, and she struck him dead at her feet, being prepared, as all women were, for the German. She died herself almost instantly after, preferring, in her proud fashion, death by her own hand to dishonour.

Then, as now, the German punished vicariously. Her youngest brother, a boy of fifteen, was brought to the side of the dead nun, told of her splendid crime, and shot. M. d'A——, then a prisoner of war at Mont Valerian, was sent for, and forced to bury his sister and brother in the little convent garden. On July 21, 1914, he was planting flowers on the grave, and looking up casually he saw beside him, standing hand in hand, the dead nun and his murdered brother. They stood regarding him at first seriously, and their lips moved—but he heard nothing. Then both smiled on him, and he thought they spoke the name of his elder son, who had just gone up for his service. Then something within him spoke distinctly and quietly for about five minutes, commanding him to go instantly to a certain friend of his, the commandant of a vitally important military centre, and tell him a certain thing concerning his wife, a very beautiful Alsatian lady, but of German parentage. M. d'A—— was overcome with horror at the prospect of delivering this message, and while he protested dumbly the vision passed. Madame had insisted on the message being delivered and had herself accompanied her husband to the Commandant. Instead of being furiously indignant, as they naturally expected, the Commandant was at first speechless, then questioned them closely till every word of the ghostly



communication was in writing. When it was finished he told them of a singular dream he had had, almost identical in detail with M. d'A——'s vision.

The sequel to this story is, the day before war was declared, the Commandant's wife disappeared and with her certain important papers. When she was found on the French frontier with these in her possession, she believed she had stolen the plans for the French mobilization. But, as her husband explained to her in the brief interval before she paid the penalty exacted by France for espionage in high places or low, these plans had not been sent to him, but to his subordinate, thanks to the warning conveyed by M. d'A——.

### *A Fulfilled Prevision*

In the following instance, the soldier's relative (aunt) seemingly had a premonition of her adopted son's safe return in health; it was accurately fulfilled. In this welter of tragedy, it is with pleasure that we are enabled to finish the chapter with a happy incident of this character.

"A soldier who took part in the Dardanelles fighting was an orphan, and had been brought up by his aunt, to whom he was deeply attached. He wrote regularly to her until one day she received a letter from the War Office, saying that he had been wounded and had a severe attack of dysentery as well.

"Just then the fighting in Gallipoli became exceptionally severe. No news was heard of him for several weeks. Nearly all his mates had been killed, until at last his aunt began to fear the worst, and gradually gave up all hope. She was nearly heart-broken, her affection for him was so great.

“One morning, however, she came down to breakfast cheerful and happy. Questioned by her daughter, who could not understand this sudden change from her recent gloom and sadness, she replied:

“‘I am happy because I know my boy is safe and well. I dreamt he came to my bedside last night, and said quite plainly, ‘Auntie, what are you fretting about? I’m quite all right.’ I saw him as clearly as I see you now, so I’m not going to worry any more.’”

“Curiously enough, the very next day she had a letter to say that her nephew was back in England, safe and well, though most of his pals had gone under. A few days later he came home on leave.

“‘I had no means of writing to you, but kept hoping and hoping that you wouldn’t fret about me,’ he said. ‘Perhaps the fact that I was constantly wishing this had something to do with your dream.’”

## CHAPTER VIII

### APPARITIONS AND DREAMS OF SOLDIERS

I HAVE previously pointed out the fact that apparitions, occurring at the moment of the death, are frequent; and that the value of some of these cases is very great, in proving that *something* leaves man, at or about the moment of death, which is capable of manifesting itself at great distances, and hence is separate or independent of the physical body. It would be possible to give a large number of cases of this character, but space forbids. The following will at least serve as illustrative. I will begin with a case which occurred soon after the outbreak of the present war, and is given in Rosa Stuart's *Dreams and Visions of the War*. It is as follows:—

#### *A Vision Coinciding With Death*

A very touching story was told me by a Bournemouth wife. Her husband, a sergeant in the Devons, went to France on July 25, 1915. She had received letters regularly from him, all of which were very happy and cheerful, and so she began to be quite reassured in her mind about him, feeling certain that whatsoever danger he had to face he would come safely through.

On the evening of September 25, 1915, at about ten o'clock, she was sitting on her bed in her room talking to another girl, who was sharing it with her. The



light was full on, and neither of them had as yet thought of getting into bed, so deep were they in their chat about the events of the day and the war.

And then suddenly there came a silence. The wife had broken off sharply in the middle of a sentence and sat there staring into space.

For, standing there before her in uniform, was her husband! For two or three minutes she remained there looking at him, and she was struck by the expression of sadness in his eye. Getting up quickly she advanced to the spot where he was standing, but by the time she had reached it the vision had disappeared.

Though only that morning the wife had had a letter saying her husband was safe and well, she felt sure that the vision foreboded evil. She was right. Soon afterwards she received a letter from the War Office, saying that he had been killed in the Battle of Loos on September 25, 1915, the very date she had seemed to see him stand beside her bed.

For the next case I am indebted to the kindness of Mrs. Marie Russak-Hotchner. She has called the case that of—

*Private Rex*

One of the most remarkable stories was told me recently by a lieutenant who had been invalided home in Canada, a man of fine family and unquestionable veracity. The names I shall use in the story are fictitious, but the real ones will be given privately if corroboration of the story is desired.

Lieut. Smith was stationed in No-man's-land, and one evening was taking some of his men from one place to another. They were marching along, very fatigued,

but undisturbed except from the usual dangers of distant shell fire.

Suddenly Lieut. Smith saw one of his men, Private Rex, begin to lag a little behind the rest, and judged that he might be ill. Watching him, he saw his pace continue to slacken until he was marching in line with himself. For a private to fall out and march beside his officer was, of course, unusual, and so the latter challenged the procedure. He asked the private if he were ill, but he replied in the negative; he asked if he were cold, but the private again said "No."

But Lieut. Smith clearly saw that something was wrong with the man, and he therefore stepped closer to him and asked him if he were hungry. The private replied, "A little." The officer had a package of malted milk tablets in his pocket, and gave him some. As he took them the officer noted that his hand was icy cold and that he was very pale.

Just at that moment Lieut. Smith's attention was diverted by the necessity of giving some commands to his men and of walking to another position. When he returned to his former place, he observed that Private Rex was no longer there, but as there had not been time for him to return to his own squad, the officer thought he might have fallen because ill, or possibly because wishing to desert. So he halted the regiment, and went back some distance to look for the missing man. Thinking there was some trouble, a junior officer came running to Lieut. Smith to give him assistance. The latter told him how Private Rex had fallen out of his place, seeming to be ill, accepted the food tablets, and then suddenly disappeared, and the officer suggested that a search should be made for him.

The junior officer, in great astonishment, replied

that there must be some mistake, as Private Rex had been killed in battle and he had attended the burial three days previously. He also reminded Lieut. Smith that he also had been present. The lieutenant then recalled the fact which, because of the stress of subsequent fighting and of the death of so many others, he had momentarily forgotten.

But Lieut. Smith told the second officer, as he repeated emphatically to me, that he had certainly seen, talked to, and touched Private Rex that evening; that it was Private Rex, and no other, who walked beside him; that he knew him well, and that it was truly his icy hand into which he placed the tablet of food, and his pale face into which he had looked as he asked him the questions about his health.

Lieut. Smith said that it was quite a common occurrence for men in the war zone to see the ghosts of their comrades who had been killed. And he added, "It takes away all fear of death, for I know that Private Rex lives, though dead."

The following group of cases are from the *Journal* of the English Society for Psychological Research, and, it will be seen, are very well authenticated. They are (usually) preceded by editorial remarks by the editor, Mrs. Salter. The first case was published in the *Journal* for May-June, 1917. This is the incident:—

### *A Dream Vision*

March 15, 1917.

My son, Lieut. A—— L—— J——, of the 1st King's Shropshire L. I., was killed at daybreak on Saturday, April 22nd, 1916.



At daybreak on the next morning, Easter Sunday, about 24 hours after his death took place, when I was lying half awake and half asleep, I had the vision or dream, an account of which follows.

I saw two soldiers in khaki, standing beside a pile of clothing and accoutrements which, in some way, I knew to be Alec's, and my first feeling was one of anger and annoyance that they should be meddling with his things, for they were apparently looking through them and arranging them. Then one of them took up a khaki shirt which was wrapped around something so as to form a kind of roll. He took hold of one end of it and let the rest drop so as it unrolled itself and a pair of heavy, extremely muddy boots fell out and banged heavily on the floor, and something else fell which made a metallic jingle. I thought "That is his revolver," but immediately afterwards thought "No, it is too light to be his revolver, which would have made more of a clang."

As these things fell out on to the floor the two men laughed, but a sad wistful kind of laugh with no semblance of mirth in it. And then the words, "Alec is dead and they are going through his kit," were most clearly borne in on my mind. They were not spoken and I heard no voice, but they were just as clear as if I had done so. And then I became fully awake, these words repeating themselves in my mind and with the fullest conviction of their truth which I never lost. I suppose I still tried to persuade myself that it might not be true, but it was useless and when the official telegram arrived it only confirmed what I already knew.

G—— J——.

In a letter of the same date, March 15, 1917, Dr. J—— adds the following comments on his statement:

. . . Two points have to be borne in mind in estimating the importance of the dream as an intimation of my son's death and not as a mere coincidence.

(1) He went out to the front in October, 1914, and was there continuously (with three short leaves) until his death on April 22, 1916—Easter Saturday. During these eighteen months I never had any dream or any impression of his being in serious danger, although I often knew that he was in the midst of hard fighting and he was wounded in three places in August, 1915, at Hooge.

(2) At the time when I had the dream I was under the impression that his battalion was resting and that they would not be in the fighting line until the middle of the week. Hence my mind was quite easy about him and I was not feeling at all anxious. In the ordinary course of events they were not due in the trenches until the Wednesday, but they were unexpectedly called upon on the evening of Good Friday to move up at once to recapture a trench which had been taken by the Germans some days before. It was after having accomplished this, and whilst the position was being consolidated, that he was killed.

I had never in my life had any dream so vivid as this one was, and when I saw in the Sunday papers that his battalion had accomplished this "fine feat," as they called it, I had no doubt whatever that my boy was dead. When the official telegram came on Wednesday I felt that it was hardly necessary to open it. . . .

I shall always think (as a nephew does to whom I told my dream on Sunday afternoon) that this vision

was Alec's way of letting me know what had happened.

A minor point that may be worth noticing is that when I heard the metallic clink when the shirt unrolled and let its contents fall on the floor, I at first thought "That is his revolver," but then immediately thought the noise was too "jingly" to be made by the fall of a heavy Colt such as he had. When his things came home, however, I found that instead of a heavy Colt he had a light automatic pistol which, in falling, would have made exactly such a sound as I heard.

I do not suppose that his kit was actually being gone through at the time of my dream, nor do I think that it makes much difference whether it was so or not. But the regimental surgeon (since killed himself) who came to see me early in June told me that he believed that they really were going through Alec's things about the time of my dream.

G—— J——.

In a subsequent letter he writes:

*March 25, 1917.*

. . . The only person whom I told the dream to, before the arrival of the War Office telegram, was my nephew who was here on Sunday, the 23rd April (1916).

I enclose the letter which he sent me when he had definite news of Alec's death.

I also enclose a copy of part of a letter which the regimental surgeon (since killed) wrote to his father. I do this in order to show the conditions under which the attack was made, especially as to mud.

One does not want to read too much into such an experience, but I have often thought that what I saw had a certain amount of symbolism in it. The fact that



the boots which fell out of the rolled-up shirt were so exceedingly muddy, and that the other thing which dropped out was, as I at first thought, his revolver, point to the terribly muddy condition of the attack, and to the fact that it was an attack, for otherwise the revolver would not have been carried. But this is a minor point.

G—— J——.

The letter of Dr. J——'s nephew, Mr. N. C. R——, to which reference is made above, began as follows:

*May 4, 1916.*

I hear Alec has died at Ypres. Your dream has come true. Alec appears to have been trying to let you know. . . .

N. C. R——.

The reference in the above letter to Dr. J——'s dream implies that Mr. R—— had heard of it before he heard of Lieut. J——'s death, but we asked also for an independent statement from Mr. R—— that Dr. J—— had related his dream to him on the day on which it occurred, April 23, 1916, before Dr. J—— himself knew of its verification. In reply Mr. R—— wrote as follows:

*April 3, 1917.*

I have been asked by my uncle, Dr. G—— J——, to send you a statement to the effect that he told me of the dream or vision which he had of his son's death before actual confirmation.

This I can do.

I was spending the afternoon of Easter Sunday last year (April 23, 1916) at his house, and while at tea he

came in from paying a professional visit somewhere.

After tea he spoke to me of his dream. I regret to say I cannot remember all he said, but I do recollect his saying he saw two officers looking over and packing his son's kit. He was angry at their meddling, but it suddenly dawned upon him that his son was dead. Whether A—— J—— appeared in the dream I forget.

Some days afterwards I heard that A—— J—— was dead, confirmation having reached him, Dr. J——, on a date after the 23rd April.

N. C. R——.

As regards the circumstances under which Lieut. J—— lost his life we print below extracts from the letter to which Dr. J—— refers on March 25, written by the regimental surgeon:

*April 27, 1916.*

. . . You will have seen by the papers about the gallant attack the Btn. made the other night to retake some trenches lost by another Btn. It was as the Army Commander said, "A magnificent feat of arms," and you can guess what the higher command thought of it when they honoured the regiment by mentioning them by name—an honour which has only been paid twice all the time out here. Unless one is on the spot, though, one could not realize the conditions under which the attack was made or the apparently hopeless job it seemed. I don't think any other Btn. could have done it. The mud, to take one point only, was so deep that the men had to throw themselves down and crawl—putting their rifles and bombs ahead a few feet and then struggling up to them. Of course the rifles were so covered with mud that they could not shoot, so the men just struggled on until they could use the bayonet.

We had men utterly engulfed in the mud and suffocated. It was a glorious achievement, and the cost was heavy. . . . J——— who used to write "At the Front" in *Punch*—was shot through the heart gallantly superintending his company consolidating the captured position. As dawn broke he was so busy with so much to see to, that he would not take cover, but kept walking from end to end of the trench over the top to save time. He was picked off by a sniper.

T. I.

In a letter to Dr. J—— from one of Lieut. J——'s fellow-officers, giving an account of his death, the muddy condition of the ground is again emphasized. He writes:

May 7, 1916.

. . . As you know the conditions were simply awful. Pitch dark, and wading up to our waists in mud. . . .

It appears from the evidence given above that at the time when Dr. J—— had the dream which he regarded as an intimation of his son's death, Lieut. J—— had been dead about twenty-four hours. It is a strong point in favour of the assumption that some other factor than chance-coincidence was involved, that during the year and a half that his son had been at the front Dr. J—— had had no other similar impression about him, and that on April 23, 1916, he had reason to believe that Lieut. J—— was temporarily out of danger.

If it is the fact that Lieut. J——'s kit was being examined about the time of Dr. J——'s dream, it may be that he received an impression of an actual scene which took place. But it seems more probable, as he suggests, that the dream was a piece of symbolic



imagery representing the fact, telepathically conveyed to him, that his son had been killed in the attack on the previous day.

We are indebted to Dr. J—— for the trouble he has taken in providing us with evidence for which we asked.

### *Another Dream Vision*

The next case was published in the *S. P. R. Journal*, July, 1916. The editor writes:—

The following case was first brought to our notice by a paragraph in the daily press on June 6, 1916, in which it was stated that:

The sister of Seaman George William M——, of Peterborough, one of the men who went down with the *Queen Mary*, had a realistic dream last Wednesday (the day the *Queen Mary* was lost). She was lying ill in bed when she thought that her brother came to her bedside, and although she spoke to him repeatedly he would not answer. He appeared quite well and happy.

Subsequently, in reply to enquiries, we received the following account from the percipient, Mrs. B——:

*June 19, 1916.*

. . . In reference to my dream—as it was published in the papers, but it was not a dream, it was a vision. I was very ill at the time. It was the afternoon of the day of the battle that I saw my brother. I was taken worse and thought I was going to die. I was with my brother on his ship and thought he was so happy and singing, and then it changed and he was at home on leave. I thought I repeatedly spoke to him each time but he did not speak to me. I knew I was ill, and thought he would not speak to me because I was dis-

figured. I asked my mother if he had gone back and she said he had not been home. I said I knew he had, it seemed so real. I was very much upset because he would not speak to me. I did not hear of the sinking of the *Queen Mary* until a week after, as I was too ill for my mother to tell me. . . . It would be just about the time when the ship went down that I saw my brother, as it was late in the afternoon on Wednesday, May 31.

F. B——.

On June 29, 1916, the Secretary of the S. P. R. went to Peterborough and called upon Mrs. B—— and her mother, Mrs. M——, who kindly answered all the questions she put to them. Their evidence, as noted, summarized by the Secretary at the time, and confirmed by their signatures, was as follows:

On May 31 Mrs. B—— was suffering from erysipelas, and had been ill from the previous Friday. About 5 o'clock in the afternoon she "felt something snap inside her, and part of herself seemed to have gone out of her; she thought she was dying." Then she seemed to be on a ship, or very near it; she could see the sailors moving about, and heard them singing; they were very happy. She spoke to her brother on the ship; he wouldn't answer. She called for a scarf he had given her, so that she could hide her face, as she was disfigured. Then the scene changed, she was at home, her brother was at home, she spoke to him, but he wouldn't answer. She cried, thinking it was because she was disfigured. The vision went. She was still very much upset because he wouldn't speak to her. She asked her mother if her brother had gone back.

She had never had a vision or a dream of this kind before.

(Signed) F—— E—— B——

June 29, 1916.

Mrs. M—— said her daughter had been "light-headed on and off" during her illness, but that at the time of the vision she seemed "listless and blank."

The news of the Naval Battle, including the announcement of the loss of H. M. S. *Queen Mary*, was published on Saturday morning, June 3, 1916. In the casualty list, which appeared a few days later (our reference is the *Daily Telegraph*, June 8), the name of G. W. M——, A.B., was included in the crew of the *Queen Mary*.

It is stated in Admiral Sir John Jellicoe's despatch on the battle published in the press, July 7, 1916, that the action began at 3.8 P. M. (Greenwich mean time) on May 31; and, in the various reports by observers, that the *Queen Mary* sank soon afterwards. In an article in the *Daily Telegraph* on June 6, Mr. Hurd, indicating approximately the course which the battle took, says:

Quite early in the action the *Queen Mary*, by an unfortunate mischance, or good German gunnery, was hit, and sank in a few minutes. . . . It should be emphasized that this misfortune occurred almost immediately after the action opened.

Thus, it will be observed that the coincidence in time between the hallucination, which occurred about 5 P. M., summer time, and the death of Seaman G. W. M——, which occurred soon after 4.48, summer time, was very close.



It is chiefly owing to this coincidence in time that we print the case, contrary to our practice of excluding hallucinations occurring during illness where delirium is present. The evidence is further strengthened by the following considerations: (1) the hallucination seems to have been the only one which assumed definite form during the illness; (2) it was certainly the only one described by the percipient during this time; and (3) it was unique in her experience.

These points will be apparent from the evidence on the medical aspect of the case, kindly contributed, in answer to our enquiries, by Dr. H. L——, of Peterborough, who was attending the percipient. The questions which were put to him are given below in square brackets:

[How long was the percipient delirious and was the delirium intermittent?]

From Monday night, May 29, until the end of the week. Yes; she appeared to ramble and say "queer things" (the mother's report to me) only at night. In the morning or afternoon when I saw her she seemed clear in her mind.

[Was this particular hallucination described to you before the news of the Naval Battle on May 31 was known to the public?]

I cannot fix the day, but I can say positively that I was told of it, both by Mrs. M—— and Mrs. B——, long before the latter had any information of the Naval Battle or the death of young M——. Mrs. B—— did not know anything about the Naval Battle, etc., until a full week after it had occurred, as I gave strict orders that she was not to be told. About a week after the Battle, say Wednesday, June 7, she picked up a paper within her reach and saw the list of officers

and men on the *Queen Mary*. It was many days before this that I was informed of the vision, both by the mother and Mrs B——.

Later, Dr. L—— wrote as follows:

June 15, 1916.

My distinct impression is that the hallucination was mentioned to Mrs. M—— before the Naval Battle was known of. But I really cannot fix the date when it was told to me. All I can say is that, when I was told of the hallucination, I questioned Mrs. B——, and she told me quite simply that she had seen her brother on the deck of his ship, that he looked quite as usual, but never spoke a word. She told me this many days before she knew of the Battle, but I cannot fix the date.

[Were any other hallucinations described to you during the illness? And have you heard of any experiences of the same kind that Mrs. B—— ever had?]

No, only that she said such "queer things."

I am quite sure that neither Mrs. M—— nor Mrs. B—— have ever had any other previous experience of the kind. They took no interest in the subject when I was first informed of it, which was early, and long before anything appeared in the papers.

(Signed) H. L——, M. B. (Edin.), etc.

### *A Curious Apparition*

The next incident appeared in the *Journal*, February-March, 1917. Editorially, Mrs. Salter writes:—

We print below a report of an apparition seen by Mrs. S. J——, living at Enfield, Gateshead, of her son-in-law, Lieut. G. E. B——, Durham Light Infantry, shortly after he had been wounded in France, but before any news of his being wounded had reached his family.

It will be observed that Mrs. J—— did not mention her experience to any one until after she knew of its veridical character but we have been able by means of certain corroborative evidence to establish a very strong probability that Mrs. J——'s recollection of what took place is substantially accurate. Under these circumstances we feel justified in putting the case on record, all the more that it presents one curious feature which will interest all who concern themselves with the psychological peculiarities of these phenomena.

Our earliest information was contained in a letter from Lieut. B——, as follows:

*November 2, 1916.*

The following presents an unusual feature to me—but possibly you can explain it.

My age is 34.

I was wounded in France July 24th, 1916, 3.30 p. m.

Between 1 and 2 a. m., July 26th, 1916, I appeared to Mrs. S. J—— (my wife's mother) at this address, waking her from sleep.

The physical appearance corresponded with that of a photo taken when I was three years old—the head was bandaged, showing only forehead, eyes, nose, mouth, and a little of the chin.

Except for the age and apparent height (only head was seen clearly)—this was the condition I was in, and I was in a hospital at Boulogne—to the best of my recollection asleep, and of course with 2 days' growth of beard.

The apparition was taken for my son "in the flesh" at first and was asked what was the matter. Mrs. J—— then recognized me—I smiled and vanished.



The War Office telegram announcing the casualty was received at 9 p. m., July 26th.

Mrs. J—— did not know me until I was about 19— at which time and ever since I have had a small moustache—and she always thinks of me as grown up— never as a child. In these circumstances, can you explain why I should appear as a child and not in my most easily recognizable form?

That I appeared to Mrs. J—— I can understand as she is more psychic than my wife.

E. M. J——.

In reply to this letter we wrote to Lieut. B—— asking for a detailed report by Mrs. J—— herself and a corroborative statement, if obtainable, from some person to whom she had related her experience before the news came that Lieut. B—— was wounded. We received an answer from Mrs. B—— as follows:

*November 5, 1916.*

My husband has just returned to duty. . . . I enclose a full account written by Mrs. J——, of her experience of July 26th. This corresponds with her description to me on August 5th.

I see that it is unfortunate, from the point of view of "evidence," that she told no one before this date. I can only say that as far as we ourselves are concerned, this makes no difference, as we do not admit the possibility of her altering the facts, even involuntarily. She is particularly clear-headed and well-balanced, and when relating one or two similar experiences, I have never known her to vary in the accounts in the slightest degree.

I am not surprised that my husband should appear

to her,—they have often discussed such things, and are much in sympathy—though the “least-familiar” form has puzzled us all. . . .

MARGARET E. B——.

(Statement by Mrs. J——, enclosed in Mrs. B——’s letter of November 5, 1916.)

During the early morning of Wednesday, July 26th, 1916, I woke from sleep, with the idea that some one was in my room. I opened my eyes to absolute darkness, but at the right side of my bed stood a misty figure, which I at first took for my little grandson, and I asked him why he was there. No answer came, but the face became more distinct, and I saw it resembled a photograph of my son-in-law, taken when he was about three years old. In the photograph one can see short curls, but in my vision the lower part of the forehead, eyebrows, eyes, nose, mouth and part of chin and neck were hidden by white wrappings. As I looked and wondered, the mouth expanded into a smile, and the appearance vanished, the room being still in darkness. My grandson had not been quite well the previous day, and my first thought was to go and see if he were worse, but as I knew his mother had settled to sleep in his room, I decided not to risk alarming her.

I did not mention the occurrence to any one, as we only had servants in the house, and naturally I did not want to say anything to my daughter at once. I made up my mind to wait until she had had a letter from her husband of later date than July 26th, and then tell her how anxious I had felt.

The W. O. wire came on the evening of July 26th, and in the rush and hurry of her departure I had no

chance to tell her until she came home on August 5th for a couple of nights, leaving her husband in the hospital. When I described what I had seen, she told me that his head and neck were bandaged in that way.

I could understand his appearing to me as he looks normally, as we had been great friends, and I have made my home with them for some years. The puzzle is why he should appear to me as a young child.

E—— M. J——.

For the next cases I am indebted to M. Flammarion.

### *A Dream Vision*

“It was during the great war, my fiancé was a soldier in the Army of the Rhine—if I do not mistake—and for a long time we had had no news of him. During the night of the 23d of August I had a singular dream which tormented me, but to which I did not attach much importance. I found myself in a hospital ward, in the midst of which was a kind of a table on which my fiancé was lying. His right arm was bare, and a severe wound could be seen near the right shoulder; two physicians, a Sister of Charity, and myself were near him. All at once he looked at me with his large eyes, and said to me: ‘Do you still love me?’ Some days later I learned from the mother of my fiancé that he had been mortally wounded in the right shoulder, and that he had died on the 23d of August. A Sister of Charity who had nursed him was the first person to tell us of his death. The impression is still as vivid in my mind as though I had dreamed it only yesterday.”



*A Vision of Death*

“My uncle was sergeant in the Second Regiment of Infantry when war was declared. He fought in the first battles, was taken prisoner to Mayence, and thence to Torgau, where he remained nine or ten months.

“On Low Sunday, one of his comrades invited him to go into town in the afternoon. He preferred to remain in camp in his casemate, saying to his friend that he was not in good spirits, but not knowing himself what his sadness could be attributed to. Being left alone, or almost alone, he threw himself, entirely dressed, upon his bed, and slept profoundly. As soon as he was asleep it seemed to him that he was in his father’s house, and that his mother was dying on a bed. He saw his aunts caring for his mother until she died, about three o’clock. Then he awoke, and found that it had been only a dream.

“When his friend returned at six o’clock in the evening he told him what he had seen during his sleep, and he added: ‘I am convinced that my mother died today about three o’clock.’

“He was laughed at for this idea, but a letter received from his brother confirmed the sad news.

“I think I ought to add that the dead woman was in a dying state about three o’clock.”

*Apparition Seen by a Child*

“On May 31, my eldest son, who had enlisted as a volunteer six months before, at Valence, in the First Hussars, was taking part in the military manœuvres in the country, which were shared in by his regiment. Being the foremost man of the advance guard, he was riding slowly, observing the country occupied by the

enemy, when suddenly, out of an ambush formed on the edge of a narrow part of the road, came a shot which struck my unhappy son full in the breast. His death was almost immediate.

“The involuntary author of this fatal accident, seeing his comrade drop his reins and fall forward on the neck of his horse, rushed forward to help him, and he heard the words the dying man uttered with his last sigh: ‘You have done me an ill turn; . . . but I forgive you. . . . For God and our country always! . . . Present!’ . . . and so he died.

“Now, this same day, May 13, about half past nine in the evening, while my wife was bustling about her household affairs, our little girl, then about two-and-a-half years old, came up to her mother and said, in her baby-talk: ‘Mamma, look godpapa’ (my eldest was his sister’s god-father); ‘see mamma—see godpapa! I am playing with him!’

“‘Yes, yes, my darling, play away,’ said her mother, busy and attaching no importance to the words of the child.

“But the little thing, hurt by her mother’s indifference, insisted on attracting her attention, and went on: ‘But, mamma, come and look at godpapa. . . . Look at him—there he is! Oh, how smartly he is dressed!’

“Then my wife remarked that as the child spoke she became, so to speak, transfigured. She was excited by this at first, but soon forgot what had passed. It lasted only a few moments, and it was not until two or three days later that she remembered these details.

“A little before noon we received a telegram telling us of the terrible accident which had befallen our beloved son, and subsequently I learned that his death took place almost at eight o’clock.”

*Vision Coinciding With Death*

“Mezieres, my native village, had been destroyed by a bombardment which lasted only thirty-six hours, but made many victims. Among these was the little daughter of our landlord, who was cruelly wounded. She was eleven or twelve years of age. At that time I was fifteen, and very often played with Leontine—that was her name.

“About the beginning of March I went to pass a few days at Domchery. Before I left home I knew that the poor little thing could never get better, but change of place and boyish carelessness made me forget by degrees the sorrows I had witnessed and the terrible scenes I had been through. I slept by myself in a long narrow room, the window of which looked out into the country. One evening, when I had gone to bed as usual at nine o'clock, I could not sleep, which was something remarkable, for as soon as dinner was over I could usually have slept standing. The moon was full and very bright. It lit up the garden and threw a strong ray of light into my chamber.

“As I could not go to sleep I listened to the town clock striking the hours, which seemed to me very long. I gazed steadily at the window, which was just opposite my bed, and at half-past twelve I thought I saw a ray of moonshine moving slightly, then a shadowy, luminous form floated past, at first like a great white robe, then it took a bodily shape, and, coming up to my bed, stood there smiling at me. I uttered a cry of ‘Leontine!’ Then the bright shade, gliding as before, disappeared from the foot of my bed.

“Some days later I went home, and before any one had spoken to me of Leontine, I told them my vision.



On the day and in the hour when she appeared to me the poor child had died.”

The following case is from *The Unknown*. We may call it—

*Physical Phenomena at Death*

“My grandparents lived on a country place at Saint Meurice, near Rochelle.

“My father, the eldest of his family, had been a sub-lieutenant in Algeria, where he had passed ten years of danger and fatigue in the first years of the conquest.

“Enthusiasm for danger, and the spirit roused by the accounts contained in his letters, inspired his brother Camille with a wish to join him. He disembarked at Algiers, as a non-commissioned officer, in April, soon after joined my father at Oran, and took part in an expedition against Abd-el-Kader at the end of June.

“The French were obliged to retreat on Arzew, and lost many men in crossing the swamps of Macta. My uncle received three gun-shot wounds, though not severe ones. But in a bivouac, a French soldier cleaning his gun let it go off, and his ball struck my uncle in the thigh. He had to submit to an operation. When it was over he died of a spasmodic seizure.

“Communication in those days was slow with Algeria, and my grandmother had heard none of these things. According to a very common fashion at this period, she had on the chimney-piece of her reception-room, *au premier*, a very handsome coffee-set of porcelain, arranged for ornament.

“Suddenly, in broad daylight, there was a tremendous crash in the room.

“My grandmother and her maid rushed up, and

great was their astonishment at the spectacle that awaited them. All the pieces that composed the coffee-service lay in fragments on the floor in a heap on one side of the chimney, as if they had been swept up in that direction. My grandmother was terrified, and felt sure that some misfortune was at hand.

“The room was carefully searched, but none of the suggestions made to my grandmother, in hopes of reassuring her, seemed to her admissible—a gust of wind, a rush of rats, or a cat shut up in the room by some mischance, etc. . . . The apartment had been completely closed, so that there could have been no current of air. Neither cat nor rats would have broken the china, and then gathered into one heap on the floor the fragments of a service that had been set out all along the chimney-piece.

“There was no one in the house but my grandfather, grandmother, and their maid.

“The first post from Africa brought news to my grandparents of the death of their son, which happened on the very day the coffee-set was broken.”

The following incident was widely commented upon, soon after its publication. It appeared, I believe, in one form or another in several British papers; but I take the account from Stuart's *Dreams and Visions of the War*, as there given:—

### *An Apparition in the Trenches*

“The Colonel of a well-known regiment that had been in the thick of the fighting ever since the commencement of the war, was simply idolized by the men who fought under him, and there was great grief

amongst them when he was so badly wounded that he had to give up his command in France, a grenade having deprived him of an arm.

“After a few months at home the Colonel, who had meanwhile been fitted with an artificial arm, thought he was well enough to rejoin his regiment. But he was told that this was impossible, and the command of a garrison battalion leaving for the Dardanelles was offered him instead.

“Being a man of action he accepted this new command rather than remain idle, and so, though his heart was with his old regiment in Flanders, he set out for Lemnos to take up his new post there.

“But before very long he contracted a severe attack of dysentery, and once more had to be invalided home. He reached England all right; but in the hospital train on his way to London he breathed his last.

“And now comes the curious part of the story. At the very moment of his death in the hospital train, the Colonel appeared to his old regiment in the trenches in Flanders, in broad daylight, when every man was at his post.

“‘Why, here’s Colonel ——! I didn’t know he was back,’ remarked the Company Sergeant-Major to the Company Commander, as he pointed out the well-known figure of their old chief, standing there before them. The Company Commander sprang forward to greet him, but before he reached his side the apparition had disappeared.

“And the Colonel was not only seen by these two, but by nearly all his men, who speak with bated breath of their experience to this day.

“For at the time he appeared to them in the trenches in Flanders they had thought he was still at Lemnos;



though when they realized the nature of the apparition they were filled with misgivings. These misgivings were only too well confirmed a week later, when the mail arrived bringing the news of his death.”

*A Fallen Soldier Returns*

The following case was published in the *Harbinger of Light*, November, 1916:—

St. Matthew's, Albury,  
Sept. 20, 1916.

*Sir:*—

I had to convey the news of the death of a soldier in France to his parents here only last night. As I expected, it was a most painful duty. The mother was half demented, and one of the deceased soldier's sisters went into a succession of fainting fits. I mention this, which is common enough these dreadful times, to emphasize the comparative equanimity of the father, which was obvious, almost at once, though, we could see, he was greatly moved.

Later on he said to me, “I knew it, Sir, before you came in!”

When he had time to speak he told me he saw his son about a fortnight ago. He had been thinking of the lad, and could not sleep. Towards morning he got up, and after putting on some clothing he went to the door leading on to the veranda, and, lifting the latch, looked out. The sky was just paling before sunrise, and in the dim light he saw his son quite plainly—he was in uniform, was not facing his father directly, but turned away, and was looking at the latter over his shoulder and smiling.

“Just like he always did—he was always smiling

some way!" I quote the father's words. He laid stress on the smile, which was evidently a habit of his son's, and marked his identity. After telling me this, he called another son who was looking after his mother, and asked the former to tell me the story in corroboration, which he did, stating that his father told the family the same day that he had seen his son, and that they might expect a letter next mail. This he said, lest they should be anxious, though in his own mind the father told me he concluded his son had passed.

I only note that the family are ordinary labouring class—very respectable people, earning good wages and comfortably situated, not at all very religious or sentimental, but evidently very united and affectionate. The father is about forty-five years of age, and there are several children.

I had not much time to enquire about details, as my mission as comforter took precedence of all else; but though I cannot, without their permission, mention the name of the bereaved family, you are at perfect liberty to use my name and this communication for any purpose you think best.

Faithfully yours,

F. BEVAN,  
(Rector and Canon).

### *Sympathy Between Twins*

There is a popular belief that between twins there exists at times an affinity which surpasses the normal. The following experience of twin brothers, while both were engaged in serving their country, would seem to indicate that there are grounds for this belief.

A certain corporal, who was with his regiment at

a home station, had been very anxious for some time about his twin brother who was fighting in France. He had not heard from him for some weeks, and as he had been a fairly regular correspondent, this worried him a great deal.

One night he was awakened from a deep sleep by the sound of his name being spoken; he sat up in bed and listened, but the call was not repeated.

And then, as he looked across the room, in the semi-darkness he saw quite plainly his brother sitting on his trunk, which was near the door. Too surprised to pause to reason how he could have got there, the corporal jumped quickly out of bed to greet him, but as he approached the spot the apparition had vanished. All the rest of the night he tossed and turned in his bed, for he could not sleep. He had the feeling that his brother was in danger. Next morning he related his experience to his landlady, and also mentioned it to his mother when he wrote home. As at the time he was suffering from dyspepsia and overstrain his friends put the vision down to "nerves." They were of very different opinion, however, when a few days later the corporal received a field postcard from his brother, stating that he had been wounded at the Battle of Loos, at the very hour when he had seemed to see him sitting on the box in his room.

The following incident was published in the January, 1918, number of the *Psychical Research Review*, and is somewhat different from the usual type of story of this character,—inasmuch as the soldier apparently appeared to a dying sister, while he himself was alive and well, though asleep, in France. The name and



address of the communicator, though not published here, is known to me. I have called it:

### *A Soldier Returns*

In her country home surrounded by loving ones a young woman lay dying of that dread disease, *consumption*. Her eldest brother had enlisted when the first call for soldiers had come and was now "Somewhere in France." When he left home she had been indisposed but no one thought that in a few short weeks her young life would be ended. But the progress of the disease was rapid and she was soon near the gates of eternity.

During her entire illness she had almost daily expressed a desire that she might be able to see her brother once more, but it seemed that her wish was to be denied. And yet on this beautiful Autumn morning she surprised her parents by stating that during the night her brother had come to her and that she was now ready to go.

Those who were gathered around her bed tried to tell her she had evidently dreamed he was there. But to them she replied, "No, I did not dream it. I was not asleep but as wide awake as I am now. I saw him plainly, in his soldier clothes, as he stood by my bed. To me he said, 'I knew you wanted me, Sis, so I have come. I cannot stay long. I must soon return. Do not fear, some day we'll be together forever. There will be no seas to separate us then. Until that time, Good-bye,' " and he faded away.

A few hours later and her form was stilled forever. Who shall say she did not see him? Perhaps by some means as yet unknown to science, she was enabled

to see what we shall call, for lack of a better name, *The Shadow Form* of her brother and hear his voice, when other eyes were blind to the vision and other ears deaf to his voice. Who knows?

### *A Remarkable Apparition*

The next incident is given by Mr. R. D. Owen; and though it is older than those just quoted, is well worth publication, because of the excellence of the evidence it presents. Mr. Owen writes:—

“For the following narrative I am indebted to the kindness of London friends. Of the good faith of the narrators there cannot be a doubt.

“In the month of September, Captain G. W., of the 6th Dragoon Guards, went out to India to join his regiment. His wife remained in England, residing at Cambridge. On the night between the 14th and the 15th of November, towards morning, she dreamed that she saw her husband, looking anxious and ill, upon which she immediately awoke, much agitated. It was bright moonlight; and looking up, she perceived the same figure standing by her bedside. He appeared in his uniform, the hands pressed across the breast, the hair dishevelled, the face very pale. His large dark eyes were fixed full upon her; their expression was that of great excitement, and there was a peculiar contraction of the mouth, habitual to him when he was agitated. She saw him, even to each minute particular of his dress, as distinctly as she had ever done in her life; and she remembers to have noticed between his hands the white of the shirt-bosom, unstained, however, with blood. The figure seemed to bend forward, as if in pain, and to make an effort to speak; but there

was no sound. It remained visible, the wife thinks, as long as a minute, and then disappeared.

“Her first idea was to ascertain if she was actually awake. She rubbed her eyes with the sheet, and felt that the touch was real. Her little nephew was in bed with her: she bent over the sleeping child, and listened to its breathing; the sound was distinct; and she became convinced that what she had seen was no dream. It need hardly be added that she did not go to sleep again that night.

“Next morning she related all this to her mother, expressing her conviction, though she had noticed no marks of blood on his dress, that Captain W. was either killed or grievously wounded. So fully impressed was she with the reality of the apparition that she thenceforth refused all invitations. A young friend urged her, soon afterwards, to go to a fashionable concert, reminding her that she had received from Malta, sent by her husband, a handsome dress cloak, which she had never yet worn. But she positively declined, declaring that, uncertain that she was not already a widow, she would never enter a place of amusement until she had letters from her husband (if, indeed he still lived) of later date than the 14th of November.

“It was on a Tuesday, in the month of December, that the telegram regarding the actual fate of Captain W. was published in London. It was to the effect that he was killed . . . on the fifteenth of November.

“This news, given in the morning paper, attracted the attention of Mr. Wilkinson, a London solicitor, who had in charge Captain W.’s affairs. When, at a later period, this gentleman met the widow, she informed him that she had been quite prepared for the melancholy news, but that she felt sure that her hus-



band could not have been killed on the 15th of November, inasmuch as it was during the night between the 14th and 15th that he appeared to her.\*

“The certificate from the War Office, however, which it became Mr. Wilkinson’s duty to obtain, confirmed the date given in the telegram, its tenor being as follows:—

“ ‘WAR OFFICE.

*January 30th.*

“ ‘These are to certify that it appears, by the records in this office, that Captain G. W., of the 6th Dragoon Guards (a mistake, as Mr. Dale Owen points out, for 6th Inniskilling Dragoons), was killed in action November 15th.

(Signed) “ ‘B. HAWES.’

“While Mr. Wilkinson’s mind remained in uncertainty as to the exact date, a remarkable incident occurred, which seemed to cast further suspicion on the accuracy of the telegram and of the certificate. That gentleman was visiting a friend, whose lady had all her life had perception of apparitions, while her husband is what is usually called an impressible medium; facts which are known, however, only to their intimate friends. Though personally acquainted with them, I am not at liberty to give their names. Let us call them Mr. and Mrs. N.

\* The difference of longitude between London and Lucknow being about five hours, 3 or 4 o’clock a.m. in London would be 8 or 9 o’clock a.m. at Lucknow. But it was in the afternoon, not in the morning, as will be seen in the sequel, that Captain W. was killed. Had he fallen on the 15th, therefore, the apparition to his wife would have appeared several hours before the engagement in which he fell, and while he was yet alive and well.

“Mr. Wilkinson related to them, as a wonderful circumstance, the vision of the Captain’s widow in connection with his death, and described the figure as it had appeared to her. Mrs. N. turning to her husband instantly said:—

“ ‘That must be the very person I saw the evening we were talking of India, and you drew an elephant with a howdah on his back. Mr. Wilkinson has described his exact position and appearance; the uniform of a British officer, his hands pressed across his breast, his form bent forward as if in pain. ‘The figure,’ she added to Mr. W., ‘appeared just behind my husband, and seemed looking over his left shoulder.’ ”

(Mr. and Mrs. N., who were Spiritualists, then obtained what purported to be a message from their strange visitant, saying that he had been killed that afternoon by a wound in the breast; but the message may perfectly well have been the automatic result of their own ideas; as it contained nothing beyond what they might have guessed from the nature of the apparition. This occurred at 9 in the evening; and the date was fixed as the fourteenth of November, by the date on a bill which was receipted, as it was remembered, on the same evening.)

“This confirmation of the widow’s conviction as to the day of her husband’s death produced so much impression on Mr. Wilkinson that he called at the office of Messrs. Cox and Greenwood, the army agents, to ascertain if there was no mistake in the certificate. But nothing there appeared to confirm any surmise of inaccuracy. Captain W.’s death was mentioned in two separate despatches . . . and in both the date corresponded with that given in the telegram.

“So matters rested, until, in the month of March,

the family of Captain W. received from Captain G. C., then of the Military Train, a letter dated near Lucknow, on the 19th of December. This letter informed them that Captain W. had been killed before Lucknow, while gallantly leading on a squadron, not on the 15th of November, as reported in the official despatches, but on the fourteenth in the afternoon. Captain C. was riding close by his side at the time he saw him fall. He was struck by a fragment of shell in the breast, and never spoke after he was hit. He was buried at the Dilkoosha; and on a wooden cross erected by his friend, Lieutenant R., of the 9th Lancers, at the head of his grave, are cut the initials G. W., and the date of his death, the 14th of November.\*

“The War Office finally made the correction as to the date of death, but not until more than a year after the event occurred. Mr. Wilkinson, having occasion to apply for an additional copy of the certificate in April, found on it exactly the same words as those I have given, only that the 14th of November had been substituted for the 15th.†

“This extraordinary narrative was obtained by me directly from the parties themselves. The widow of Captain W. kindly consented to examine and correct the manuscript, and allowed me to inspect a copy of

\* It was not in his own regiment, which was then at Meerut, that Captain W. was serving at the time of his death. Immediately on arriving from England at Cawnpore, he had offered his services to Colonel Wilson, of the 64th. They were at first declined, but finally accepted, and he joined the Military Train, then starting for Lucknow. It was in their ranks that he fell.

† The originals of both these certificates are in my possession; the first bearing the date 30th January, and certifying, as already shown, to the 15th; the second dated 5th April, and testifying to the 14th. (R. D. O.)



Captain C.'s letter, giving the particulars of her husband's death. To Mr. Wilkinson also the manuscript was submitted, and he assented to its accuracy so far as he is concerned. That portion which relates to Mrs. N. I had from that lady herself. I have neglected no precaution, therefore, to obtain for it the warrant of authenticity.

"It is especially valuable, as furnishing an example of a double apparition. Nor can it be alleged (even if the allegation had weight) that the recital of one lady caused the apparition of the same figure to the other. Mrs. W. was at the time in Cambridge, and Mrs. N. in London; and it was not till weeks after the occurrence that either knew what the other had seen.

"Those who would explain the whole on the principle of chance coincidence have a treble event to take into account; the apparition to Mrs. N., that to Mrs. W., and the actual time of Captain W.'s death, each tallying exactly with the other."

Mr. Wilkinson, of Winton House, Ealing, W., writes to us:—

*November 5th.*

"Mr. Robert Dale Owen personally investigated the case, and submitted the message to Captain Wheatcroft's widow. I revised the part belonging to me, and that part which referred to the appearance of Mrs. Nenner was revised by her and her husband, Professor Nenner. I gave the original certificates of death by the War Office to Mr. Owen.

"W. M. WILKINSON."

(The Mr. N. mentioned was the Rev. Maurice Nenner, Professor of Hebrew at the Nonconformist Col-

lege, St. John's Wood. Both Mr. and Mrs. Nenner are dead.)

It should be observed that there was no probable recognition of Captain Wheatcroft by Mrs. Nenner. We only know of the following points to connect her vision with Captain Wheatcroft's death:—Similarity of attitude; uniform of a British officer; wound in the breast; date; and, apart from Mrs. Wheatcroft's vision, there is nothing remarkable in this combination. But it is certainly curious that on that day she should have had a vision which corresponded, at least up to a certain point, with what Mrs. Wheatcroft saw.\*

We do not know the hour of Captain Wheatcroft's death, as he may not have died the moment he was struck. If the death was immediate, it must have preceded Mrs. Wheatcroft's vision by at least 12 hours.

The following remarkably interesting series of Visions and Dreams appeared in the *Occult Review*, March, 1917, and is reprinted here by kind permission of the Editor, Mr. Ralph Shirley. The article is by "F. G." and Mr. J. Arthur Hill, the well-known psychological researcher, and author of *New Evidences in Psychical Research*, *Psychical Investigations*, *Spiritualism*, etc. Here is the account:—

\* There is another curious incident connected with this case. In a letter written on July 28th, to the Rev. Wrey Savile, and kindly sent by him to me, a clergyman of the Midland counties gives permission to use his wife's testimony to the fact that Captain Wheatcroft "appeared, on the date named, to an old playfellow and an old friend of his"—herself. I have corresponded with the clergyman in question, but further details cannot now be procured.

*Mrs. Guthrie's Narrative*

In February, 1914, I became acquainted with a Capt. Stuart, an army man who had been through the Boer War. We saw little of each other, but each felt almost at once a strong sense of kinship and friendliness. As a matter of fact—though this may not be the cause—there is very slight relationship, through a common ancestor several generations back. In July, 1914, before I had any idea of the European war-cloud, which was soon to burst, I was presiding at a tea in camp, not far from my home: it was a bright sunny day, and everybody was in high spirits except myself. I found myself inexplicably depressed: the thought "Oh, the pity of it, the pity of it!" filled my mind, without any reason. Capt. Stuart was there, but I did not specially associate my feelings with him or any one else. I went home to bed, and wept miserably without knowing why.

In July, 1915, Capt. Stuart's battalion sailed for Gallipoli. We corresponded regularly, and I sent him parcels. I felt no special apprehension. On the night of December 9, 1915, I went to bed at 10 p. m. but could not sleep for some time. When I did, I had a horrid dream of muddy water, and awoke in great discomfort and uneasiness. The room was in absolute darkness, the blind down, and heavy curtains across the window; but presently I was surprised to see a big bright light on the wall opposite my bed and moving very rapidly. It then disappeared, reappearing on the next wall, then on the wardrobe by my bed. I was frightened and screamed for my friend next door; she was in almost instantly, white and shaking and saying, "The Light! the Light! What is it?" For she had



seen the same light in her room, on the door of communication between the two rooms. The blinds were down, the heavy curtains drawn, in her room also: moreover we were on the third floor, and no explanation by a light outside was possible. We spent the remainder of the night together.

Four days later, on December 13, came the news that Capt. Stuart was wounded, but no details. And, since he was on the Staff, we hoped it was nothing serious. The absence of "dangerously" or "seriously" was reassuring.

That night, Monday, December 13, 1915, I dreamt that Capt. Stuart was standing by my bedside. I saw him as plainly as I see the writing I am doing at this moment. His uniform looked very worn, and he had grey hairs in the black. His face looked wan, worried, harassed, troubled, lined, and he was very thin in the body, and his uniform was splashed. One hand was on my counterpane, the other was pointing to heaven and he was singing, "Jesu, Lover of My Soul." Then I awoke. When my maid came in, the first thing in the morning, I said I felt sure that Capt. Stuart had "gone west," and told her my dream. The letters came in, and there was one from a relative of his, saying that a wire had been received from the War Office announcing his death. He had been wounded on December 6, and died on December 9. I went over to see the relative, and mentioned my dream and the hymn, asking if it was a favourite of his. She said she had never heard so.

About a month after—during which time I constantly saw the Light, only now always there was a second light close behind it—this relative wired for me to come over, and I went. On going into the room she greeted

me with unusual gravity, saying immediately afterwards: "What was the hymn you say Colin sang that night you saw him?" "Jesu, Lover of my Soul," I replied. She then gave me a letter which had arrived that morning from one of the senior Staff officers, giving the details. Capt. Stuart was rendered unconscious by a shell-wound on December 6, and died at 2 a. m. December 9, without recovering consciousness. He was buried, wrapped in the Union Jack, at 4.45 a. m. with full military honours; and the hymn sung was "Jesu, Lover of my Soul."

I had never discussed religion or hymns with him. And I had never dreamt of him before.

Some time afterwards I either had a dream or a vision—I don't know which—of my friend standing by my bedside, looking awfully determined and not too pleased. One hand had hold of one of my wrists very tightly, and he was urging me to go with him. I wanted to go, very much, but something (I felt it was a material and earthy claim) held me back. He was in khaki, but it looked brighter and more cared for. He seemed very determined, and was angry because he could not drag me out of bed. I gave a cry, and woke or came to, to hear some one moving round the room to the door, which I distinctly heard open; footsteps (a man's with jack boots and spurs clanking) going downstairs: the front door opened and shut, and the clock struck five.

Very early the next morning my friend came into my room much upset, and asked me if I had seen the Light. I said No: and she said that something had awakened her and she had seen a large Light on the communication door between our rooms, though the room was in pitch darkness: then it moved along the

wall towards the door, as it did so she heard something moving in my room, then heard my door open, footsteps as of a man in jack boots with spurs clanking down stairs, the front door open and shut, and the clock struck five.

A few weeks later I was at my mother's, where Capt. Stuart had never been. My maid slept with me. She had never seen Capt. Stuart. On the third night, January 7, 1916, I dreamt that he had come into my room and was bending over me with a beautiful smile on his face. He took my hand gently but firmly (he was looking awfully well and very determined, but at the same time kindly so), and I was quite willing to go, and extraordinarily happy. Then a great shriek woke me or brought me to, and I heard my maid crying, "The man, the man! No, no, you must not go with him!" It took me a long time to pacify her. She then told me that she had been awakened by hearing the door open, and to her astonishment in came a man in khaki. The extraordinary thing is that though the room was in absolute darkness, she saw everything quite as plainly as if it had been broad daylight. The man, who, she saw, was an officer, came to her side of the bed and looked down at her. She stared up at him, too astonished to be frightened just then. When he saw her, he looked angry and turned on his heel to go round to my side of the bed, and she saw that when he leant over me a wonderful change came over his face, the angry look giving place to a beautiful smile. She saw him take hold of my hand, and she thinks I said "Coming!" Then she suddenly realized that there was something strange, and when I was half out of bed she screamed (and she did scream), then I woke or came to. Some days afterwards I showed her a



photograph of Capt. Stuart. She recognized it without hesitation as being the man she had seen that night.

I never saw the light or lights again, but in July (1916) I had a queer dream which I call my "Mrs. Caird of Arran" dream. This I will now describe.

I dreamt it was very early in the morning; where I was I do not know—and some one came and said, "A Mrs. Caird of Arran is here and specially wishes to see you." "Never heard of her," I answered. "Oh, she knows all about you, and she says she must see you." I said I was busy and couldn't see her then; she must wait.

The day passed, and so did all recollection of Mrs. Caird of Arran from my mind, and it was not till late in the evening (all this in my dream) that I was reminded that Mrs. Caird of Arran was still waiting. I was horrified at having kept any one waiting all those hours, and thought how annoyed she would be with me. But I found her quite good-tempered. She was quite unknown to me. A tall woman, elderly, a jolly, buxom-looking party, but not at all vulgar or common. She was dressed in black satin; from neck to waist was what used to be called a "waterfall" of black lace, and from mid-bosom to waist hung a huge gold chain fashioned like a cable, with huge links; she wore a bonnet tied under her chin with strings—old-fashioned, with bugles; her hair, which must have been yellow, was now grey, parted in the middle. Eyes a pretty grey, complexion rosy, expression very kind. And she seemed to know all about me. I wondered where ever I could have met her. So I said, "As you come from Arran, perhaps you know the Stuarts—Capt. Stuart passed over at Gallipoli last December." "Oh, very well, indeed," she replied; "and Colin has just sent

a message to his mother by a bat (an officer's servant) to say he will never come back now."

Then the scene changed and I was in a bare, rocky place with brown soil; blue sea very near, peacefully lapping against the shore; overhead a very blue sky, and hovering in mid-air huge ferocious birds. I myself was seated by a great heap of disturbed earth that had evidently been a grave, and close to me was a great white bone. And there was a bad smell. I threw myself on the ground weeping bitterly and crying, "Colin, Colin, if only I could have saved you this!" (For I knew how he would loathe it.) Then I felt myself touched, and found Mrs. Caird of Arran beside me, pointing to the grave and the bone. She said, "Never mind these; Colin says he is quite all right and that he had a splendid woman friend at home when he was out at the Dardanelles and he will never forget her." "Did he say who she was?" I asked. "Yes, her name was Flora." I looked at Mrs. Caird to see if she was "drawing" me, but she seemed quite unconscious. Just to make sure, I said, "My name is Flora," but she only replied, "Is it? Well, he says he can never forget how this woman friend helped him during all these weary months. Her parcels and long cheery letters did so much to buck him up, and he knows the time and thought she must have spent for him. She will always live in his heart and thoughts like this"—and she produced a piece of white paper on which, in enormous letters, was the word *Flora*. Then I woke.

My next and (up to now) last experience was on the night of September 14, 1916. Before going to sleep I had been thinking of Colin and wondering if it were possible to see him. The next thing I found myself in a narrow, lofty, whitewashed walled passage, with

slate tiles, all beautifully clean as if just washed. At one end was a door, slightly ajar, evidently of some occupied room, for I could hear movement, voices, and laughter occasionally.

Suddenly, in front of me, just across the passage, appeared an elderly woman whom I had never seen before; short, full-figure, dress as of very bygone times such as I had never seen but had heard of: the real old Garibaldi blouse and waist with a patent leather belt, and the Garibaldi blouse and skirt were in pepper-and-salt colour. She had a white turned-down collar on, black hair parted down the middle, and done up in an old-fashioned chignon, complexion pasty to yellowish, good shaped nose, bright black eyes. She spoke. "Capt. Colin Stuart is passing by and wishes to see you," she said, and immediately a thousand voices seemed to echo her. I was frightened and did not speak. "Are you ready to see Capt. Colin Stuart when he passes by?" she asked, and a thousand voices echoed again. I could not speak, and she gave me a very serious look, saying, "You must not keep him waiting when he passes," and the thousand voices echoed this too. Then she vanished, and there was silence, and I waited in fright as to whether I should see Colin as an awful apparition. I had not much time for fear, for from the room where I had heard voices and laughter, there appeared Colin; I heard his footsteps, and in a moment he was beside me, and he gave a jolly laugh. Sacred and serious as this subject is to me I cannot describe that laugh as anything but jolly: and, taking hold of my hand in one of his—I saw the other was occupied—he led me down the passage and into a small, beautifully clean three-cornered room with white walls, slate-tiled floor, huge old-fashioned fireplace, but no fire or



urniture. It was cool, but not unpleasantly so. It was the room next to the one he had come out of. We only went just inside the door. Colin twisted me round in front of him so that I could see him well, and let go of my hand. It was then that I saw that he carried a suit case and travelling rug in his occupied hand, which he never let go of once. He was in what I should call a lounge or smoking suit, beautifully cut and tailored; of Copenhagen blue; shirt cuffs and collar beautifully white; and as for Colin himself he looked just splendid. He carried his head up, proudly and grandly, his hair was beautifully cut and trimmed, also his moustache; and his face! he had no lines, and there was no sign on that face of either care, or fatigue, or worry, or pain, or as if he had ever known anything of evil or trouble of any kind. He looked as if he had had the most perfect long rest possible, and had had a splendid bathe. I was so delighted (no words had thus far been spoken between us) that I clapped my hands and cried, "Colin, Colin!" I suppose he understood, for, looking at me gravely, he said, "They gave me cruel pain." (I don't know what he meant, unless he was explaining his first mud-splashed and alarming appearance, with the lights and the noises: for I know he would not want to frighten me, but perhaps he couldn't help coming that way at first.) Then I suddenly felt awfully old and tired and worn out, and I said beseechingly: "When can I come?" And he replied very softly, "Not just yet awhile; you are doing a splendid work, but it will not be for long now," and as he finished speaking, he gave such a happy laugh. And I came to with the sound of that happy laugh in my ears.

I have given you my experiences, which have all

come quite spontaneously. I have been to no séances or mediums. They may or may not be of interest to you, but to me they have been a great comfort. I am firmly of opinion that my friend is doing useful work on the other side and is waiting for me. I do not believe in death, and have a great horror of the word for what it has been made to imply. I pray for my friend in the present tense along with myself, and my thoughts are constantly with him and of him.

On each occasion when I have come to, there has been a feeling of intense fatigue, which was unaccountable on any physical grounds, for I lead a placid and restful life, and besides, it is not like fatigue after walking or dancing. It is not bodily fatigue, but the nerves feel done, absolutely tired and worn out; I had the same feeling when my father and brother died.

*Comment by J. Arthur Hill*

Some of the foregoing, admittedly, is not "evidential" in the strictest sense. There is nothing surprising in any one dreaming that a friend is dead, when he is known to be wounded; or in dreaming that he is going away, or that we are by a disturbed grave—though this latter coincides with what was reported after the dream about graves on the Gallipoli peninsula. But on the other hand, there are points which are strongly evidential; *i.e.*, which suggest the cooperation of some mind external to that of the dreamer. The Light, seen by both Mrs. Guthrie and her friend, appeared for the first time on the night of December 9, apparently after midnight. And it was on that night, at 2 a. m. on the 10th—which, if local time, would be midnight where Mrs. Guthrie was—that Capt. Stuart

died; though Mrs. Guthrie did not then know that he was even wounded.

And, as to the next incident, Mrs. Guthrie had no normal knowledge of the hymn sung at Capt. Stuart's funeral, and no knowledge on which inferences could be based; for she had never talked with him about hymns. The almost inevitable explanation is either telepathy from some soldier present at the funeral or the actual operation of the mind of Capt. Stuart himself.\* On this latter hypothesis he must have been consciously present at his own funeral, listening to the hymn sung. And there is nothing incredible about that. I know of various incidents which suggest that this often happens; and the Japanese seem to believe something of the sort. Apparently Capt. Stuart came and sang it before the news could arrive normally, as a test message proving his real presence.

Then there is the queer fact of the maid having a waking vision which corroborated Mrs. Guthrie's contemporaneous dream—if it *was* a dream, for her state on these occasions does not seem to have been quite like ordinary sleep. There was no "suggestion" from one to the other; each perceived the same thing at the same time, and the evidence for its objectivity was exactly of the same kind as the evidence on which we base our belief in the external world in general. More fleeting and less repeatable, but of the same kind.†

Then there is the continuity and the steady improvement in the spirit's condition. This to me is signifi-

\* And the telepathy theory is rendered unlikely by the fact that there is little or no good evidence for the "telepathing" of some one else's apparition.

† I have obtained Mrs. Guthrie's maid's signed statement corroborating her part of the experience.



cant: Mrs. Guthrie has no knowledge of spiritualism or mediums, but her experience is in line with what I have learned in my own investigations. After passing over, there is usually no sudden transition to supernal realms of glory; no transmutation of man into seraph or even ordinary angel. No, he remains himself, and for some little time he remains very much in the state of mind last experienced; exemplified by Capt. Stuart's splashed and worn khaki and wan and troubled look when first seen, four days after his death. Soon, with rest and attention and care, the spirit gets over the shock and pain incidental to its last hours in the body, attaining gradually a state of fine and perfect health. It will be noted how Capt. Stuart, in his appearances, looked first "brighter and more cared for," and finally on September 14, was evidently in the most splendid form and ready for work and progress,—as symbolized by suit-case and travelling rug, and by his jolly laugh. It is all in line with knowledge gleaned through other sources—also the meeting which he foreshadowed, for I am quite sure we are all met—and it is helpful to get this corroboration through a private person who knows nothing of the traditions or conventions of the subject. It may be said here that Mrs. Guthrie is, as she has said to me herself, "A Celt of the Celts,"—as is also Capt. Stuart. Perhaps this has something to do with the experiences, for the temperament which we call Celtic certainly seems more open to psychical experiences than the stodgy Anglo-Saxon build, which happens to be my own.

Mrs. Guthrie seems also to have power of the "physical-phenomena" kind. I quote the following from a later letter of hers. After mentioning a desk in which she keeps Capt. Stuart's letters, she says:—

“ . . . the last letter he ever wrote me, which was on the day of his wounding—December 6—will never stay in the pocket with the other letters, and on one occasion when I went to this desk during this summer I had a shock, for not only was the letter out of the pocket where I had put it, but the envelope was in one corner with the two sheets placed very tidily just below it, and two little note-books which had never been taken out of their different pockets in the desk, were at the other corner on the pad very tidily packed on top of each other. I need hardly say this desk is kept locked and I have the only key.

“Capt. Stuart was awfully precise and tidy. This last letter, which reached me a month after his death, was different from any he had written me before. He was ordinarily very particular and courteous; this letter was cheery and even flippant. . . . Did I tell you that about a month ago the room in which he slept during his one and only visit here is now a sitting room, and one night just before we all went to bed (the others were tidying up the room, the door of which opposite the fire-place at which I stood was open) my attention was attracted—why, I don’t know—to the door. First I saw a kind of nebulous grey cloud which evolved into the half of my friend, and he was wearing the suit in which he came to us in July, 1914. I saw him only for a moment, and the others saw nothing.

“The grave incident in my ‘Mrs. Caird of Arran’ dream (July, 1916) is odd, for it is only three weeks since (*i.e.*, end of October—J. A. H.) that I read in the paper about desecration of graves at Gallipoli.

“Some six weeks after my last dream of Capt. Stuart I had a dream of my father, of whom I had previously only dreamt in the vaguest way, as it was ten years

ago when he passed, a broken old man : but when I saw him in this dream he looked glorious, like Capt. Stuart ; so fresh, bright, clean, no trace of sorrow or suffering, beautifully dressed and groomed. And he also carried a suit-case—an extraordinary coincidence. He was coming out of a passage exactly like the one I had been in with Capt. Stuart. Papa was coming out and I was waiting at the entrance with a lot of women and children. We were on a beautiful rich plateau with herds of sheep, oxen, and goats, and the women and children were dressed in flowing white robes ; one woman had a crook (stick) and there was a child with very golden curls. Suddenly some one said, 'He's coming,' and out of the passage came my father. He looked splendid, glorious ; they crowded round him ; he greeted some of them, and then said : 'Where's Flora?' 'Here!' they answered, and I was pushed forward. Papa kissed me, then held me back from him and said : 'You have done a splendid work, Flora.' He drew me to him, kissed me again very tenderly, gave a happy laugh and I awoke."

Cases of this character have occurred in all wars ; the present war is no exception ; only, until the foundation of the Society for Psychical Research, there had been no organized body for the collection and study of such narratives. The few remaining cases,—while occurring in wars prior to the present one,—are, nevertheless, of the same general character ; and will be of interest, as indicating the similarity of the phenomena, and how nearly alike they are in point of fact. The first case I quote from M. Flammarion's work, *The Unknown* :



*The Tell-Tale Wound*

Captain G. F. Russell Colt, of Gartesherrie, Cambridgeshire, sends the following narrative:

“I had a brother who was very dear to me, my elder brother, Oliver, a lieutenant in the Seventh Royal Fusiliers. At the time of which I write he was at Sebastopol. I kept up a regular correspondence with him. One day he wrote as though he were out of spirits and not well. I answered that he must pluck up heart, but that if anything happened to him, he must let me know by appearing to me in the little room where as young fellows we had often sat together smoking and gossiping in secret. My brother received this letter just as he was leaving his quarters to receive the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. (The clergyman who was the celebrant told me afterwards.) After Communion he went into the trenches. He never came back. A few hours later the assault upon the Redan took place. When the Captain of his company fell, my brother took his place and bravely led on his men. Although he had received several wounds, he had crossed the ramparts with his men, when he was struck by a ball in his right temple. He fell in a heap with other soldiers. He was found dead in a sort of kneeling posture, upheld by other corpses, thirty-six hours later.

“His death took place—possibly he fell and did not die immediately—September 8, 1855.

“The same night I awoke suddenly. I saw, opposite the window and beside my bed, my brother on his knees, surrounded by a sort of phosphorescent mist. I tried to speak to him, but I could not. And yet I was not frightened. We had been brought up

to have no belief in ghosts and apparitions, but I wanted to collect my thoughts, because I had not dreamed of him nor been thinking of him, and I forgot what I had written to him a fortnight before. I said to myself that it might be an illusion, the reflection of a moonbeam on a towel, or of something else. A few moments after, I looked again. He was still there, his eyes fixed on me with profound sadness. I tried again to speak, but my tongue seemed tied. I could not utter a word.

“I jumped out of bed. I looked out of the window, and I saw that there was no moonlight. The night was dark and it was raining heavily, great drops pattering on the window panes. My poor Oliver was still there. *I walked right through the apparition.* I reached my chamber door, and as I turned the knob to open it I looked back once more. The apparition slowly turned its head towards me and gave me another look full of anguish and of love. Then for the first time I observed a wound on his right temple, and from it trickled a little stream of blood. The face was pale as wax, but it was transparent.

“I left my room. I went into that of a friend, where I lay down on the sofa for the rest of the night. I told him why I had come into his room. I also spoke of the apparition to several people in the house, but when I mentioned it to my father he ordered me never to repeat such nonsense, and above all not to mention it to my mother.

“The following Monday he received a note from Sir Alexander Milne, telling him that the Redan had been taken by assault, but it gave him no details. I asked my friend to tell me if he saw, sooner than I did, my brother’s name among the killed and wounded. About

a fortnight later, he came and told me the story of his death.

“The Colonel of the regiment, and one or two officers who saw the body, sent me word *that the look on the face was exactly what I had described*. The wound was just where I had seen it, but it was impossible to say if he had died at once. If he had, his apparition must have taken place some hours after his death, for I saw it about two in the morning. Some months later they sent me his little prayer-book and the last letter I had written him. They were both found in the inner pocket of the tunic that he wore when he died. I have them still.”

The last three cases are from *Phantasms of the Living*, and were investigated originally by Mr. Edmund Gurney. The first is a so-called “Borderland” case; the second a vision, and the third more nearly a true apparition.

#### A “Borderland” Case

“On September 9th, at the siege of Mooltan, my husband, Major-General Richardson, C. B., then adjutant of his regiment, was most severely and dangerously wounded, and supposing himself dying, asked one of the officers with him to take the ring off his finger and send it to his wife, who at that time was fully 150 miles distant, at Ferozepore. On the night of September 9th, I was lying on my bed, between sleeping and waking, when I distinctly saw my husband being carried off the field, seriously wounded, and heard his voice saying, ‘Take this ring off my finger and send it to my wife.’ All the next day I could not get the sight or the voice out of my mind. In due time I heard



of General Richardson having been severely wounded in the assault on Mooltan. He survived, however, and is still living. It was not for some time after the siege that I heard from Colonel L., the officer who helped to carry General Richardson off the field, that the request as to the ring was actually made to him, just as I had heard it at Ferozepore at that very time.

“M. A. RICHARDSON.”

The following questions were addressed by Mr. Gurney to General Richardson, whose answers were appended.

(1) Does General R. remember saying, when he was wounded at Mooltan, “Take this ring off my finger, and send it to my wife,” or words to that effect?

“Most distinctly; I made the request to my commanding officer, Major E. S. Lloyd, who was supporting me while my man had gone for assistance. Major Lloyd, I am sorry to say, is dead.”

(2) Can he remember the time of this incident? Was it morning, noon, or night?

“As far as memory serves, I was wounded about 9 p. m. on Sunday, the 9th of September.”

(3) Had General R., before he left home, promised or said anything to Mrs. R. as to sending his ring to her, in case he should be wounded?

“To my best recollection, never. Nor had I any kind of presentiment on the subject. I naturally felt that with such a fire as we were exposed to I might get hurt.”

[Four years after the above was written, Mrs. Richardson gave me *viva voce* a precisely accordant account. She described herself as a matter-of-fact person, and does not have frequent or vivid dreams.

[The details as to the ring seem fairly to raise this case out of the category of mere visions of absent persons who are known to be in danger, and with whom the percipient's thoughts have been anxiously engaged.]

### *A Vision*

From Colonel V., who writes, in a letter dated March 11th:—"The account was written by me from a statement made to me by my father, the late Capt. J. H. V. The words are my father's, and I wrote them as he related them to me." Names were given in confidence.

"One of my (*i. e.*, Colonel V.'s, not his father's) grand-aunts was Mrs. F., married to an officer, Major or Colonel F., of the Dragoons, serving in George III.'s time in America. He was killed at the battle of Saratoga. My aunt lived at the time in Portland Place, W., and was entertaining a large party one evening. Suddenly they remarked she seemed to be in great pain and agony, exclaiming quite aloud to her guests, 'Oh, do go home! I have seen a most fearful sight, and am compelled to break up the party.' Some of her most intimate friends asked her what she had seen. She replied that she was certain 'her husband F. had been killed in a battle, and that she most distinctly saw his body being carried to the rear by his soldiers.' She remained in great anxiety for weeks, when the sad news confirming her vision arrived from America, and that at the hour she made the exclamation to her guests, her husband, F., of the Dragoons (allowing for difference of longitude) was killed in an attack made on the enemy at the battle of Saratoga."

Colonel V. adds, "An aunt, now deceased, told me she was, when a girl, present at the time when (her

aunt) Mrs. F. called out 'that F. had been shot, and that she saw his body being carried off the field of battle.' "

We find from *Burgoyne's Campaign*, by Charles Neilson (Albany) that Brigadier-General F. was wounded at the battle of Saratoga, at 2 p. m. Oct. 7, but did not die till 8 a. m. on Oct. 8. From letters and memoirs relating to the American War of Independence, by Madame Riedesel, we learn that he was carried to Madame Riedesel's hut at 3 p. m., which would correspond with about 8 p. m. in London; and that during the afternoon, while he was lying mortally wounded, he frequently uttered his wife's name.

### *An Apparition*

"Sir:—Of many comrades who gave up their lives for Queen and country in Zululand and Natal, for none have I, or those who knew him, felt a keener pang of regret than for Rudolph Gough. In November Gough, having retired from the Coldstream Guards, proceeded as a volunteer to Natal, where on arrival he was given a company in Commandant Nettleton's battalion of the Natal Native Contingent, with which regiment he served in the first advance into Zululand. To all our astonishment, Gough, who had risen from a sick bed in Durban, accompanied by Lieutenant George Davis of his own regiment, arrived in camp at dusk, having ridden through from Durban, a distance of 82 miles, in little over a day. Gough, who had suffered badly *en route*, was again severely attacked by that curse of South African Armies—dysentery—and was ordered to one of the ambulances, where he remained until the



morning of the action of Gingihlovo. The moment the alarm sounded, the poor fellow staggered out and took command of his company, and afterward actually led his men over the shelter trench, when the cheer was started and the charge sounded. The excitement and the exertion proved too much for my poor friend's enfeebled frame, and utter collapse followed.

"On April 17, just before 'tattoo,' I was sitting in the gipsy-looking edifice that the officers of the King's Royal Rifle Corps had rigged up, which we dubbed the 'mess house' or 'banqueting hall,' finishing a letter to a newspaper for which I acted as correspondent, when the brigade bugler rang out 'last post.' I walked to the door, outside of which I saw standing the man who, two days ago, I had been told was dying on the other side of the Tugela. I could not describe on paper the extraordinary sensation that Gough's unexpected appearance gave me."

"Some few days after I returned to Port Pearson to re-assume command of the Natal Native Pioneers. After reporting my arrival, I made my way to the post-office, where I was much shocked at being told of my friend's death. The postmaster handed me a telegram, which had been suffered to remain in a pigeon-hole for some days, instead of being sent on to the front. It was from the civil surgeon, who helped to soothe the last moments of my friend, and ran as follows: 'Captain the Hon. H. R. Gough is dying. He has been asking for you all day. Come down here if possible.' On subsequent inquiries at the hospital, I found that he had died at exactly the hour I fancied I had seen him outside the mess-house at Gingihlovo. Prior to the occurrence I have narrated, I never had

the faintest belief in the actuality of supernatural phenomena of any nature.

“STUART STEPHENS.

“(Late Lieutenant 4th Battalion Royal Dublin Fusiliers.)”

Miss I. F. Galwey writes to us from 5, Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin, May 18th:

“I met two of young Gough’s cousins on Saturday; and they assure me that the account given by Mr. Stephens is a perfectly authentic one, and is fully believed by all the family; but they know nothing of Mr. Stephens, except that he was a comrade of poor Rudolph’s, and that just before his death he had expressed an earnest desire to see him.”

(The *London Gazette* for July 22, gives the date of the death of Captain Gough, as April 19. It seems very probable that the “17” in Mr. Stephens’ account is a misprint. For if he inquired at the hospital and learnt the identity of the hour, it is not likely that he made so grave a mistake as to the day. But from the *South African Campaign*, by J. R. Mackinnon, we learn that Captain Gough had been desperately ill for some days before his death; so that even if the vision did precede the death by two days, it might still be connected with his condition. It is clear, too, from the words of the telegram, that his thoughts had been directed to the percipient for some little time before his death.)

## CHAPTER IX

### CLAIRVOYANT DESCRIPTIONS OF DEATH: DEATH DESCRIBED BY "SPIRITS"

THE physical shock which causes death doubtless destroys the physical body to such an extent that life cannot again manifest through it. The body is thenceforward of no further use as a vehicle of spirit; it has fulfilled its purposes, and must now disintegrate and return to the dust whence it sprang. If the spirit of man leaves the physical body, it must do so *somehow*,—and that process should be capable of perception by those having properly trained vision. Some accounts of this nature are given below.

After death, man is thought to inhabit a vehicle or body resembling his physical body, but composed of finer matter—an "astral" or "ethereal" body—the "spiritual body" of St. Paul. In this, man lives and functions for some time at least. The exit of this body from the physical body has been minutely studied, and its method of egress may be said to be fairly well-known. In the following case, the dying person was a young girl, but the process is the same with both sexes; and we cannot doubt that what is here described is going on in countless thousands of cases over the battle-fields of Europe.

The account which follows is from the pen of Andrew Jackson Davis,—a man whose clear perceptions and intuitions raised him to the front-rank as a seer,



philosopher and thinker, and while the language used is at times a trifle "flowery" or old-fashioned, one cannot doubt that it seeks to set forth, as clearly as possible, the actual facts, as they presented themselves to the eye of the "Seer." He says:

"When the hour of her death arrived, I was fortunately in a proper state of mind and body to produce the superior (clairvoyant) condition; but, previous to throwing my spirit into that condition, I sought the most convenient and favourable position, that I might be allowed to make the observations entirely unnoticed and undisturbed. Thus situated and conditioned, I proceeded to observe and investigate the mysterious processes of dying, and to learn what it is for an individual human spirit to undergo the changes consequent upon physical death or external dissolution. They were these:

"I saw that the physical organization could no longer subserve the diversified purposes or requirements of the spiritual principle. But the various internal organs of the body appeared to resist the withdrawal of the animating soul. The body and the soul, like two friends, strongly resisted the various circumstances which rendered their eternal separation imperative and absolute. These internal conflicts gave rise to manifestations of what seemed to be, to the material senses, the most thrilling and painful sensations; but I was unspeakably thankful and delighted when I perceived and realized the fact that those physical manifestations were indications, not of pain or unhappiness, but simply that the spirit was eternally dissolving its copartnership with the material organism.

"Now the head of the body became suddenly en-

veloped in a fine, soft, mellow, luminous atmosphere; and, as instantly, I saw the cerebrum and the cerebellum expand their most interior portions; I saw them discontinue their appropriate galvanic functions; and then I saw that they became highly charged with the vital electricity and vital magnetism which permeate subordinate systems and structures. That is to say, the brain, as a whole, suddenly declared itself to be tenfold more positive, over the lesser proportions of the body, than it ever was during the period of health. This phenomenon invariably precedes physical dissolution.

“Now the process of dying, or the spirit’s departure from the body, was fully commenced. The brain began to attract the elements of electricity, of magnetism, of motion, of life, and of sensation, into its various and numerous departments. The head became intensely brilliant; and I particularly remarked that just in the same proportion as the extremities of the organism grow dark and cold, the brain appears light and glowing.

“Now I saw, in the mellow, spiritual atmosphere which emanated from and encircled her head, the indistinct outlines of the formation of *another* head. This new head unfolded more and more distinctly, and so indescribably compact and intensely brilliant did it become, that I could neither see through it, nor gaze upon it as steadily as I desired. While this spiritual head was being eliminated and organized from out of and above the material head, I saw that the surrounding aro-mal atmosphere which had emanated from the material head was in great commotion; but, as the new head became more distinct and perfect, this brilliant atmosphere gradually disappeared. This taught



me that those aroamal elements, which were, in the beginning of the metamorphosis, attracted from the system into the brain, and thence eliminated in the form of an atmosphere, were indissolubly united in accordance with the divine principle of affinity in the universe, which pervades and destinatees every particle of matter, and developed the spiritual head which I beheld.

“In the identical manner in which the spiritual head was eliminated and unchangeably organized, I saw, unfolding in their natural progressive order, the harmonious development of the neck, the shoulders, the breast and the entire spiritual organization. It appeared from this, even to an unequivocal demonstration, that the innumerable particles of what might be termed unparticled matter which constitute the man’s spiritual principle, are constitutionally endowed with certain elective affinities, analogous to an immortal friendship. The innate tendencies, which the elements and essences of her soul manifested by uniting and organizing themselves, were the efficient and imminent causes which unfolded and perfected her spiritual organization. The defects and deformities of her physical body were, in the spiritual body which I saw thus developed, almost completely removed. In other words, it seemed that those hereditary obstructions and influences were now removed, which originally arrested the full and proper development of her physical constitution; and, therefore, that her spiritual constitution, being elevated above those obstructions, was enabled to unfold and perfect itself, in accordance with the universal tendencies of all created things.

“While this spiritual formation was going on, which was perfectly visible to my spiritual perceptions, the material body manifested, to the outer vision of ob-



serving individuals in the room, many symptoms of uneasiness and pain; but the indications were totally deceptive; they were wholly caused by the departure of the vital or spiritual forces from the extremities and viscera into the brain, and thence into the ascending organism.

“The spirit arose at right angles over the head or brain of the deserted body. But immediately previous to the final dissolution of the relationship which had for so many years subsisted between the two, the spiritual and material bodies, I saw—playing energetically between the feet of the elevated spiritual body and the head of the prostrate physical body—a bright stream or current of vital electricity. And here I perceived what I had never before obtained a knowledge of, that a small portion of this vital electrical element returned to the deserted body immediately subsequent to the separation of the umbilical thread; and that that portion of this element which passed back into the earthly organism instantly diffused itself through the entire structure, and thus prevented immediate decomposition.

“As soon as the spirit, whose departing hour I thus watched, was wholly disengaged from the tenacious physical body, I directed my attention to the movements and emotions of the former; and I saw her begin to breathe the most interior or spiritual portions of the surrounding terrestrial atmosphere. At first it seemed with difficulty that she could breathe the new medium; but in a few seconds she inhaled and exhaled the spiritual elements of nature with the greatest possible ease and delight. And now I saw that she was in possession of exterior and physical proportions, which were identical, in every possible particular—

improved and beautified—with those proportions which characterized her earthly organization. Indeed, so much like her former self was she that, had her friends beheld her as I did, they certainly would have exclaimed—as we often do upon the sudden return of a long-absent friend, who leaves us and returns in health—‘Why, how well you look! How improved you are!’ Such was the nature—most beautifying in their extent—of the improvements that were wrought upon her.

“I saw her continue to conform and accustom herself to the new elements and elevating sensations which belong to the inner life. I did not particularly notice the workings and emotions of her newly-awakening and fast-unfolding spirit, except that I was careful to remark her philosophical tranquillity throughout the entire process, and her non-participation with the different members of her family in their unrestrained bewailing of her departure from the earth, to unfold in Love and Wisdom throughout eternal spheres. She understood at a glance that they could only gaze upon the cold and lifeless form, which she had but just deserted; and she readily comprehended the fact, that it was owing to a want of true knowledge upon their parts, that they thus vehemently regretted her merely physical death.

“The period required to accomplish the entire change which I saw was not far from two hours and a half; but this furnished no rule as to the time required for every spirit to elevate and reorganize itself above the head of the outer form. Without changing my position or spiritual perceptions I continued to observe the movements of her new-born spirit. As soon as she became accustomed to her new elements

which surrounded her, she descended from her elevated position, which was immediately over the body, by an effort of the will-power, and directly passed out of the door of the bedroom in which she had lain, in the material form, prostrated with disease for several weeks. It being in a summer month, the doors were all open, and her egress from the house was attended with no obstruction. I saw her pass through the adjoining room, out of the door, and step from the house into the atmosphere! I was overwhelmed with delight and astonishment when, for the first time, I realized the universal truth that the spiritual organization can tread the atmosphere, which is impossible while in the coarser earthly form—so much more refined is man's spiritual constitution. She walked in the atmosphere as easily, and in the same manner, as we tread the earth and ascend an eminence. Immediately upon her emergence from the house, she was joined by two friendly spirits from the spiritual country, and after tenderly recognizing and communing with each other, the three, in the most graceful manner, began ascending obliquely through the ethereal envelopment of her globe. They walked so naturally and fraternally together that I could scarcely realize the fact that they trod the air—they seemed to be walking upon the side of a glorious but familiar mountain. I continued to gaze upon them until the distance shut them from my view,—whereupon I returned to my external and ordinary condition.”

This account of the facts—of what actually happened at death—is confirmed by numerous other witnesses, who agree as to the main details. For example, a nurse (who evidently had some clairvoyant



power) and who has worked at the front for some months, writes:—

“ ‘There is no death; what seems so is transition,’ wrote Longfellow in one of his inspired poems. This is no mere expression of poetic fancy, but a plain statement of fact; *that transition I have often seen*. For something like a score of years I was a professional nurse; many deaths I have witnessed. And many times I beheld the spirit body rise from the discarded earthly body, in appearance an etherealized, glorified replica of it. No traces of disease or suffering did I ever see on the radiant faces of those thus transformed. Striking at times was the contrast which they presented to the human features,—emaciated by debility or deep-furrowed by pain.’ ”

### *Death Described by “Spirits”*

Several soldiers have apparently returned from their new homes in the “spirit world” to tell the particulars concerning their sensations immediately after being “killed” by rifle or cannon ball. They relate how they intuitively or spiritually (of course somewhat vaguely) realized the nature of the accident, and that they had just “died,” in the usual sense of the word, but they did not feel anything like pain—being only disposed to sleep very profoundly, regardless of the place, and forgetful of what had happened to them. This indifference has in many instances resulted in a kind of slumber for many days in the other world.

Writing (through a medium) of his experiences, soon after “passing over,” one communicator says:—

“Now it must be remembered that the ‘Soul’ becomes the body of the *spirit* after death. This, how-

ever, is not the work of a moment. Whole hours, sometimes days, are consumed in perfecting the work of this final organization. While this beautiful process is going forward, the spirit does not feel anything physical or sensuous. It is all intuition, and memory, and meditation, and love. Its personality is not self-conscious, until the new senses in the new body are completed and opened, and adapted to the use and everlasting duration of the spirit. We repeat, when the death is natural—and no death is natural, save that of ‘ripe old age’—then the *spirit* is immediately clothed with its new body. It does not sleep, feels no suspension of identity, realizes no penalty for physiological injury which is the effect of an accidental death, and thus the aged one is young and happy, and free as is an uncaged bird among the trees of the mountain. . . .

“The soldier need not ‘dread’ the temporary suspension of his personal consciousness, should he fall in battle, because there is in the experience no pain—only a confusion for a moment, a surprise of an instant’s duration, as though the whole world had burst into countless atoms, succeeded by a flash of universal light which reveals a vast darkness, and then—indifference, rest, happiness, slumber. Directly the atoms composing the ‘Soul’ begin to assemble about you—the spirit—while you live in intuition, in memory, in meditation, and in love—all unconscious of a personality or locality, without apprehension, perfectly free—indifferent, restful, slumbering. The sublime assurance that you are floating in the Spirit of the infinite Father and Mother—that no sparrow falleth unobserved—that nothing is wrong—that everything is right where you are—this assurance, singing like the



affectionate song of a loving mother in your spirit's depths, will lull you to sleep, dreamlessly and yet alive and thoughtful, in the downy cradle of eternity.

“Therefore fear not the physical sensations consequent upon a sudden death at the ‘cannon’s mouth.’ Fear, rather, the moral disadvantages accruing from a struggle in which the inspiration of universal Freedom is not at once the mainspring and the end to be attained.”

Another soldier, purporting to communicate through a medium, and speaking of the details of his transition, and the joy he experiences in thus coming back and being enabled to communicate with his earth-friends, says:—

“After a spirit has dissolved its connection with the earthy tabernacle, known as the body, it is tired; and especially if it has suffered long with the disease which sent it out. Then there comes a period of blissful peace and rest. You lie, as it were, in a dreamy state, such as you often experience in the morning when, between waking and sleeping, such pleasures come. The spirit friends hover about it, giving it strength from their own magnetic influences, comforting it, lulling it as the mother lulls her child to rest, until such time as strength is given it to think and act for itself. It was thus in my case. I went out suddenly, in full strength, consequently it did not take long for me to awaken to the enjoyments and delightful influences everywhere about me. The shock was terrible, and it was very sad for me to witness the grief of my friends on earth. It took a long time for me to become reconciled to this change of conditions. I was, so far as my presence was concerned, at home in my father’s house as much as ever I was. I heard



every word uttered, saw the sadness, and, as it were, lived it, and felt as keenly as did any one of my relatives; but still I could not make myself known. The door of communication was shut, and they did not believe nor countenance this doctrine of Spiritual return. They scouted it, and their unbelief has been one of my hardest burdens to bear, for if they would only open the door of their hearts and let me in, it would be so comforting to us all. The family would then become reunited through the bonds of spirit-communication, and we should all taste of the realities of immortality. But I must not digress nor be too particular. To resume:—

“I remained about the house and followed the members of my family closely for a long time, and was very unhappy. The good spirit-friends did all they could for me, but I refused to be comforted. I wished to talk to father and mother, and hosts of other dear relatives. Others could talk to their friends, but I could not. One day, as this medium well knows, I succeeded in getting possession of her, . . . and there made myself known. It was a joyful hour to me; but not so joyful as when I found I could control the tongue and pen of the person now writing this. My sorrow departed. Gladness filled my heart. I could commune with earth friends, and my possibilities of doing good were enlarging. Then I commenced to be happy, and to understand the philosophy and significance of this life, its duties, and its vast connections. In coming to the medium, I found I was benefiting him as well as gratifying myself. My friends here noticed the change, and to me was imparted a duty of developing and helping him in every possible manner—a very pleasant duty, and one which I have performed to the

best of my ability, and one which I always shall perform, as we are, in spirit, more to each other than we ever dreamed of. I see now clearly. . . .”

Still another, writing through the hand of Mrs. E., an automatic writer, says:—

“I want you to believe your friends live still and can think of you. . . . On opening the eyes of my spiritual body I found myself unaltered, no terror, only a strange feeling at first, then peace, a comforted heart, love, companionship, teaching. I am—(giving here his full name), and have written this, but your brother—(giving the name) is here and wants to speak to you.”

After an interval Mrs. E. felt her hand again impelled to write, and the following message came:—

“I am here (giving her brother’s name) and want to tell you about my awakening into spirit life. I was at first dimly conscious of figures moving in the room and round the bed. Then the door was closed and all was still. I then first perceived that I was not lying on the bed, but seemed to be floating in the air a little above it. I saw in the dim light the body stretched out straight and with the face covered. My first idea was that I might reënter it, but all desire to do this soon left me—the tie was broken. I stood upon the floor, and looked round the room where I had been so ill and been so helpless, and where I could once more move without restraint. The room was not empty. Close to me was my father’s father (giving the name correctly). He had been with me all through. There were others whom I love now, even if I did not know much of them then. I passed out of the room, through the next, where my mother and — were (relatives still in this life), I tried to speak to them. My voice was plain to myself, and even loud, yet they took no

notice of all I could say. I walked through the college rooms; much blackness but some light. Then I went out under the free heavens. I will write more another sitting—power too weak now. 'Good-night.' (His signature follows.)

At another sitting a night or two later, the same name was written, and the thread of the preceding narrative was abruptly taken up without any preface:

“I saw the earth lying dark and cold under the stars in the first beginning of the wintry sunrise. It was the landscape I knew so well, and had looked at so often. Suddenly sight was born to me; my eyes became open. I saw the spiritual world dawn upon the actual, like the blossoming of a flower. For this I have no words. Nothing I could say would make any of you comprehend the wonder of that revelation, but it will be yours in time. I was drawn as if by affinity to the world which is now mine. But I am not fettered there. I am much drawn to earth, but by no unhappy chain. I am drawn to those I love; to the places much endeared.”



## CHAPTER X

### OUR DEAD SOLDIERS YET LIVE!

IN the preceding Chapter, we have seen that *something* leaves man at death, and it now remains for us to show that this "something" possesses memory and intelligence—that, in short, it is still the same man we knew; and that he continues to persist in much the same way that he always did,—that he is the same individual we knew here. In considering this question, we must put "orthodox" conceptions out of our minds,—as being far from the truth,—and think of the departed one as being just as he always was,—bright, happy, and young; freed from the cares and sorrows of this life; living in a new world which he has just entered and is about to explore. This is the spiritistic teaching; this is what is told us by those who have apparently come back to inform us of the road we too must one day travel; and I shall accordingly set forth, here, the details (as precise and accurate as possible) concerning the spirit's exit from the body and its entrance into the world of spirit,—asking the reader to remember that in what follows the majority of the statements were either "communicated" to us through some medium, or are a summary of these statements, expressing as concisely as possible the views therein set forth. These statements are supported by others, coming from men and women who have had exceptional opportunities of obtaining the facts,—or who have,

apparently, communicated with their dear ones more or less directly.

What, then, happens to the soldier who has been killed in action; who has "gone west," to join his comrades who have, perchance, preceded him? We know that his body has been buried; that is no more. We believe that his spirit survives; that it inhabits some sort of vehicle, resembling a body, and that it retains all the powers and faculties of this life. *What happens to the soldier at death?*

One communicator replies to this query as follows:—

"To make this point clear, let us briefly review what has happened to those noble 'boys' who sprang to the colours at the call of Duty, and without thought of self, shouldered the rifle, went forth like modern Crusaders to meet the common foe, fought bravely in the trenches, and fell as martyrs and heroes that others might live. Have they 'died' in any real sense? *No!* Have they gone out of existence as the beasts that perish? A thousand times *No!* Are they, then, still alive? *Yes!* And are they the self-same, dear, loving, natural 'boys' as when they moved amongst us and caressed us in our homes? A thousand times *Yes!* There is only one change—they have simply lost their physical bodies. The *real* man, the immortal ego, remains absolutely unaltered by the process of Death. In the language of the Bishop of London: 'A man is exactly the same five minutes after death as he was five minutes before death.' That is absolutely true.

"These deathless 'boys,' then, are still precisely the same today in all their essential characteristics as when enveloped in their mortal robe. They have carried forward all their feelings of affection toward their

loved ones on the earth, all their cherished desires, all the possessions in their treasure-house of memory, and all their little idiosyncrasies of character. None of these things belong to the *physical* body. They are the attributes of the *spiritual* man, and consequently they endure after the raiment of flesh has been discarded.

“Death does not transform a man into either a saint or a devil. He awakens to spiritual consciousness with the impression firmly imbedded in his mind that he is, to all intents and purposes, just as he was when functioning on the terrestrial plane. The change, in fact, is so imperceptible at first that many of those who have passed through the ‘Gateway’ positively refuse to believe they have ‘died’! If they have experienced illness they naturally feel free from pain, but they attribute this to the fact that they have suddenly, and by some inexplicable means, become convalescent. That they have ‘died’ is altogether an irrational explanation. The ideas that have been instilled into their minds concerning the meaning of Death had not been realized in the slightest degree; there had been no dread and no terror; they had not consciously crossed the ‘dark waters of Jordan’; they had not been transferred to the mythical Heaven of their imagination; they were manifesting in a body similar in form to the physical vesture; everything around them seemed as natural and as objective as the things of earth; they felt the same impulses and the same desires, and the general environment produced by their mental activity seemed exactly the same as before. How, then, could it be said that they have ‘died’? They might feel that ‘something’ had happened, but what that ‘something’ was they would be



unable to explain. 'Death' would be the last explanation to offer!

"The days pass, teachers take them in hand, and very soon the conviction dawns upon them that they must have 'died' after all! Then they become concerned for those they have left behind, and knowing they must be mourning their departure, they are accompanied to their former homes by friendly guides and endeavour to impress the dear ones with a sense of their actual presence. Alas, the effort often fails! The grief of the bereaved has erected an impenetrable barrier—a dense wall of grey mist, which spiritual vibrations are unable to influence. Imagine the disappointment and sorrow that follows—a loving heart thwarted in its mission of mercy. Such a soul realizes all the grief that pervades the home, and is powerless to afford relief. This experience is going on in countless homes today, and all because the people have never been taught the glorious truths of Spiritual Philosophy. And it is not until the grief has abated that the loving messenger from the Summerland can, in varying degrees, according to impressibility, or otherwise, of the mourner, become a 'ministering spirit'—such as those St. Paul refers to—to afford solace, inspiration and cheer to those so much in need of help.

"Is it any wonder that, possessing a knowledge of these spiritual truths, we desire to proclaim them from the housetops? Is it not time that men and women were plainly told that there is not only one, but *two* parties affected by the condition created by a death in a family? The spiritual and the material interpenetrate, and it is very easy for us to mar the happiness of our friends in the Beyond by indulgence in

inordinate grief at their transition. This is why Sir Oliver Lodge is constantly entreating those bereaved by the war to endeavour, as far as is humanly possible, to modify their distress. And every experienced investigator endorses this entreaty."

"Few families," says Sir Oliver Lodge, "have not been struck down by some calamity during the years of war. I want to point out that death is not so serious a matter—it is a transition, a natural process of emancipation of the soul from the body—dissolution but not extinction. *When people think of the body lying in the grave they should not think of the person as associated with that body.* The body is only a transitory thing of 70 or 80 years, but that which has grown within that body will persist. We must think of the transitoriness of the body and the permanence of the soul. It is necessary to realize that character is a possession which lasts throughout eternity. That character we form here, we take with us, we cannot get away from it. Suicide does not help at all. We only take ourselves with us into the next life, nothing else.

"Death by violence is a calamity, but do not mourn unduly for those that are gone, for, as Macaulay says, 'They were in some sort happy in the opportunity of their death.' This kind of death has in it an element of sacrifice, of redemption, which we may hope will be accounted to them. Let us realize the magnitude and complexity of the universe. Perhaps we may yet find that it is our bodily disability which prevents us seeing the vast amount of intelligence and help working with us. *Let us try to think of those who are gone as not really gone, but, unseen by us, yet working with us in a glorious scheme of help and pity.* We must change

to something higher. The angels keep their ancient order, and we do not know what we shall become, but there are all grades of being up from man to Deity. This vision is not purely imaginary. The great men of the race are not deceived, and they say even more than we do."

A letter recently received from one who had lost his son in battle says:—

"We have spoken with our boy (killed in action) many, many times: in fact, it is now a regular thing, and this is what he said recently:

"'Do you know, Dad, I don't think you can quite grasp it. Do you know that *the "boys" suffer more here when they return home in spirit and are refused a hearing than ever they suffered on the battle field?* They know they are alive, and try to appraise their loved ones of the fact, only to be met with, and encompassed by, *waves of tormenting grief.* This is why I bring so many of them through to you, Dad.'

"The question is, how can we open the eyes of the many parents and friends to the truth of this—how essential it is not to grieve? I am willing to do anything I can for the 'Boys' who have given their lives that I may continue to live in freedom. I am not concerned about the parents. If they will remain blind then, perhaps, it is well they should suffer. It is the 'Boys' I am thinking of. What can we do to make the way easier for them?"

The following interesting account appeared in the *Harbinger of Light*, February, 1918. It is evidently an editorial summary of the detailed case, as submitted: The writer says:—

Our New Zealand contributor, who writes under the *nom-de-plume* of "Simeon," and an article from whose



pen appeared in the January issue of this journal—in which he declared that he had established indisputable communication with his soldier son, who was “killed” on the Somme, in September, 1916, has forwarded to us what appears to be a very good test of identity given by his soldier boy. About six months after he passed away, he purported to speak to a Mr. A——, through the organism of Mrs. A——, both of whom, it should be explained, were known to the lad before he left for the war.

“Do you remember the last time we met?” said the communicant to Mr. A——. “You spoke to me in the Garden, near the Boys’ High School. I was having my lunch, and the war was not then thought of.”

Mr. A—— confirms the truth of this statement, and then proceeds to relate much more striking comments made by the boy.

“Will you convey my love to father and mother, and my brothers—thank God they have not gone to war. Tell my dear mother not to hold any fanciful ideas of me, or to believe every so-called message she may receive. Tell her I owe her all that is best in me, for she is brave and good, and I would do anything possible to smooth her path in life. *Tell her one particular thing that will assure her of my presence*—tell her that the day she prevented me from going out birds’ nesting, and took so much trouble to instruct us in the right, I decided always to try to do what was right. Tell her the recollection of the anecdote she told us always haunted me. Tell her I have not gone to any restful spiritual home yet, and probably will not till the war ends. Tell her I cannot be a shirker in the body or out of it, but having been trained with many good comrades to do my duty, I try to do it still, and

if I were permitted I could tell you so much we do to help those still fighting—much that is sanctioned and assisted, too, by others higher than ourselves, but I dare not stay. Tell mother that I was quite suddenly shot out of the body, and felt no pain whatever, and thanks to the insight I had received through my parents, and you, and others, I simply folded my arms and had a good look at my body, and thought, ‘Well, is that all!’ I could not wrench myself away from the body immediately, and accompanied it when carried off by stretcher-bearers to the dressing station, because the body was not quite dead, but I felt no pain. How long it was before I lost the consciousness of my material body I cannot say, but the freedom I now feel, and the active part I am taking in what occupied me so much before death is my duty, and it seems natural and right. Besides, Mr. A——, there are many pledges my comrades and I made to each other in the face of death, which are sacred, and must be kept, if possible. But I cannot stop now. Good-bye, Mr. A——, good-bye. I am so delighted to have spoken to you. Tell father and mother they need have no regrets, and that my present activities are more valuable and quite as natural as when I was in the flesh, and they will know it is the right and proper course till time changes affairs. Good-bye.”

With regard to the birds’ nesting incident, the correspondent writes—“This *one particular thing* does assure his mother of his presence, because it was one of those things *only known to the boy and herself*. Nothing concerning the incident could possibly have been in the mind of either Mr. A—— or the medium, and this is why he emphasized the sending of it through to his mother. Some years ago the lad spoke of going

birds' nesting and his mother impressed upon him how cruel it was to break down the home so carefully prepared by the parents for their young, illustrating, in story form, the tragedy of some great giant coming and ruthlessly smashing up her home, and destroying her children.

It is "trifles" of this character, as Sir Oliver Lodge emphasizes, which are so valuable in accumulating evidence of identity, and seeing that the circumstance was known only to the mother and her boy, the item becomes somewhat impressive from the evidential point of view. It may be of interest to add that twice during the interview the boy appeared to be told by the guide that "he must not stay long," and on each occasion he gave the ordinary military salute, and replied, "Yes, sir!" This conversation took place six months after the lad's death. Since then, he has frequently communicated in the home circle, and is still, in a very real sense, "one of the family!"

Another writes to the same magazine:—

What a difference it would make in the lives of countless thousands of bereaved ones if they could only realize that these statements are literally true—that their heroic fathers, husbands, sons, are no more dead than when they wore the robe of mortality, that they are, in fact, more alive than ever, that they are rejoicing in the fruits of sacrifice, and are often at the front performing deeds of mercy! All their interests and sympathies remain, and when they are not on the battle-field they are in their former homes endeavouring to console the mourners and lift the veil which hides them from physical view. This consciousness of their continued existence, and that they are just the same as formerly—the same in appearance and the



same in their affections—would lift a load from many a broken heart and shed a ray of hope across the dismal vista of the future. And this sense of relief would become intensified if these sorrowing and soul-crushed relatives could feel assured that they had received a message from the fallen hero, and that all was well with “the boy.” As Ernest Renan expresses it: “If we could but once a year exchange two words with our loved and lost, Death would be no longer Death.” Thank God, this “exchange” is taking place in thousands of instances today. “*Every week I know of a new case where a stranger goes to a medium and gets into touch with a relative,*” states Sir Oliver Lodge. The psychic journals of England are full of cases of parents “discovering” their boys who were “killed” in the trenches—the severed connection has been restored, and great joy has followed this blessed reunion of loving hearts.

These experiences can be repeated in the lives of every mourner if they will only put aside prejudices, and, in spirit, seek to re-establish communication with the loved one. It must not be imagined, however, that we are advocating the practice described as “running after mediums.” We do not approve of extremes of any kind. But we do maintain that every father and every mother, who has given a boy as part of the price of victory in this awful war, is entitled to know where that boy is today, and how he fares in the realm of endless life. And we declare, further, that that knowledge can be theirs if they will only investigate. It is not a matter of “calling up” a somnolent soul, who is popularly supposed to be “asleep within the tomb.” There is no “calling up” about it. These “boys” are very much alive, and are eagerly awaiting an opportunity

to assure their desponding relatives and friends that "All is well." They are, in fact, far more anxious to communicate than those they have left behind are to go to a medium to hear what they have to say.

The writer of these lines has not yet lost a relative in the war. But he has lost a score from natural causes in England since he has been in this country, and although none of them were known in this country, they have all reported themselves through different mediums, and, in some cases, succeeded in conclusively establishing their identity,—have given the nick-names by which the writer knew them as a boy, and related intimate details of family history of thirty years ago! Every experienced investigator has had similar experiences. This explains the confidence with which Sir Oliver Lodge, Sir William Crookes, Sir William Barrett, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and a host of other noted scientific men speak and write on the subject. It is only those who have never investigated that deny the facts—ignorance sitting in judgment on knowledge! We do not know whether the Rev. Ernest Jenkins, M. A., Congregational minister, of Leeds, is a student of the Spiritual Philosophy. If not, he seems to have learned its truths all the same. Preaching a memorial sermon recently concerning the death of Lieutenant Harry Scholefield, who died from wounds received in action, the Rev. Dr. Jenkins said:—

"This life is but a fragment of our existence, a fragment which, by itself, has no meaning; its meaning is rooted in an eternal past and carried on in an eternal future. We are on the steps of a stair, with many steps beneath us and many yet above. What we call dying is just stepping higher. *Harry Scholefield not only lives, but is in conscious and intimate touch with*

*us here. He has not passed to a land 'far, far away,' but is near at hand. He is no doubt resting after the awful experience through which he has passed; but soon, quite soon, he will be refreshed and take up the duties and pleasures which await him in his new life. Memory does not cease with death; we carry it with us beyond the grave. And having memory, his loved ones left behind are constantly in his thoughts. I can imagine him saying to some of the other valiant souls who have laid down their young lives for us:— 'I wish my folks would not worry. I'm all right. I'm proud and happy to have laid down my life in such a cause. I want them to go on in the same useful, loving and happy way as when I was with them in the body. My death is a cause for pride, not pessimism,— fuller service, not less.'* In some such words, I feel confident, he is speaking."

This, of course, is the Spiritualistic view entirely, and whether the preacher was aware of the circumstances or not, the fact remains that the imaginary message he placed on the lips of the fallen soldier bears a very striking resemblance to the sentiments uttered by many of these returned heroes. They are more than satisfied with their present condition, and their chief concern is to remove the grief occasioned by their departure. When will rational and comforting sermons of this character be more generally preached? Not until the Church recovers its lost-out knowledge of the meaning of death and the conditions prevailing in the world beyond. It is spiritual illumination that the Church needs today,—a Pentecostal outpouring that shall galvanize the dry bones of orthodoxy into exuberant life, and open the eyes of those who are "blind leaders of the blind." In the mean-



time, Spiritualism offers to the bereaved the solace which the Church fails to afford. "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." That was the divinely sympathetic invitation of olden time, and a similarly appealing offer is today extended in the name of Spiritualism to all who are staggering beneath some crushing blow inflicted by the war. "Oh, for the touch of a vanished hand, and the sound of a voice that is still."

And another correspondent writes:—

"*'But what of those who meet sudden death in battle?' some may ask. 'Do angels also meet them when they enter the other life?'*

"Aye, verily they do. I testify not only to that which I have been told by 'angels,' but to that which I have seen. For often I have been liberated from my physical body, though not by death, and sometimes have been transported to battlefields. And there I have seen angels—hosts of angels—ministering to the wounded and dying and bearing those away who have been killed—not their mangled corpses, but their spirit bodies, unscathed by shot or shell. . . .

"Nothing with which we are familiar in this life is more generally misunderstood than death. Of all the many gifts which our Father in Heaven bestows on us it is, I think, the best. As it has been revealed to me, it is the crowning proof of Divine love. Death is but a rebirth into another life which, for those who seek good and not evil, is a broader, freer life than this—in a life in which the best that is in them finds ampler scope for development; and in which, as they progress, they obtain a deeper realization of the love of God than is possible here, and joy unspeakable in serving Him."

Still another, who has received constant and assuring communications from his son, killed at the Dardanelles, writes:—

“Unfortunately, there are but few, comparatively speaking, who have had a realization of the channel open for communication, prior to the catastrophic blow falling so suddenly upon the nation. Consequently they have been caught unprepared. My sympathy is with all such, and as one who has followed the open path for many years, I write in love of my fellow-sufferers.

“*It was quite different in the case of our dear boy.* From early childhood he was brought up to know and appreciate the fact that ‘nothing is hid,’ in except so far as we hide it from ourselves by self-imposed limitations,—the outcome of ignorance. Though only twenty when he left for Gallipoli, he had been privileged to see full sized materializations, and had affectionate knowledge of and kind regard for some sisters possessed of the power of mediumship. We were, therefore, not much surprised when some *three months after he fell on the Somme front, he gave us evidence of his presence.* We did not hurry. We did not ask. We waited, leaving it to him to come in his own good time, but we never failed to send him loving thoughts. He had been resting, and regaining his strength,—hence some delay.

“And how real he was! Absolute proof of his living presence has again and again been given to us. And how he thanked us for having brought him up in the knowledge of the Truth! It had, he said, made his passing so easy, while our loving thoughts had helped to re-invigorate him. And what joy it was to him to come back and find response in us,—that both he and we might know that nothing can ever break

the cords of love. Lucidly he explained to us how he now saw from both sides—we seeing from only one; he therefore could speak with knowledge while we must accept much of the truth in faith.

“How we all love our ‘Boys’! And how much our nation has done and is doing for them, irrespective of cost. Here then is a simple thing we might do: Think in reality of those who have gone! Speak to them in love! Pray for them to the All Father, the All-pervading Source of Life, the Divine Spirit, ‘in Whom we live and move and have our being.’

“If I could only tell you, too, of the many companions he has brought with him and assisted to speak, you would no longer ask why I am so anxious to write this message. Do I not love all those who have fought and died, for us who are older, that we may continue to enjoy rights of freedom? Therefore it is, I plead with those who have lost one who is near and dear to them to give him a welcome home in reality, and send him continual thought-waves of love. This is what the dear ones long for us to do. God is Love, and Love is the never-failing channel of communication.

“*Only last night our beloved boy was again with us, and spoke for nearly two hours, almost as freely as when present with us in the flesh, and great and lovely is the work he is engaged upon. And so, of all who have ‘passed over’ none are missing or forgotten. He told us he had been privileged to see The Master, and to bow within the radiant Light of His all pervading love for the children of men, for the Sons of God who are fighting onward along the path of tribulation. Wherefore, brothers in affliction, ‘be of good cheer,’*



for this is the path by which all must move 'out of darkness into His marvellous light.' "

Doubtless, it is this *certainty*, which is thus obtained through direct and personal communication with the dearly-beloved departed-one, which gives assurance to many which they would not otherwise have, and buoys them up in a new faith and with new courage. M. Maeterlinck indeed had occasion to notice this, and the feelings of surprise he experienced when first he encountered it, in a woman whose son had been killed at the front, for he says (*The Light Beyond*):—

The other day I went to see a woman whom I knew before the war—she was happy then—and who had lost her only son in one of the battles in the Argonne. She was a widow, almost a poor woman; and, now that this son, her pride and her joy, was no more, she no longer had any reason for living. I hesitated to knock at the door. Was I not about to witness one of those hopeless griefs at whose feet all words fall to the ground like shameful and insulting lies? Which of us today is not familiar with these mournful interviews, this dismal duty?

To my great astonishment, she offered me her hand with a kindly smile. Her eyes, to which I hardly dared raise my own, were free of tears.

"You have come to speak of him," she said, in a cheerful tone; and it was as though her voice had grown younger.

"Alas, yes! I had heard of your sorrow; and I have come. . . ."

"Yes, I too believed that my happiness was irreparable; but now I know that he is not dead."

"What! He is not dead? Do you mean that the news . . . ? But I thought that the body . . ."

“Yes, his body is over there; and I have even a photograph of his grave. Let me show it to you. See, that cross on the left, the fourth cross: that is where he is lying. One of his friends, who buried him, sent me this card and gave me all the details. He suffered no pain. There was not even a death struggle. And he has told me so himself. He is quite astonished that death should be so easy, so slight a thing. . . . You do not understand? Yes, I see what it is: you are just as I used to be, as all the others are. I do not explain the matter to the others; what would be the use? They do not wish to understand. He is more alive than he ever was; he is free and happy. He does just as he likes. He tells me that one cannot imagine what a release death is, what a weight it removes from you, nor the joy which it brings. He comes to me when I call him. He loves especially to come in the evening; and we chat as we used to. He has not altered; he is just as he was on the day he went away,—only younger, stronger, handsomer. We have never been happier, more united, nearer to one another. He divines my thoughts before I utter them. He knows everything; but he cannot tell me everything he knows. He maintains that I must be wanting to follow him and that I must wait for my hour. And, while I wait, we are living in a happiness greater than that which was ours before the war,—a happiness which nothing can ever trouble again. . . .”

And the happiness and the certainty which is thus obtained can never again be lost. The assurance that the son still lives has proved too deep for eradication. Her son had been lost—yes; but he was still “there,” waiting for her; still the same boy he always had been; for the self which is lost in service is not lost,

but found. "He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it," said the Nazarene. And this has been amply borne out by the present war. As a contributor to a recent issue of the *International Psychic Gazette* expresses it:—

"*Self lost in Service!*" This is the essence of the Christ-life: the manifestation of the Christ upon the earth, and in spite of all the terrors and desolation caused by the world-war, yes, even because of it, this spirit is developing and unfolding in many a human soul today. "Self lost in Service" is the greatest antidote to all sadness and weariness the world ever has or can ever know. It is indeed a spiritual anæsthetic which sootheth to slumber the restless heart-ache, while the great Angel of Pain probes and cuts and prepares for the greater healing which is to follow. And when to this loving service is added the knowledge that so-called Death is but an episode in Life—a great adventure for the spirit—and that communion is possible, and in some cases even easy, then indeed is the river of tears between the two states dried and the veil is not.

Two cases within my circle of friends illustrate this. A young girl whom we will call Heather, is affianced to a brave young soldier. He leaves his love and his country and yields up his life on the great sacrificial altar of the battlefields of France. When Heather hears the news, she is distracted, overwhelmed. Then she learns that spiritual communion is possible, and by chance, she is brought in contact with a sensitive who sees and describes to her her soldier lover. Soon she is invited to sit in a small spiritual circle, and to her surprise she becomes clairvoyant and clairaudient; that is, she sees those who have passed through death's



portals, she hears their voices, and for her there is a new heaven and a new earth; former things have passed away—she has not lost her lover, death has not divided them. The consciousness of his presence lifts her heart and soul above the things of earth; she is still his and he is hers, and these two know that they are one forever, that theirs is a marriage made in heaven, which the cold blasts of earth can never chill, and now Heather looks forward to the day when her lover and herself shall work together in the great spiritual harvest-fields, and shall do such work as they might never have accomplished had he remained in the physical body. Daily he visits her now and informs her of his movements and his progress, and tells her how he attends lectures at the halls of learning, and studies in the colleges in the Great Beyond, and how one of the special subjects he is learning, and graduating for, is the different methods of controlling earth mediums and the ways of efficiency guarding them from obsession.

Oh, how natural and sane is life beyond! This brave soldier-lover is not a white-winged angel in some far-off state; neither is he in the orthodox hell, but he is just Heather's lover, working for her good, and learning the best means of communing with her and protecting her; and doubtless ere long his studies will bear fruit, for he is a strong determined man of character and high ideals. He is years older than Heather, and she trusts him implicitly, and looks forward eagerly to the day when he will be able to use her as his conscious instrument upon the earth, when they both shall minister to the spiritual needs of the earth-treaders. So Heather does not now weep for her lost love. Faith has been crowned by knowledge,

and both faith and knowledge are now dedicated to divine service for humanity. Truly as Tennyson says:

“The veil is rending and the voices of the day  
Are heard across the voices of the dark.”

Another girl, whom we will call Dot, loves a brave fellow who is no stranger to the facts of spiritual science. He imparts to her some of his knowledge. She is not particularly impressed with the average Spiritualistic meetings. Mere phenomena, necessary as these are as stepping stones, do not satisfy. She feels in her soul that there is something greater to attain to. The war breaks out. Her lover does what many other brave men have done, he gives himself to his country. In May of last year he comes home on leave; they are married; the young bride is left in her father's home. The very next month the husband is reported “wounded and missing.” Does Dot give way to selfish repining and unavailing regret? No: in this state of life and beyond, she was and is—*his*, so there is no room for regret whatever may be his fate. But her intuition tells her that he has not passed into spirit-life, although from that fateful day in June last to this, she has had no word of him. What does she do? She sets to work to cheer up his own people, who grieve so terribly about his unknown fate, and then she thinks also of the “gifts of the spirit,” and desires earnestly “the best.” She starts sitting for automatic writing, and very soon gets many cheering messages; then she determines to develop her own spiritual gifts for service, and is invited to join our circle for development. She decides that if development is possible to her, she will not be used by any spirit to pamper the curiosity of a mere wonder-seeking

crowd, but that the temple of her body shall be a shrine consecrated to the use of angels who work in the service of love. The weeks go by, and Dot's unfoldment proceeds. Then a spirit who has guarded her for long, although unknown to her, speaks, and we are told that an intelligence of high degree, in response to the sensitive's appeal, wishes her prepared for his use. Soon, we are given to understand, this lofty spirit will speak in public through Dot. Now, all Dot's spare time is given to her own preparation to become a link in the chain which unites highest heaven to deepest hell, to be a channel through whom waves of Christ-love may reach the earth and even outer states. . . .

So here again "Self lost in Service" leaves no room for selfish repining. Thus are the lessons being learned which "The Mighty Angel of Tribulation" came to earth to teach. Thus are sparks of divine being fanned into flame, and these shall kindle many another spark, until by degrees every other spirit throughout the length and breadth of the Universe shall release themselves as part of the Eternal Flame—that Power which men call God.

I cannot do better, perhaps, than to conclude in the fine words of Sir Oliver Lodge, who, in a recent article entitled "A Message of Hope to the Bereaved," says:—

And how can man die better  
 Than facing fearful odds,  
 For the ashes of his fathers  
 And the temples of his gods,

And for the gentle mother  
 Who dandled him to rest,  
 And for the wife who nurses  
 His infants at her breast.



So sings the poet concerning the heroic defence of ancient Rome; and so has come the call to us in modern England; to fight for the women-folk, as always, and, this time, for an exceptionally large and noble cause.

In this conflict we are all engaged, directly or indirectly, for the iron machinery of war has turned out to be as essential as the muscles and sinews to wield it.

Some are called to sacrifice leisure and home and occupation; some are called on for their lives. But there is no lack of response, for we know that we are passing through one of the great crises in the human history of this planet.

It has been expedient that many men should die for the nation, and not for this nation only, but for the whole cause of free civilization and Christianity. An organized system of devilish morality had reared its head in Europe, and had deceived the unfortunate people who had succumbed to its specious promises and temptations, and had seemed to be justified by success.

A conflict was inevitable sooner or later—a conflict in which the forces of evil must be thoroughly vanquished, that it may be known by bitter experience that they lead to destruction after all. A nation cannot sell its soul to the devil with impunity any more than can an individual. Wickedness may flourish like a green bay tree, but in the fulness of time it is cut down, dried up, and withered.

An object-lesson in morality, a veritable crusade, this war has been called, and the nomenclature is just. Our gallant troops are agents of the powers of good, as truly as ever were human agents called to a specific

work. In the highest cause they have been called upon to suffer and, if need be, to die.

But the suffering is far wider spread, the bereaved and sorrowful are in piteous case, and it is on their behalf that an opportunity has been given me of saying a few words of comfort and hope.

For what is death? A natural process through which all living things must pass, a stage in the journey of existence. An important station, truly; we do more, on arrival, than change to another line. Death is more like a Port of departure, where we leave our land conveyance and launch out on a new medium. In that sense only can it be likened to a terminus. Death is a great adventure, it is in no sense a termination of existence.

By too many death has been thought of as an end, a cessation of existence, a sudden and complete stoppage. It is not so; but it was a natural mistake to make, because it has been singularly difficult to get messages back. Away the emigrants have sailed, on the ocean of a new life, and had no means of sending word of their progress to mourners on the shore.

They have found means now. The silence is no longer unbroken. I doubt if the silence was ever quite complete, but it served. It was more than sufficient to cause despair and to constrain people to think of their loved ones as buried in the earth or sea and to lament their fate hopelessly and wildly. This horrible blunder need no more be made.

\* \* \* \* \*

The pangs of separation are bad enough without this added torment, which is both gratuitous and false. It was torment on both sides, too. For, though we might

be out of touch with them, they were not wholly ignorant of us. They might know very little of what we were doing, but affection is a strong link, and they could feel and be distressed by our hopeless sorrow.

They do not wish to be mourned in that way; they feel strong and vigorous, active and useful; they ought not to be lamented unduly. Sorrow that is natural and human is their due, but it should be full of love and hope and sympathy, as theirs is for us. Their messages tell us that they are well, that they are happy, that life is keenly interesting, and even more exhilarating than when pent up in the bodily mechanism from which they have been liberated.

Yet bereavement is painful; death in the prime of life is tragic, the premature loss of an earthly phase of existence is a great deprivation. True; but without sacrifice is no remission; the sacrifice is their glory and honour and patent of nobility. The cause being worthy, they are happy in the opportunity of their death. And we that are left behind must rejoice with them in their fruition and eager helpfulness, and must temper our sorrow with abundant hope.

It will be asked: How do I know so positively, so assuredly, that death is not the end, that it is only a transition, a change of conditions, a quitting of the material life, and an entry into another mode of existence under different conditions? Though I have reason to think that, for ordinary people, the new surroundings will be not altogether dissimilar to the surroundings here. Not by religion, not by faith, have I been guided to this knowledge, but by simple following of fact. Speculative thought might easily suggest the contrary—in my case at one time it did—but my business as a scientific man has been not to speculate



but to grope, to examine all manner of facts, and to follow the light faithfully whithersoever it might lead.

Denials, negations, assumptions of impossibility are easy to make, but unless they are well founded they are misleading. The restricted outlook of those who have limited their study to bodily structure and functions is quite natural and readily understood. The living body is a beautiful piece of mechanism, full of physical and chemical laws in entirely normal activity.

Given a suitable stimulus, everything that can happen in the inorganic world can be traced working in the same way in the fabric of animals and plants. And those who have discovered this and are still working at its details sometimes get carried away by their enthusiasm and add to their splendid sheaf of positive information the gratuitous surmise, the baseless hypothesis, that the body which they study is the whole of man. And that when man's material machinery is irretrievably damaged and discarded there is nothing left.

Well, without further examination of specific psychological facts, it might seem so, but when we come to grips with the facts we find that it is not so. The whole personality persists: the memory, the character, the affections are all unchanged. The individual soul, if so it may be called, has entered another region of service, and has some different—perhaps ethereal—mode of manifestation: one that does not appeal directly to our senses at all, so that the animating spirit seems to have gone altogether beyond our ken.

Beyond our ordinary physical ken, yes: but a mental link remains. The power of thought, the immaterial method of communication that is called telepathy, continues, and this can be utilized and developed.

By this means messages have been received across the gulf, and the barrier is opaque no longer. It never was really opaque: there must have been far more personal intercourse than the world in general has been aware of; but now the facts—the messages which come—are being examined in a scientific age, and to any one who will really study the facts, for a few strenuous years, doubt is no longer, in my judgment, reasonably possible.

The evidence requires study. Yes, truly, it does. All scientific evidence requires study. Is the general public expected to examine the records of scientific societies before it can receive information at the hands of those who have worked at the subject of which they treat? Certainly not. Yet some idea of the evidence ought to be given. It is not possible to convey any adequate idea of the evidence in an article, it needs at least a book; and a book I will write—indeed am writing; but I have lately communicated three incidents of the most recent evidence to the Society for Psychical Research, whose *business it is to criticize these things*, and in a forthcoming issue of its proceedings they will appear. While in the previous volumes of proceedings will be found a large accumulation of previous evidence.

But I cannot expect people in general to understand it; I cannot expect people to deduce conclusions from any record. They can realize that a case for inquiry has been made out; they can regard the possibility with respect and interest; but for conviction I am sure that most people must depend on some first-hand experience of their own. And what that experience may be, what form it may take, is not for me to say. Meanwhile I counsel an open and yet critical mind, and the

reception of such immediate comfort as they can receive from the assurance that I and a few other students fairly familiar with the whole of the evidence have been convinced.

\* \* \* \* \*

Those who prefer to be guided by speculation and hypothesis as to what is likely must continue their attitude of negation, which is based on nothing more substantial than their inability to comprehend how these things can possibly be true: especially how mental activity without the accustomed organ which we call the brain is possible. As a matter of fact they have no real theory of how it is possible *with* the brain. We have grown accustomed to that fact, and find it hard to imagine any other; that is the strength of their position.

The connection between mind and matter is a puzzle. Mind without matter is not a whit greater puzzle. It is not a case for theory but for examination of fact. The facts at present recognized by orthodox science must be enlarged, and then in due time a theory may follow.

The theory may be difficult: it certainly is far from clear at present. Supposititious explanations can be suggested, but to them no weight can be attached. We do not pretend that the whole rationale of the process of communication is clear. That is what we are engaged in studying. If there were no difficulty, the human race would have known all about it long ago.

It is because of the difficulty that such careful record and examination of fact has been necessary. Because of it also much profound scepticism has been quite legitimate.



But now that there are facts demonstrating personal survival to be studied, it is futile to adduce the difficulty of explaining them as an argument against them. If they will not fit into our preconceived theories, then those theories must sooner or later be enlarged. The realm of science is not necessarily limited to a study of the material basis of existence; it will have to include something more like existence itself. There must be a theory not of earth-life alone, but of life itself—something much larger and fuller, of which earth-life is but an episode.

Then I venture to anticipate that we shall find that we are one family all the time, that there is no real break or discontinuity in existence, that what is called "the next world" is a condition of things fully as real and interesting and full-bodied as this world. That it is no strange land to which our friends have gone, but a home-country commensurate with the brightest of our reasonable hopes.

Meanwhile we must be satisfied to do our work here, not shirking any of this life's duties, and making ourselves worthy of the reunion which will come in good time. The readiness is all.

Nor have we altogether to wait till the future for our partial communion. Even the most stricken may be enabled to endure to the end if they can learn from time to time a channel is open for their thoughts and aspirations to be felt; still more if by patience, in ways at present unsuspected, some reasonable foundation for personal conviction of reciprocal interest and affection is vouchsafed to them.

*Some there are now who have had this experience, and have thus learnt the truth of the ancient saying that LOVE BRIDGES THE CHASM.*

## CHAPTER XI

### COMMUNICATIONS FROM SOLDIERS WHO HAVE "DIED"

WE now come to those cases where messages have apparently been received by the living from those who have gone before—relatives or friends of theirs who have been killed in the present world-war, in most instances,—which tend to show us that those whom we have been accustomed to think of as "dead" are in fact yet alive, and capable, at times, of communicating with those yet in the body, through certain instruments or sensitives known as psychics or mediums. The first case of this kind I adduce is, it seems to me, very striking,—not only by reason of the fact stated, but also because of the utter frankness of the writer, which at once disarms criticism, and compels belief.

The author of the following account, who remains anonymous, is, we are assured, a well-known business man who, until his experiences, was sceptical regarding the kind of phenomena here set forth. The account is taken from the *Harbinger of Light* (Melbourne), January, 1918, being quoted by that periodical from *The London Magazine*. The account reads:

"Out of the many conflicting prophecies as to how the war will affect the future, one stands out pre-eminent in its promise of fulfilment. Without doubt, an extraordinary and broadcast interest has been roused in things spiritual which promises far-reaching effects.

"We are no longer satisfied with dogmatic creeds

or cut-and-dried phrases reduced for many to a meaningless jangle of words by centuries of reiteration. Only lack of thought made them acceptable in an age of materialism which the war has brought crashing about us.

“To have our youths cut off from us at the very beginning of their manhood seems so unnatural that we cannot all accept it in stoic silence. The eternal questions, ‘Whence come we? Whither do we go?’ become insistent in their demands for an answer, and it is to those who are seeking this answer I commend what my wife and I have to relate. Not that it is conclusive in itself, except as a first link in the chain which we ourselves can forge in our search towards the Infinite.

“I have no doubt there are many who, like myself, dazed by a sudden loss, with a hurt past expressing, have believed their dear ones gone forever beyond all recall; and it is to those I would address myself in the hope of bringing them the comfort we have derived from our strange and wonderful experiences.

“I am just an ordinary man of business, dealing with figures all day; I have no scientific training, and no professed religion; I have no arguments to offer, no axe to grind; I *merely give facts, simple in their detail, but which served to convince me that all my preconceived ideas must go by the board.*

“In November, 1916, my son was mortally wounded while leading his men at Beaumont-Hamel, and several days later died, on the verge of his nineteenth birthday. My wife and I went to France, where in a military hospital we had a few words with him before he passed over. He was an only child, and the sentiment between him and his mother, who is exceptionally young, was



as much the outcome of an intimate friendship and delightful companionship as it was due to her maternal relation: the loss to her is a threefold one.

*Deep-rooted Prejudice Defeated*

“I will not dwell upon that last meeting. On our return to England a friend, anxious to help my wife in her great grief, sent her Sir Oliver Lodge’s book, *Raymond*. Such was my prejudice that I begged her not to read it. However, I did not feel justified in persisting in face of her expressed desire to do so, but I was emphatic that I should not be asked to be a party to what I considered absolute folly.

“She was so impressed with what she read and the prospect it opened out to her that she used every available argument to lessen my prejudice and induce me to read it. ‘Men like Sir Oliver Lodge, Sir William Earnshaw Cooper, Mr. Arthur Balfour, Lord Dewar, Sir William F. Barrett, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Sir William Crookes, all men of science and letters, had,’ she said, ‘after years of research and consideration, ranged themselves on the side of belief.’ It *might* be that I, an ordinary business man who had given no thought to the occult or to theological matters of any kind, was the one in error, not they! These arguments seemed to me reasonable, and I changed my mind and decided to read it.

“However, I was in no way convinced, though I thought it a beautiful theory and realized my mistake in condemning it unread. I felt it might be a consolation to her, so agreed to help in any way possible. She wrote to Sir Oliver Lodge asking his advice. He knew nothing about us, but out of kindness to one suffering

a loss similar to his own, he introduced us to a friend whom he thought would be helpful, who had also experienced a like bereavement.

“In January of this year she anonymously arranged a sitting for us with Mr. A. Vout Peters, and at our first attempt to explore the unknown we were told that our boy on going over was met by ‘John, Elizabeth, William, and Edward.’ These four names only were given. John was my father; Elizabeth my mother; William my brother. My father has been dead about thirty-six years, my brother William about thirty-five years, and my mother over two years. Edward I could not place, but, impressed by the accuracy of the first three names, I wrote to my eldest brother inquiring about a child who, I knew, had died in infancy before I was born. I had an immediate reply, informing me that a child named Edward had died at the age of twelve weeks.

### *A Very Personal Test*

“Another remarkable instance occurred upon this first occasion. The boy knowing my unbelief, said he was anxious to give me proof of his presence, and he proceeded to do this through reference to a matter *intimately personal and known only to my wife and myself*. It is so peculiarly private that I do not care to add it to this statement. Among other things, he also reminded me of a youthful school fellow of his to whom I had given an uncommon nickname, which had stuck to this boy through his schooldays.

“Although my boy’s name was not Roger, he had always been called so, except by his mother, who had converted it into the pet name of Poger. The medium

told us he was getting a name through. It was R-o-. He could not make out the next two letters but the last was 'r'. I replied, 'That is the boy's name—you mean Roger.' Instantly the medium answered, 'The boy says I am not to say "Roger—but Poger."' '

"My curiosity, if nothing more, was roused by these phenomena,—to me inexplicable. I felt I could not leave the matter there. I had entered into it purely to find consolation for my wife, but I realized I might find something more.

"Some weeks later, again anonymously, we made an appointment with another medium, Mrs. Osborne Leonard. As upon the previous occasion, this medium knew nothing of us, why we had come, or concerning whom we sought information. The first thing she did was to give us an exact description of our boy, also the name Poger, adding that Elizabeth, John, and William were near, helping him.

"Unknown to me, my wife had been concerned at the absence of her own letters among many others she had found in the boy's returned belongings, although she had made no mention of this. The medium was insistent that Roger was pointing out a satchel with a flap which was among his things and had been overlooked. 'There,' she said, 'his mother would find the writing she was in search of.' On looking in the place indicated, the satchel with the flap, just as described, was found, and in it all his mother's letters and nothing else.

"Then followed a particularly interesting and convincing instance. The medium stretched forth her hand, which, she said, held something that looked like a coin and yet did not seem one, but she was very definite about its being bronze. My wife suggested



that it might be a regimental brass button which he had had made into a locket for her, but the medium insisted that if we searched things thoroughly we would find a bronze object which answered to the description given. Roger was anxious it should be found and a hole made in it that his mother might wear it as a token. We had no previous knowledge of his having possessed anything of this nature, no mention had been made of it in his letters, but on returning home we found in a little stud-box a penny bent nearly double by a bullet.

### *Conviction Follows Investigation*

*“By this time I was thoroughly convinced that communication had been established with my boy, and was most anxious to pursue it further. At this stage a friend told us of a Mrs. Annie Brittain, a medium to whom we also owe some very convincing proofs.*

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

“Both my parents’ names were given, and though my son appeared in the Army List as Leslie Stuart

Wilkinson, his name again came through as 'Poger.' We were also told upon this occasion that 'there were two boys with him—Geoffry and Malcolm.' Both were cousins who had passed over during the war. One went down in the *Defence*, the other was recently killed in action.

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

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

"A few days later she returned to town, having made no mention of this to any one, and only told me as we met at the station. That same afternoon we saw Mrs. Brittain. Almost the first thing she said was, 'The boy wants me to tell his mother it was not a dream—the veil was allowed to be lifted for one second. And,'

added Mrs. Brittain, 'Joan has also seen him.' Joan is an intimate young friend, who a little time before had told my wife, to her astonishment, that she (Joan) had actually seen him under conditions which placed out of bounds the possibility of its having been a dream. Mrs. Brittain had never heard of and knew nothing of Joan. She told us many strange things at this extraordinary sitting. Thus far no medium had given my wife the name of endearment the boy used to her, and she was transfigured with joy when this time he said, 'Good-bye, Angel,' the name she was most used to from him.

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

*"Whatever our religion, let us be sure that no one of us has a monopoly of truth. By searching the beliefs of others we may find that which answers our greatest need and completes our own imperfect conception."*

The next two cases, giving good evidence of identity, are from Sir William Barrett's book *On the Threshold of the Unseen*. The author calls the cases, respectively, "The Chatham Case," and "The Pearl Tie-Pin Case."



*The Chatham Case*

“In this case the communicating intelligence was unknown to Mrs. E. The circumstances, written down at the time, were as follows:—A cousin of my hostess, an officer in the Engineers, named B., was paying a visit to Hawthorn Manor. I was not present, but the facts were sent to me; some, indeed, came under my own knowledge. B. had a friend, a brother officer, Major C., who died after B. left Chatham, and to whose rooms in the barracks he frequently went to play on C.’s piano, both being musical. Of this Mrs. E. assured me she knew absolutely nothing. . . . At the sitting in question, much to B.’s amazement, for he was quite ignorant of Spiritualism, the Christian name and surname of Major C. were unexpectedly given, followed by the question, addressed to B., ‘Have you kept up your music?’ Then came some private matter of a striking character, when suddenly the unseen visitant interjected the question, ‘What was done with the books?’ ‘What books,’ was asked. ‘Lent to me,’ was C.’s reply. ‘Who lent you the books?’ The reply came at once, ‘A—,’ giving the name of another brother officer, of whose existence Mrs. E. was also wholly unaware. ‘Shall I write to ask A— if he has them?’ B. asked. ‘Yes,’ was the reply. All present assert on their word of honour they knew of no such loan, nor was the officer named in any of their thoughts, nor had Mrs. E. ever heard A.’s name mentioned before.

“A— was written to, and the questions about the books incidentally asked, but in a reply that came some time after no notice was taken of the question. Two months later, however, B. accidentally met his friend

A——, when, in course of conversation on other matters, A—— suddenly exclaimed: ‘That was a rum thing you asked me about in your letter; I mean about Major C. and the books. I did lend him some books, but I don’t know what became of them after his death.’ ”

### *The Pearl Tie-Pin Case*

“Miss C., the sitter, had a cousin, an officer with our Army in France, who was killed in battle a month previously to the sitting: this she knew. One day after the name of her cousin had unexpectedly spelt out on the ouija board, and her name given in answer to her query ‘Do you know who I am,’ the following message came:—

“ ‘Tell mother to give my *pearl tie-pin* to the girl I was going to marry, I think she ought to have it.’ When asked what was the name and address of the lady, both were given, the name spelt out included the full Christian and surname, the latter being a very unusual one and *quite unknown to both sitters*. The address given in London was either fictitious or taken down incorrectly, as a letter sent there was returned, and the whole message was thought to be fictitious.

“Six months later, however, it was discovered that the officer *had* been engaged, shortly before he left for the front, to the very lady whose name was given; he had however told no one. Neither his cousin nor any of his own family in Ireland were aware of the fact and had never seen the lady nor heard her name, until the War Office sent over the deceased officer’s effects. Then they found that he had put this lady’s name in his will as his next of kin, both Christian and surname being precisely the same as given through the

automatist; and what is equally remarkable, a pearl tie-pin *was* found in his effects.

“Both the ladies have signed a document they sent me, affirming the accuracy of the above statement. The message was recorded at the time, and not written from memory after verification had been obtained. Here there could be no explanation of the facts by subliminal memory, or telepathy, or collusion, and the evidence points unmistakably to a telepathic message from the deceased officer.”

### *An Apparition Narrates Facts*

I next give an account of a séance, published in the *Journal* of the British S. P. R., April, 1917. Mrs. Salter, writing editorially, says:

“In the following case which has been sent us through Sir Oliver Lodge, evidence of identity was obtained in a communication purporting to come from a spirit. The communication was made through a professional medium, to whom reference is made under the name of Mr. Z. in Sir Oliver Lodge’s paper on ‘Recent Evidence about Prevision and Survival’ (*Proc. S. P. R.*, Part LXXII., pp. III ff.).

“The spirit purporting to communicate was a son of Colonel M—— and we give first Colonel M——’s account of the incident, as follows:

“ ‘December 23, 1916.

“ ‘On 5th October, 1916, I was at supper at Colonel C——’s residence in Tufnell Park. Mr. (Z.), who had been asked to give a private séance, was one of the party and at supper was seated on my left. During the meal he said to me, “A boy who looks to me about



25, dressed in the kilt, has just come in and is standing now behind your chair—to me he seems to be your son.”

“ ‘He further described him to me as wearing the Black Watch tartan (this was an error, but one easily enough made, especially by a Londoner). My son was in the Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders, and I said it would not be the boy, who had been shot through the head near Ypres on 8th November, 1914. Mr. (Z.) said, “I feel sure he is for you—he is trying to identify himself and is showing me a large scar, three or four inches long, on the left shin, looks to me as if it might be a foot-ball scar.”

“ ‘I replied that I had often seen the boy in swimming, etc., and that to my knowledge he had no such scar.

“ ‘(Z.) however, remained very positive and said, “Well! I feel very sure he is for you, and if you make enquiries you will find he had this scar—he smiles and shows it to me again.”

“ ‘Some two or three days after, I met on the staircase of my house an old servant who had been the boy’s nurse many years ago, and I asked her if she remembered any such scar.

“ ‘She said, “Yes, during the winter of 1910-11, while at Sandhurst, he had motored in to London for the week-end on leave.”

“ ‘He used a motor-bike in those days—“The roads were still covered with half-melted snow. The bike skidded and threw him. The front wheel during the fall turned round and caught his leg between the step and the wheel and gave his shin a very nasty cut—five or six inches long. When he got home, about midnight, he woke me up to bandage the wound before he turned

into bed, as it was bleeding badly. Before bandaging I washed the wound with Sanitas for fear of tetanus infection."

" "I never saw the wound and had no knowledge of the scar, and therefore, had denied its existence to Mr. (Z.)—but he was right and I was wrong.

" "There could have been no "thought reading" in this case, for the idea that the boy had such a scar as described did not then exist in my mind. In fact, I "thought" quite differently.

" "C. M——, *Lt.-Col.*'

" "Certified that the above statement contains an accurate summary of what took place on the occasion mentioned.

" "M. C——.  
(A.Z.)'

" "We have also obtained an independent statement from Colonel C—— as follows:

" "January 10, 1917.

" "I was present at the séance and supper mentioned by Colonel M—— and can certify that his letter contains an accurate statement of what took place.

" "N. C——.'

" "The following statement was obtained from the nurse to whom Colonel M—— alludes above:

" "January 7, 1917.

" "I certify that I have read the above statement, that I personally washed and dressed the wound referred to, and informed Col. M—— of the fact as recorded, and that the above is a true statement of

the case, and that I am the "nurse" therein referred to. I was not present at the séance and do not know Mr. (Z.) and therefore cannot certify to that portion of the statement.

“ ‘EVA M——.’

“After receiving this statement we wrote to Colonel M—— pointing out that the nurse did not say which leg was injured and asking for further information from her on this point. In reply she wrote to us as follows:

“ ‘February 16, 1917.

“ ‘I hereby certify the wound was on the left leg, about half-way between the ankle and the knee.

“ ‘EVA M——.’

“It appears that the medium, Mr. Z., was justified in his assertion that the young soldier who wished to communicate with Colonel M—— —apparently his son—had a scar on his left leg. It came to our knowledge that upon another recent occasion a spirit purporting to communicate through Mr. Z. (in no way connected with Colonel M——) had referred to a scar on his right leg as a proof of identity. In this case also it happened that the statement was correct, but this second incident suggested that Mr. Z. might be in the habit of making allusions to scars on the chance of scoring a hit. We have, however, made enquiries of several people who have had sittings repeatedly with Mr. Z. and they tell us that in their own experience he has not referred to a scar. It appears unlikely therefore that the occurrence of two recent cases in which a spirit purporting to communicate through Mr. Z. has referred correctly to a scar on one of his legs is merely a coincidence.



“Whatever was the source of the medium’s knowledge it does not appear to have been Colonel M——’s mind, as he himself has pointed out, and it is difficult to see upon what normal source of information Mr. Z. could have drawn.

“Upon this point Colonel M—— informs us that until the evening of October 5, 1917, ‘I had never met or heard of Mr. Z., no one of the company at the table or in the house had acquaintance with my son, or knew him by sight.’ ”

The next account was published in the *International Psychic Gazette* of London. Writing editorially, Mr. John Lewis, the editor, says:

In giving the following account, furnished to us by Count Hamon, of a remarkable séance, the medium at which was the Rev. Susannah Harris, it should be mentioned that the sitting was given by the medium without payment, and in the interests of psychic science. We know personally all those mentioned as having been present, and have seen the letters referred to by Count Hamon.

On Monday, May 14, 1917, I attended in a private house a séance at which Mrs. Harris was the medium. There were present on this occasion, amongst several others whose names I am not authorized to mention, Miss Scatcherd, Mrs. Dixson-Hartland, and Dr. Hector Munro.

After many convincing conversations with spirits by means of the “direct voice” had occurred, a spirit visitor came and said very distinctly, “I want to send a message to my father.”

“Who are you?” we asked.

The spirit replied, “I am an officer recently killed at

the front in Flanders; my name is ——." We could not hear the name very distinctly, so after some repeated efforts to get it, we said, "Well, leave the name alone for the moment and try to give us the message."

Speaking very slowly at first, the spirit said, "My father lives near Dublin; you will find him at the well-known club there."

A gentleman present asked, "Which club do you mean?"

The spirit replied, "The Kildare-street Club; you know it well, and you also know my father."

As no one had caught the name of the father exactly right, the gentleman referred to said, "I know the Kildare-street Club very well, but I do not think I know your father; but give us the message."

Continuing, the spirit went on, "My father is always worrying and unhappy about me; he can't seem to get over it. I want some one to tell him that I came here tonight to get this through as a test message to him, to tell him not to worry about me as I am all right, and glad to have gone through it, and I want him to know that I am all right and not to worry and be unhappy any more."

After a slight pause, he continued, "My father also goes to mediums in Dublin, and I try to give him messages through them, but I want this sent on to him as a test message."

We again asked him to try to give us the name, and we got one part—the Christian name—very distinctly, but the surname was always so slurred that we were unable to catch it clearly, and after many efforts had to give it up. But before we did so, I promised that I would do all I could to send on his message.

The next morning I wrote a letter to the name I

thought it had sounded like, addressing it to the Kildare-street Club. In about a week this letter was returned to me through the Post Office marked "Name not known."

I was considerably worried as to what I should do next, until the thought came to me that I should write to the secretary of the club simply saying that I was anxious to find a gentleman who, I believe, was a member of his club, whose son had recently been killed in Flanders; that the name was something like so-and-so, and that I had a message to give him about his son.

Now comes the strangest part of this strange story. In a few days, I received a letter from the gentleman in question, saying that the secretary had sent him my letter, and adding, "I have had a message from my son who was recently killed in Flanders, saying he had sent me a message through a medium in London, that he had difficulty in getting the name and address through but he wanted to give me a test." The father added: "If you understand this I hope you will send me his message." In another paragraph the writer continued: "I see your name is Hamon. I am descended from a Huguenot family, and twice they married into the Hamon family, also Huguenots; their name was also de Robillard, Counts of Champagne. It may interest you."

*Now here was the case of a gentleman who had not yet come into contact with me receiving through a medium in Dublin a message from his son in the spirit world—stating clearly what had taken place at our séance in London—and sending his son's message before he had received it from me. It was also strange that I should have been the person so strongly impressed to obey the request made by the spirit to try*



and get into communication with his father, and by so doing be brought in contact with a branch of my own family that I did not know existed in Ireland.

Among the many remarkable instances I have met with of accurate psychic messages, this is, I consider, one of the most remarkable and worthy of being placed on record.

Mr. Robert Mountsier, in the January (1918) *Bookman*, writing on "Spiritualism in England," says:—

In the minds of those remote from the war these losses tend to be little more than mathematical symbols; to those directly concerned they are the facts of death, from which it is impossible to escape. For instance, what does a list of the men lost on H.M.S. *Invincible*, which went down in the great naval battle off Jutland, mean to you? The list of a thousand names begins:

## NAVY ROLL OF HONOUR

### *Killed*

Rear-Admiral the Hon. Horace L. A. Hood

Secretary Harold R. Gore Brown

Lieutenant Frank P. O'Reilly

Assistant Paymaster Lewis R. Tippen

And this record of death ends:

Worters, L. G., London Z.1942; Wright, J., Tyne, Z. 6863; Wright, SS.104319; Wyatt, A. H., 181053.

To you this list of names may mean in the abstract nothing more than a company of brave men as indefinite in its physical make-up as any gallant crew mentioned in one of your old history text-books. To thousands in England it meant and still means tears,

suffering, desolation, loneliness. One person overcome with grief by the destruction of the *Invincible* is my friend, Mrs. Stuart—to give her a name other than her own, which I am not at liberty to use. Her seventeen-year-old son Edward, an only child, was one of the midshipmen lost with the *Invincible*. When the newspapers and a telegram from the Admiralty removed the hope that her son might have been saved, she gave herself up to a consuming grief. Nothing could console her. Friends enlarged upon the theme, “He went to a gallant death, dying for you and England.” The vicar came with these words, “Comfort yourself with the thought that his death is God’s will, that he awaits you in heaven.”

Mrs. Stuart’s reply was always the same: “I am a mother who wants her boy above everything else, and what you say is to me nothing but words, mere words. If I only knew where he is!”

Now Mrs. Stuart has the knowledge she longed for. Having gone to a private séance, attended by a small group of people, Mrs. Stuart was startled by hearing the medium give a description that fitted her son.

“A young man, a boy, has a message for some one here. I see a uniform; it is the blue of the navy. The boy is tall, stands very straight. Has black hair and eyes softly luminous. Nose long and delicate. His lips are thin and sensitive. When he smiles there is a dimple on his right cheek.”

“It’s my boy,” interrupted Mrs. Stuart, without realizing that she had spoken until the medium said, “He wants to talk with his mother.”

“You must not grieve so for me, mother. Again and again I have come to you when you have been weeping for me. But you haven’t been able to know that I was

there. Really, I am quite happy, and there is no reason why you should make yourself so unhappy. You are like so many others; you will not believe that there is such a thing as my talking to you. At first I did not know this myself, but now I understand.”

Up to this point in the séance there is nothing extraordinary, except the description of Edward Stuart. Later the medium solemnly swore to Mrs. Stuart that before the spirit of Edward Stuart appeared she had never heard nor read of either the mother or her son. As to the beginning of the message it is not unfair to assume that any medium or any person who has studied the messages so frequently communicated by mediums should be able to utter the same words without any connection with the “other side.”

The voice of the medium continued: “You should not think, mother, that I suffered when the ship went down. You are always picturing to yourself my last hours as horrible torture. Those hours are the most wonderful I ever had on your side. When we were going down Weaving came to me. He was very calm. He said: ‘You and I are going to leave all this. Let us go.’ And we came over.”

Immediately upon returning home Mrs. Stuart went to a list of those lost on the *Invincible*. There was the name of Weaving, a name which was in a part of the list she had never looked at before and which her son had never mentioned in his letters. The day following the séance she secured from the Admiralty the address of a member of Weaving’s family. By correspondence she learned that Weaving, a man of education, had been interested in Spiritualism, but had never consulted a medium. Weaving’s letters to his family had contained no references to Edward Stuart by name.



After carefully investigating those features of the case that were susceptible of fraud, Mrs. Stuart was convinced that she had been in communication with the spirit of her departed son. Spiritualism has brought her consolation.

Mr. Mountsier further says:

Extraordinary communications, but prove that they are true, is the attitude of the sceptic. Extraordinary, yes, as we of this world view things, but prove that they are not true, is the position taken by the Spiritualist.

The sceptic, however, is no more able to disprove them than he is able to prove that Mrs. H—— did not see the spirit of her son upon four different occasions at her home in Lancashire. On a Wednesday evening the mother was sitting alone at tea when she heard the door open and saw her boy enter and lean against the wall just inside. With an exclamation of delight at his return, she got up to greet him, when to her surprise he went out again and shut the door. Thinking that he had gone to buy cigarettes, she hurried out to two shops nearby and made inquiries. No one had seen her son. She decided that he had met friends and would return later, so she left the door open all evening and sat up till eleven o'clock waiting for him.

The next afternoon while sewing she happened to lift her eyes and there sitting on a stool was her son. She approached to kiss him, but again he disappeared without a word.

Friday evening, after having tea, she was standing, tea-pot in hand, when again she saw him appear at the door.

“My boy,” she cried, “don’t leave your mother this

time! Come in and sit down and have a cup of tea.”

“I can’t, mother,” came the reply, “I’m done. I want to go to bed.”

Then she noticed for the first time that there was blood on his breast. “Go up to your room, and I will come and wash you and bring you a cup of tea.”

She heard him go up. Within a few minutes she followed and found him standing by the bedside. Suddenly he fell on the bed. He rolled over on his back, and the mother saw the bed covered with blood. With an exclamation of dismay she caught up the sponge and turned again to the bed. No one was there, and the bed was spotless and undisturbed.

For the first time she realized that it was not the actual physical presence of her son that had been before her. The next day, Saturday, the son appeared for the fourth time, telling her not to fret, for everything was all right with him.

The next morning when the postman came to the door she said, “You have brought me bad news.” A letter he gave her contained the news of her son’s death at the front. He had been killed on the previous Wednesday, the day on which he had first appeared before his mother.

What can the sceptic say that will make this woman believe she did not see her son? Or how can the sceptic prove to the satisfaction of over one hundred officers and men that they did not see Col. — on the day that he died several hundred miles distant from the trenches where they were stationed?

This is the story. Col. —, of one of England’s famous regiments, was idolized by the officers and soldiers under him. There was no sacrifice they would not make for him, and he was equally devoted to their

interests. He shared their dangers in Flanders for a year, until one morning he was wounded by a hand grenade which caused the loss of his right arm. When after a number of months he was fitted with an artificial arm he used all the influence possible to get back to his old regiment. The War Office was obdurate. He could not return to fighting in Flanders. However, if he wished he could have the command of a garrison battalion that would first be landed at Lemnos.

He accepted, but his heart was with his old regiment. They heard of his new command, but all of them, officers and men, believed that the colonel would succeed in getting back to them. Shortly after landing at Lemnos the colonel became ill with dysentery. He was put aboard a hospital ship which reached a channel port on a Tuesday. At noon the next day the colonel was placed on a hospital train, but he never reached London, for he died just half an hour later.

At the hour of the colonel's death a company of his old regiment saw him in their trench in Flanders. The company sergeant-major turned to the company commander, "Beg your pardon, sir, here's Colonel — coming round; didn't know he was back again."

The officer looked up, and there stood the colonel, with his cap just a little on one side as he always wore it and with a pair of binoculars, familiar to all the men, slung around his neck.

The company commander started toward him, dropped his stick and stooped to pick it up. When he straightened up again the colonel was gone. Down a communication trench rushed the officer to company headquarters. The officers there had also seen the colonel. "We looked at him for fully a minute, then suddenly he was not there. We can't make it out,



either, for we thought he was in the Dardanelles. Besides all the men saw him, and he had both his arms."

Not until the next week did the regiment learn of the colonel's death. Not one of the hundred and more men who had seen him even knew until then that the colonel had left the Mediterranean.

No matter what you and I believe, no matter what arguments we might put forward in attempting to prove that the colonel or his spirit did not appear, that company saw its former colonel. They know they did. . . .

General Sir Alfred Turner, who in more than twenty-five years of psychic research has had séances with numerous mediums of various nationalities, tells me he has come in contact with very few who are not genuine. Recently he has had a number of sittings with three mediums in whose powers and integrity he has the utmost confidence because of repeated tests and communications.

At one of these sittings, with a medium known as Mr. Craddock, a distinguished general officer, who died in the Sudan thirty-one years ago, appeared to the medium and General Turner, "as clearly as in his physical life," said General Turner in telling the details. He asked the spirit what had happened to his son, who was an officer in the Guards and who had been reported "missing, believed killed." The father replied that his son is a prisoner in Germany, and that owing to shell-shock his memory is completely destroyed, and he cannot recall his name to give to his captors.

When sitting with X., a medium of more than ordinary powers, there came a voice calling General Turner "uncle." He could not identify the source of the com-

munication until the spirit gave his Christian name; then General Turner recognized him as a boy of nineteen, an officer in the Guards, who although not a nephew had always addressed him as uncle. General Turner knew that the boy had been brutally murdered by a German officer. The battalion of the Guards to which the boy belonged was being pressed back by the Germans in greatly superior numbers when he was wounded by a piece of shrapnel. His comrades, unable to carry him, saw him shot by a German officer. Later this German was captured, identified, tried by court-martial and shot.

At this séance the boy told General Turner that he was perfectly happy and had no wish to return to earth. He said that since his spirit had left his body he had been helped by other spirits.

At a subsequent séance General Turner was in communication with the boy a second time, but with a different medium, Mrs. Susannah Harris. Through one of her control spirits, called Harmony, General Turner addressed a question to this nineteen-year-old officer of the Guards relating to the fellow-officer "reported missing, believed killed" and said by the spirit of the father to be a prisoner in Germany.

"Is Captain —— with you?"

"No," came the reply, "he is still on your side. He was made a prisoner. The people around him cannot learn who he is. He is suffering from shell-shock, and he knows nothing about the past."

"Does he know his name?"

"No, he has forgotten everything."

As yet no information has been received from Germany verifying these corroborative communications from different spirits through different mediums. But

the Spiritualist is just as firm in his belief of the truth of these communications as the Christian, who does not demand material proof of his religious beliefs.

During the same séance with Mrs. Harris, General Turner was in communication with Lord Roberts, who died on November 14, 1914, after the English people and government had realized their mistake in not following his advice in regard to preparations to offset Germany's military strength. This was uppermost in General Turner's mind, and he addressed a question concerning it to Lord Roberts: "Do you feel that the refusal of the government to listen to your warnings will have a disastrous effect on the outcome of the war?"

"I am convinced England will be victorious," replied Lord Roberts. "If the government had only met Germany's activities with the proper military preparations everything on your side would be very different from what it is today. Everything will be well in the end."

Miss Estelle Stead, in a recent contribution to the *English Review of Reviews*, says:

One of the most remarkable results of the war has been the development of what, for want of a better expression, I will call telegraphic communications, while postal service has been practically held up. Short messages from the "dead" telling of arrival, giving assurance that the transmitter is happy, and tests of identity are being received daily. But my experience and the experience of others who have studied the communications received since the outbreak of the war is that long and concise messages are of very rare occurrence today.



The causes for this may be summed up as follows :

1. The numbers passing over.
2. The conditions around the earth plane.
3. The mental condition of receivers here.

Many of those who have studied communication on the other side—and it is by no means all who have—are using the knowledge they had gained, and which they were using, before the war, to transmit longer messages for themselves, and to help the newly-arrived to get into touch. It appears to need all their knowledge and strength to get just a few words of assurance and comfort through, and when once the telegraphic message of hope and comfort has been communicated, little more seems able to be achieved, save a repetition of that message or of similar short messages of identification and comfort.

Until the newly-arrived has studied the subtleties and difficulties of communication for himself and learned how to manipulate and overcome them, he will not be able to transmit anything in the way of a letter or a longer message. Even then, having learned how to communicate himself—and this is a fact which many on this side who have received these short telegraphic messages and tests of identity, seemingly easily, find difficult to realize and grasp—much depends on the conditions here as to whether, once transmitted, the messages will ever be received, will not be so much altered and distorted as to be almost unrecognizable as coming from the loved son, father or husband from whom they long to hear.

The conditions around the earth plane at present are terrible. The war is setting up so many clouds in the mental atmosphere that, according to messages received from those on the other side, a thick black dark-

ness envelops the earth as a fog. This has to be penetrated by those wishing to send messages. These are guided in their efforts by the lights which we send out here. For each individual one of us here emanates light, the force and strength of which is regulated by our spiritual development and the strength of the love-power within us. Where there is a great love, the light is strong and attracts the loved ones. Where there is spiritual development the light is also strong and attracts many, and often those on the other side who are unable to get in touch with their own people will be able to communicate. But when there is spiritual development and a strong bond of love powerful in its unselfishness, then, given the right psychic conditions, there will be the clearest and purest of communications.

These elements seem to be essential if good communications are to be obtained. As my father says in his message, "Commune with us for love of communion, and all other things that love can dictate and circumstances will permit shall be added thereto." Again and again I have proved, by only too bitter experience, that if one seeks for a message along any particular line or with regard to any particular subject, one is foredoomed to failure; that love and prayer and patience are needed to bring about right conditions, and that often when we least expect it and are not looking for it, the message which is helpful comes and the advice which we need is given.

As these boys and men learn how to establish communication for themselves they in their turn help the more newly arrived to come into touch with their loved ones even as they themselves have done. Raymond Lodge, who came so quickly into touch with his own



people after passing over, owing to the fact that they understood the necessity of giving certain conditions, has stated, and others whom I know personally on the Other Side have also told me, that this is their special work. . . .

Another boy was able to establish his identity and give proof of his continued existence by giving a message to a medium in New Zealand for his mother in England. This is the account sent me by my friend, Mr. Trolove, of Wellington, New Zealand:—

“Four months or five months after the war started a medium at the circle in Wellington, of which I am a member, was controlled by some distressed soul who wanted his mother. He gave his name and said his age was twenty-three, and that he had died in a hospital from wounds at Compiegne. He begged us to write and tell his mother, and gave her name and address in England. Would we write and tell her he was happy, and that all was well with him? I wrote, and got a reply by return mail, acknowledging the facts, and thanking me for the message.

I have in my possession from the boy's mother, the letter confirming Mr. Trolove's statement.

At the W. T. Stead Bureau *we have seen many reunions*. This bureau was opened a few weeks before the war, at the instigation of those on the other side, in order that, we now realize, it might be ready to help those who would be cast into mourning and despair through the war. The aims of the W. T. Stead Bureau are the same as those of Julia's Bureau, founded by my father in 1909, and closed after his passing in 1912, and which he set forth as follows:—

“It is not established to solve scientific problems nor for the purpose of physical research. Its one and



only object is to help those who mourn to communicate with their loved ones who have passed on to another world; to heal broken hearts, to comfort Rachel mourning for her children, to bring sure and certain knowledge of immortality to light by restoring communication between death-divided friends and relatives."

Here at our weekly meetings many a boy on the other side has just the opportunity to find the conditions for which he has been longing to make his presence known to those mourning him here. It may not be that the actual person with whom he especially wishes to come in touch is present; it may be a friend, it may be a distant relation. *The boys will insist on being described again and again, and bring relatives and friends who have passed over to be described also, until they have been recognized and have obtained a promise that a message will be conveyed, if possible, in order to bring about conditions so that they may be able to give direct evidence to their dear ones.*

Up to the present I have spoken of those who have been able to establish their identity and come into touch with their loved ones on this side. These are the fortunate ones, but there are hundreds who are not able to bring about the right conditions. Many have to watch their dear ones, mourning them as dead, and are able to give no sign. But not only for this reason is it so very essential that those who have realized this truth and who have had it demonstrated to them by their friends on the other side should make it known whenever opportunity occurs, but because it makes so much difference to those who are passing on if they know something of it. Many in passing to the Spirit World do not realize where they are, or what has happened. The only heaven they know about—if they know about

it at all—is the one they have been taught about as children, and they are not able to grasp the fact that they have cast off their mortal bodies. They are as in a dream, not knowing where they are, trying to fight on and not understanding why their comrades do not notice them, and are unable to realize what it all means.

We are often told by those on the other side that *loving thoughts and prayers sent out from this side are of enormous help*, in that they concentrate power which enables the bands of spirit people working in the battle-fields to break down this condition and bring realization of the truth of life after death to those who pass over in ignorance. It is only when they themselves desire to learn that they progress, and it is in creating this desire that our loving thoughts and prayers are helpful, and that the ministering spirits are able to come to them and to teach them the laws of the Spirit World. As they learn and progress their spirit body becomes finer and finer, and they are able to realize more and more fully the glory and beauty of the Spirit World, about which they can tell us so little. For to understand we must be able to compare, as my brother wrote when my father expressed his disappointment that he could tell him so little of the life he was living:—

“When I think of the ideas I had of the life I am now Living, when I was in the world in which you are, I marvel at the hopeless inadequacy of my dreams. The reality is so much, so very much greater, than ever I imagined. You and I and all the people that on earth do dwell are too apt to imagine this life as only an extension of the old life. Everything is to be as it is, only more so. But everything is not as it was. It is a new life, the nature of which you cannot



understand, although it is possible to explain something of it by analogy. Imagine yourself a caterpillar on a cabbage leaf. 'Things will be better on before you,' you say to the caterpillar. But what does 'better' mean to the caterpillar? More cabbages, ever more cabbages, and ever cabbages; more sunshine, less rain, and no hungry birds to eat you up. All caterpillary ideas limited by the sensations and aspirations of a cabbage world. After a time the caterpillar becomes a butterfly. But how can the butterfly explain to the caterpillars the condition of his new life, the buoyancy of flight, the joy of love, the sweetness of the honey-flowers? These essentials of the new existence are incapable of being explained to the caterpillar mind, for the vocabulary of the cabbage would contain no words capable of conveying concepts entirely alien to the caterpillar's senses. So it is with me. I tell you it is better on before you, always, and far better than I ever dreamed of. But when I come down to tell you wherein the betterness consists I feel like the butterfly sitting by the caterpillar endeavouring to explain what sight is, what light is, what flight is, wherein lies the joy of love."

Often people will say to me, "You seem to be so in touch with your father; can't he tell you something definite about the war?" He has told me many interesting things in connection with the war, but from what he says, it is impossible for him to see very far ahead. He foretold the great change in Russia some while before it happened. He has once or twice spoken of the work being done on their side in connection with the eventual settlement, but says he is too much in the war conditions to be above and to see exactly when the end will be. He often speaks of the great difficulty



of getting sufficiently "into tune," because of the present conditions around the earth-plane, to talk on the war, or even general matters at any length. But he can see the light of Peace growing clearer and nearer, and gives this message of hope for the future:

*"The earth is now covered with black clouds, and is a place of weariness and sadness, but the time is coming when it will be an earth of joy and gladness. We see sweet peace. More light, more light will come till the two worlds blend into one."*

### *A "Ouija" Communication*

The following curious case is from *Azoth* (New York), and gives an account of what purports to be a conversation with a soldier who had been killed by a bayonet wound, and was obtained through the Ouija Board. Mr. Michael Whitty, the editor of *Azoth*, was present at the time, and in fact, it was he who conducted the experiment of removing the fancied bayonet. The account nicely illustrates, it seems to me, the earthly and bewildered state of mind which many spirits find themselves in, for some time, after they pass on to the other side. This is, of course, more the case with some than with others. In the present instance, it seems to have been very marked.

### *A Talk With a Dead Soldier*

On the evening of New Year's Day, 1916, the writer and three friends were trying what results they could get with a Ouija Board. For those who do not know—a Ouija Board is generally considered a kind of toy or game, and consists of a board about 20x15 inches

bearing the letters of the alphabet and the numerals 1-10 printed thereon, a "NO" and "YES" in the two upper corners and a little wooden triangle with three legs which slides freely and easily over the board's smooth surface. The way it is used—generally two persons each place the fingers of one hand lightly on the triangle, when it will begin to move, and often spell out words and messages.

On this particular evening M, which stands for the writer, and G were trying Ouija and obtaining some rather disconnected words and phrases, when J came in; M and J then sat down to the board and G took pad and pencil and recorded the letters as the triangle moved around and pointed to them. After a moment or two we began to get as follows:

when very young—bayonet still in me  
—There seemed to be a good deal of hesitation about finding the letters, but with the exception of the repetition of the ay in bayonet it came clearly.

M asked—"What is your name?" The answer came slowly and hesitatingly A r e e s t a r t e e s.

Then the conversation went on as follows:

N o b a n a j s o l d i e r r s a r e e s s t i l l h e r e b a y -  
o n e t s t i l l i n m e

M. "Is your name Rees?"

O. (O meaning Ouija.) Yes

M. "What is your first name?"

O. Albert

M. "Where were you fighting?"

O. I must not tell

M. "Why not? If you have been killed it does not matter now."

O. I will not tell

M. "Why will you not?"

O. yes boss orders not to

M. "Are you English?"

O. No

M. "Are you French?"

O. no

M. "Are you Italian or Russian?"

O. No Canadian

M. "Oh, a Canadian, eh?"

O. It hurts

M. "You are deluding yourself. If you are dead you are in a new body—the bayonet may be sticking in the old body but it is not really sticking in you now."

O. just try a bit yourself

M. "Do you know any of us here?"

O. I was the husband of cook for mrs Weston

M. "What was her name?"

O. Alice

M. "Where did she live?"

O. In hern bay (Probably meaning Herne Bay, near London)

J. "Who is Mrs. Weston?"

O. A pal of your stepma—

J. "Mine?"

O. yours stepmot—No—a ma

J. "My stepma?"

O. Yes

M. "What are you doing round here?"

O. I seem to hang out with erle he lives ianinmerw (evidently mixed up)

M. "Whom did you say you are with?"

O. My pal searl that s is name

M. "Is there no one else here?"



O. only sear l here

M. "Well, what do you want us to do for you?"

O. take this bayonet out

M. "Can't Searl take it out for you?"

O. he aint got no hands

M. "How did you get it?"

O. got it for xmas

M. "Will you do exactly what I say? If you will I can help you."

O. No

M. "Well, I can't help you unless you do what I tell you——"

O. I got (t) his for lowing what one dam fool said

G. "Is he writing sense?"

O. can't you read

M. "Will you do what I tell you? If you will I can help you——"

O. Are you sure you can what's it

M. "Will you do it?"

O. If i can

M then told him to wish himself back where his body was and find it, and then he would see the bayonet in it and realize that it was not really in him now.

O. if I go back now ill get in a scrap with a bhlpoody ogerman

M. "The dead don't fight with each other."

O. they still scrap

M. "Where is your mother?"

O. she did not go to war

M. "I don't suppose she did, but where is she?"

O. been dead years

M. "Well, you think of her and call her and she will come to you."

*O. nothing doing*

*M.* "Well, I will pull it out for you. Place yourself so that the head of the bayonet is in my hand here (holding out hand)—Is it there?"

*O. yes goe easy goe easy*

*M.* "All right—it won't hurt (suddenly pulling as if removing the bayonet). There—it's out now. I've got it"—(a pause).

*O. its ok now*

*M.* "Does it still hurt?"

*O. thats all right pleas eun ouo for me*

*M.* "Now, what about Searl? Perhaps I can fix up his hands——"

*O. he is sleaping*

*M.* "Well, goodnight——"

*O. thanks*

\* \* \* \* \*

This is actually and exactly what passed. Whether it really was a Canadian soldier killed last Christmas and who imagined the bayonet was still sticking in him and giving him great pain or not—I leave others to judge for themselves.

### *Raymond*

Every one interested in psychical literature has doubtless read Sir Oliver Lodge's book *Raymond*. It is, indeed, so well-known that it might almost seem superfluous to quote any passages from it. Nevertheless, inasmuch as no book dealing with the war and psychic phenomena would be complete without some extended mention of this work, I will quote, here, a few extracts from the most important passages of Sir Oliver Lodge's book, written to show that Ray-

mond Lodge, his son, who was killed September 14, 1915, actually communicated with him through various mediums; and for this purpose I extract passages from the famous "Faunus" Message, and from the narrated incident of the "Group Photograph." Writing of the first intimations he received that something was about to happen, Sir Oliver Lodge says:

### *The Faunus Message*

Messages of an intelligible though rather recondite character began to reach me indeed a week or two before the death of my son. The first intimation that I had that anything might be going wrong, was a message from Myers (Frederic W. H., the great researcher, poet, author, some years deceased), through Mrs. Piper in America; communicated apparently by Richard Hodgson at a time when a Miss Robbins was having a sitting at Mrs. Piper's house, Greenfield, N. H., August 8, 1915, and sent to me by Miss Alta Piper, together with the original script. Here follows the extract which began abruptly thus:—

R. H. "Now, Lodge, while we are not here as of old, *i. e.*, not quite, we are here enough to give and take messages.

"Myers says you take the part of the poet, and he will act as Faunus."

Miss R. "Faunus?"

R. H. "Yes, Myers. *Protect*. He will understand." (Evidently referring to Lodge).

"What have you to say, Lodge? Good work. Ask Verrall, she will also understand. Arthur says so" (this means Arthur W. Verrall, deceased.—O. J. L.).

Miss R. "Did you mean Arthur Tennyson?"



R. H. "No; Myers knows. . . . Myers is straight about Poet and Faunus."

To non-classical people this means nothing. It meant nothing very definite at that time to Lodge, except that there was, indeed, a meaning and that a scholar like Mrs. Verrall would be able to interpret it.

It will be remembered, however, that in his former frequent communications to Lodge and his other fellow researchers that Myers, poet and classical scholar as he was, had dealt in these recondite allusions to poetry which would mean nothing to the ordinary man but so much to the scholar.

In these communications formerly given in parts, of classical references through mediums far distant from each other and simultaneously, the piecing together of which made an intelligible whole, Myers had delighted in showing his old fondness for the poets and forging a chain of evidence which to the logical mind seemed well-nigh irresistible. These are technically called "Cross Correspondences."

Sir Oliver, therefore, wrote Mrs. Verrall: "Does the Poet and Faunus mean anything to you? Did one protect the other?"

She replied at once (Sept. 8, 1915) referring him to *Horace*, Carni. II, XVII, 27-30, and saying:—

"The reference is to Horace's account of his narrow escape from death, from a falling tree, which he ascribes to the intervention of Faunus."

"I perceived, therefore," says Sir Oliver, "that some blow was going to fall, or was likely to fall, . . . and that Myers would intervene, apparently to protect me from it."

This "Faunus Message" reached Sir Oliver at the beginning of September, while he was in Scotland, and

Raymond was killed near Ypres on the 14th of September, 1915.

*The Sequel*

What steps did Myers take to lighten the blow—for “lighten” is the true meaning of “levasset,” not to ward off entirely, but to “lessen”?

To prove Myers’ fulfilment of his promised aid, Sir Oliver quotes the record of sittings with mediums in England previously unknown and by sitters who gave no sort of clue to their identity. Members of his family went anonymously to sittings arranged for by a friend in London.

The family heard of Raymond’s death on the 17th of September, and on the 25th Lady Lodge was having an anonymous sitting for a friend with Mrs. Leonard, then a complete stranger, and had the following spelled-out for her by tilts of the table, as purporting to come from Raymond:—

“Tell father I have met some friends of his.”

Lady Lodge: “Can you give me any name?”

“Yes, Myers!”

On the 27th, Sir Oliver went to London and had his first sitting with Mrs. Leonard. He went as a stranger—the appointment being made for him by a friend. The medium was entranced and the guide “Feda” described a youth in terms which suggested Raymond.

Feda: “He finds it difficult, he says; but he has got so many kind friends assisting him. He did not think when he waked up that he was going to be happy—but now he is and is going to be happier. . . . He has great work to do and wonders if he will be able to do it. He says, ‘I have many instructors and teachers with me. . . . I have met many who tell me that, a little

later, they will explain why they are helping me. . . . I feel I have got two fathers now. I have not lost one and got another. I have got both. I have got my old one and a pro tem father.' ”

The most direct allusion, however, to the “Faunus” message came at the close after Raymond had gone and before Mrs. Leonard came out of trance:—

(The little guide speaks of herself in the third person.)

“He is gone but Fedra sees something which is only symbolic; she sees a cross falling back on to you; very dark, falling on to you; dark and heavy-looking; and as it falls it gets twisted round and the other side seems all light, and the light is shining all over you. Yes, that is what Fedra sees. The cross looked dark, and then it suddenly twisted round and became a beautiful light. The cross is a meaning of shedding real light. It is going to help a great deal.”

On the afternoon of the same day Lady Lodge had her first sitting, as a complete stranger, with Mr. A. Vaut Peters, who had been invited for the purpose—without any name being given—to Mrs. Kennedy’s house at 3.30 p.m.

Here again, Raymond was described early in the sitting and several identifying messages given. “Moonstone,” Peter’s chief control, voiced the message as follows:—

“Was he not associated with chemistry? If not, some one associated with him was, because I see all the things in a chemical laboratory. That chemistry takes me away from him to a man in the flesh (O. J. L., presumably); and connected with him, a man, a writer of poetry, on our side, closely connected with Spiritualism. He was very clever—he, too, passed away out



of England. (This was clearly meant for Myers who died in Rome.) He has communicated several times. I see the letter M—— he is helping your son to communicate. (His presence and help were also independently mentioned by Mrs. Leonard.) He is built-up in the chemical conditions. If your son did not know this man, he knew of him. (Yes, he could hardly have known him, as he was only about twelve at the time of Myers' death.) At the back of the gentleman, beginning with M. and who wrote poetry, is a whole group of people. (The Society of Psychological Research group, doubtless.) They are very interested. And don't be surprised if you get messages from them, even if you don't know them."

Then Moonstone stopped and said: "This is so important, what is going to be said now, that I want to go slowly, for you to write clearly every word" (indicating carefully):—

"Not only is the partition so thin that you can hear the operators on the other side, but a big hole has been made."

Thus the former and oft-repeated spirit message from the same source reappears, amended and strengthened in a new version.

### *The Group Photograph*

Next comes what Sir Oliver regards as "a peculiarly good piece of evidence" arising out of sittings in the fall of 1915 in which occurs the mention and description of a group photograph taken near the Front, of the existence of which the Lodge family were in complete ignorance, but which was afterwards verified in a very satisfactory and complete manner.

Raymond was killed September 14th, 1915. The first reference to a photograph of him taken with other men was made by "Moonstone," the control of Peters, in a sitting with Peters by Lady Lodge, Sept. 27th, 1915.

It will be recalled that this sitting was arranged with Peters by Mrs. Kennedy at her house for a lady unknown. The following is an extract from records of the sitting:—

"You have several good portraits of this boy. Before he went away you had got a good portrait of him—two—no, three. Two where he is alone and one where he is in a group of other men. He is particular that I should tell you of this. In one you see his walking stick."

Lady Lodge thought this statement of a group photo an error, or a guess, and paid little attention thereto. Dr. Lodge, however, was impressed in some degree by the statement: "he is particular that I should tell you of this," and made an enquiry or two but nothing more was heard of it for two months. On Monday, November 29th, however, a letter came from Mrs. Cheves, a stranger, mother of Captain Cheves, who had known Raymond and had reported the nature of his wound. Mrs. Cheves' letter ran as follows:—

Dear Lady Lodge: My son who is M. O. to the 2nd South Lincs, has sent us a group of officers, taken in August, and I wondered whether you knew of this photo, and had a copy. If not, may I send you one, as we have half a dozen and also a key? I hope you will forgive my writing to ask this, but I have often thought of you, and felt so much for you in your great sorrow.

Sincerely yours,

*Univ Calif - Digitized by Microfilm* B. P. CHEVES.

Lady Lodge wrote thanking her and requesting the photo, but it did not come to hand.

Before it came to hand, Sir Oliver had had a sitting with Mrs. Leonard at her house on December 3rd, and on this occasion he asked carefully concerning the photograph, wishing to get as much detail as possible before the group picture should come to hand. He introduced the topic and asked questions and got answers as reported below.

*(Fedá, Mrs. L.'s child control, is supposed to be speaking and often speaks of herself in the third person):*

Fedá: "Now ask him some more."

O. J. L.: "Well, he said something about having a photograph taken with some other men. We haven't seen that photograph yet. Does he want to say anything more about it? He spoke about a photograph."

Fedá: "Yes, but he thinks it wasn't here. He looks at Fedá and he says, 'It wasn't to you, Fedá.'"

O. J. L.: "No; he is quite right. It wasn't. Can he say where he spoke of it?"

Fedá: "He says it wasn't through the table."

O. J. L.: "No, it wasn't."

Fedá: "It wasn't here at all. He did not know the person he said it through. The conditions were strange there—a strange house." (Quite true, it was said through Peters in Mrs. Kennedy's house during an anonymous sitting, on the 27th of September.)

O. J. L.: "Do you recollect the photograph at all?"

Fedá: "He thinks there were several others taken with him, not one or two but several."

O. J. L.: "Were they friends of yours?"

Fedá: "Some of them, he says. He did not know



them all, not very well. But he knew some; he heard of some; they were not all friends."

O. J. L.: "Does he remember how he looked in the photo?"

Feda: "No, he does not remember how he looked."

O. J. L.: "No, no, I mean was he standing up?"

Feda: "No, he doesn't seem to think so. Some were raised up round; he was sitting down, and some were raised up back of him. Some were standing, and some were sitting, he thinks."

O. J. L.: "Were they soldiers?"

Feda: "He says yes—a mixed lot. Somebody called C. was on it with him; and somebody called R.—not his own name, but another R. K. K. K.—he says something about K. He also mentions a name beginning with B. . . . put down B."

O. J. L.: "I am asking about the photograph because we haven't seen it yet. Somebody is going to send it to us. We have heard that it exists, and that's all."

Feda: "He has the impression of about a dozen on it. A dozen, he says, if not more. Feda thinks it must be a big photograph. No—he does not think so. He says they were grouped close together."

O. J. L.: "Did he have a stick?"

Feda: "He doesn't remember that. He remembers that somebody wanted to lean on him, but he is not so sure if he was taken with some one leaning on him. But somebody wanted to lean on him, he remembers. The last what he gave you, what were a B., will be rather prominent in that photograph. It wasn't taken in a photographer's place."

O. J. L.: "Was it out of doors?"

Feda: "Yes, practically" (Then *sotto voce*). "What

you mean 'Yes, practically'; must have been out of doors or not out of doors. You mean 'Yes,' don't you?"

Feda thinks he means "Yes," because he says "practically."

O. J. L.: "It may have been a shelter."

Feda: "It might have been." "Try to show Feda."

At the back he shows me lines going down. It looks like a black background, with lines at the back of them.

(Feda here kept drawing vertical lines in the air.)

The photo arrived on the afternoon of Dec. 7th. Meanwhile, December 6th, Lady Lodge had been looking up Raymond's diary, now returned from the front with the kit, and found the entry: 24th August. Photo taken.

He had had one home leave—16th July to 20th July. As the photo was not yet taken he could not have imparted any information regarding it on his home coming, and he had not mentioned it in correspondence.

On the morning of December 7th, and before the photo arrived, Sir Oliver wrote out in detail a description of the photo, from statements made by Raymond in the various sittings, which in many striking details was verified from the photo itself.

The photo was a 12x9 inch from a 5x7 original, the number of officers in the photo being twenty-one. Five are in the front row squatting on the grass, Raymond being one, the second from the right. Seven in the second row are seated on chairs. Nine are in the back row standing up against the outside of a temporary wooden structure, such as might be a hospital shed, or something of that kind.

“On examining the photo,” says Sir Oliver, “we found that every peculiarity mentioned by Raymond, unaided by the medium, was strikingly correct. The walking stick is there. There are six conspicuous vertical lines on the roof of the shed, but the horizontal lines in the background generally are equally conspicuous. The men are a ‘mixed lot,’ inasmuch as they represent different companies as there are too many officers for one company. Captain S. T. Boast—the B. referred to—is the most conspicuous figure in the group. Officers whose names begin with B., C. and R. are in the group. Some are sitting and some are standing as Raymond’s description required.

“The background is dark and is conspicuously lined. It is out of doors and close in front of a shed or military hut. By far the most striking piece of evidence is the fact that some one behind Raymond is leaning or resting a hand on his shoulder. The photograph shows this actual occurrence and indicates that Raymond is somewhat annoyed by it. It is the only case in the photograph where one man is leaning or resting his hand on the shoulder of another.”

In his concluding comment on the photo episode, Sir Oliver observes that the case furnishes something of the nature of “cross-correspondence,” inasmuch as a reference to the photo was given in answer to a question through another medium. The elimination of telepathy from the living, except under the far-fetched hypothesis of the unconscious influence of complete strangers, was therefore exceptionally complete. Sir Oliver is confident that Raymond expected this to be a particularly good piece of evidence from the statement of Moonstone: “He is particular that I should tell you this.” He contends that the amount of co-



incidence and agreement in detail between the description of the photo by Raymond through the different mediums and the actual photo itself, as it came to hand later, "is quite beyond chance or guess work." In short, it proves in his view actual communication from his departed son. As this case seems destined to become historic, the reader will, doubtless, be glad to have the following summary of events and dates:—

### *Calendar*

July 20th, 1915—Raymond's last visit home.

August 24th, 1915—Photo taken at the Front, as shown in Raymond's private diary, but not mentioned by him.

September 14th, 1915—Raymond's death.

September 27th, 1915—Peters' (Moonstone's) mention of the photograph as a message from Raymond.

October 15th, 1915—Negative sent with other negatives by Captain Sydney T. Boast, from the Front in Flanders, to Messrs. Gale and Polden, Aldershot, for printing.

November 29th, 1915—Mrs. Cheves wrote spontaneously saying that she had a group photograph of some 2nd South Lancashire officers which she could send if desired.

December 3rd, 1915—Feda's (Mrs. Leonard's) further description of a photograph which had been mentioned through another medium, in answer to a direct question addressed to Raymond.

December 6th, 1915—Lady Lodge found an entry in Raymond's diary, showing that a photograph had been taken on August 24th.

December 7th, 1915—Morning—To make sure, Sir

Oliver wrote to J. A. Hill his impression of the photograph before it came.

December 7th, 1915—Afternoon—Arrival of the photograph.

December 7th, 1915—Evening—The photograph was shown to the home members of the family and examined by Sir Oliver and found to accord in a remarkable manner with the messages from Raymond.

### *The Return of Private Thomas Dowding*

I will conclude this Chapter with a brief résumé of the book on the return of Private Thomas Dowding, which contains many incidents of extreme interest, and, unlike most books automatically written, it is modest, straightforward and carries with it a certain sincerity which compels belief. The facts in the case are briefly these:—

*Private Dowding* was a schoolmaster in a small East Coast town before the war. He was an orphan, somewhat of a recluse, and made friends but slowly. He became a soldier in the autumn of 1915, and left his narrow village life behind him. He joined as a private and died as a private. His soldiering lasted nine months, eight of which were spent in training in Northumberland. He went out with his battalion to France in July, 1916, and went into the trenches almost at once. He was killed by a shell splinter one evening in August, and his body was buried on the following day.

That is the brief graphic sketch he gives of himself in a communication he wrote seven months later by the hand of Mr. Tudor Pole, who sets down the circumstances thus:—

“On Monday, 12th March, 1917, I was walking by

the sea when I felt the presence of some one. I looked round; no one was in sight. All that day I felt as if some one were following me, trying to reach my thoughts. Suddenly I said to myself, 'It is a soldier. He has been killed in battle, and wants to communicate!' That evening I happened to call upon a lady who possesses some degree of clairvoyant power. I had forgotten about the soldier until she described a man dressed in khaki, sitting in a chair near me. He was gazing intently in my direction. She said he was mature, wore a small moustache, and seemed somewhat sad. Not a very intelligent character apparently, but an honest one. I came home and sat down at my writing-table. Immediately my pen moved. Did I move it? Yes, in an involuntary way. The thoughts were not my own; the language was a little unusual. Ideas were conveyed in short, simple phrases. It would really seem as if some intelligence outside myself were speaking through my mind and my pen. Some of the ideas were not in conformity with preconceived notions of my own. The messages I received in this manner from 'Thomas Dowding,' recluse, schoolmaster, soldier, are set down exactly as they reached me."

These were all written between March 12th and 18th, excepting a short final note received at Rothes Library on the following Good Friday. They form a document of the deepest interest, and picture the Private's going-out from the strife and slaughter of the battlefield to his new life in the spirit. They make vivid what must be common experience of many soldiers during every day of this war. They are slain, buried, and what then? Are they only a memory of a life that is past and done with? Here is what Private



Dowding has to say on the first occasion he guided the pen in Mr. Tudor-Poole's hand:—

“ . . . As you see (he observes) I hasten over these important events, important to me once, but now of no real consequence. How we overestimate the significance of earthly happiness! I was afraid of being killed, and was sure it would mean extinction. There are still many who believe that. It is because extinction has not come to me that I want to speak to you.

“Physical death is nothing. There really is no cause for fear. Some of my pals grieved for me. When I ‘went West’ they thought I was dead for good. This is what happened. I had a perfectly clear memory of the whole incident. I was waiting at the corner of a traverse to go on guard. It was a fine evening. I had no special intimation of danger, until I heard the whizz of a shell. Then followed an explosion somewhere behind me. I crouched down involuntarily, but was too late. Something stuck, hard, hard, hard, against my neck. Shall I ever lose the memory of that hardness? It is the only unpleasant incident that I can remember. I fell, and as I did so, without passing through any apparent interval of unconsciousness, I found myself outside myself! You see I am telling my story simply; you will find it easier to understand. You will know what a small incident this dying is. Think of it! One moment I was alive, in the earthly sense, looking over a trench parapet, unalarmed, normal. Five seconds later I was standing outside my body, helping two of my pals carry my body down the trench labyrinth towards a dressing station. . . . I seemed in a dream. I had dreamt that some one or something had knocked me down. Now I was dreaming that I was outside

my body. Soon I thought I shall wake up and find myself in the traverse, waiting to go on guard. . . .”

Private Dowding, it will be observed, found death itself the reverse of alarming. “As in my case,” (he observes) “thousands of soldiers pass over without knowing it. If there be shock, it is not the shock of the physical death. Shock comes later, when comprehension dawns. Where is my body? Surely I am not dead!” Dowding then followed his body as it was taken to a mortuary and stood near it all night, watching, as he expresses it, but without thoughts. Finally he lost consciousness and slept soundly. When he awoke his body had disappeared. He hunted for it in vain; it had been buried or burned. But he found himself in a body of some sort; he can tell very little about it excepting that it is convenient, does not ache or tire, and seems similar in formation to his old body. He seemed to float above the battlefield in a mist that muffled sound and blurred vision. It was like looking down from above the clouds. Later, he says:—“A new sensation came to me. It was as if I stood on a pinnacle, all that was essential of me. The rest receded, receded. . . . All appertaining to bodily life seemed to be dropping away down into a bottomless abyss. There was no feeling of irretrievable loss. My being seemed both minute and expansive at the same time. All that was not really *me* slipped down and away.”

It was at this point that he first realized that he had been killed by a German shell. His description of his impression of the difference between his present body and that which he possessed when in the physical state is curious, though a little bewildering.

“When I lived in the physical body I never thought

much about it. I knew very little about physiology. Now that I am living under other conditions I remain incurious as to that through which I express myself. By this I mean that I am still evidently in a body of some sort, but I can tell you very little about it. It has no interest for me. It is convenient. It does not ache or tire. It seems similar in formation to my old body. There is a subtle difference, but I cannot attempt analysis."

Describing his state of consciousness under these new conditions, he observes: "When I first woke this second time, I felt cramped. This is passing, and a sense of real freedom comes; I am simply myself, alive, in a region where food and drink seem unnecessary. Otherwise life is strangely similar to earth life." Private Dowding suffered at first from a sense of loneliness and solitude, but after a time met his brother, who had passed over three years earlier, and came down to welcome him. The brother took him to one of the rest-halls "specially prepared for newly arrived pilgrims." "Confusion" (he says), "at once dropped away from me. Never shall I forget my happiness. I sat in the alcove of a splendid domed hall. The splashing of a fountain reached my tired being and soothed me. The fountain played music, colour, harmony, bliss. All discordances vanished, and I was at peace. . . ."

In the next communication Private Dowding states that he is beginning to meet people and to exchange ideas, and expresses surprise that the only person he came across for a long time was his brother. The explanation given to him of this fact was that he was never in reality alone, but that owing to the isolated character of his life on earth he had shut himself up



in his own shell and was therefore unable to realize the presence of those who were around him. The moral he draws from his experience on the other side is that it is dangerous to live too much to oneself, and that the life of a recluse is unwise except for the very few who have work which requires complete silence and isolation. In this sense Private Dowding realizes that the war was his salvation through dragging him out into real life and association with his fellow-men. "Each of us" (he says), "creates his own purgatorial conditions." "If I had my time over again, how differently I should live my life. . . . I neither lived enough among my fellow-men nor interested myself sufficiently in their affairs." How many so-called Christians there are who, like Private Dowding, refuse obstinately to learn one of the most important lessons taught by the life of Him who was so often described as "the friend of publicans and sinners!"

A fresh shock was shortly in store for our friend. On returning to the rest-hall on one occasion he met a messenger from a higher sphere from whom he received a very decided cold water douche. "Do you know" (he asked) "that most of what you have conveyed to your friend at the matter end of the line is quite illusory?" The Messenger suggested that Dowding had better do a little living first in the new sphere which he had reached, before talking about it to his friends on this side of the barrier. Afterwards, however, having talked the matter over with his brother, he relaxed somewhat, only stipulating that he should not convey to his friends here the impression that his experiences were more real than they actually were. Our friend was ready to grant, looking back on his life from the other side, that his experiences here had been

in the main in the nature of *Maya* or illusion—"A long chain of illusory episodes," as he expresses it, "with my poor little self in the centre." But he did not like to think that his impressions about his present life were mere illusions also. "How much," says Mr. Ralph Shirley, "of what we learn of that part of the other world which impinges on our own is of dream-like character! How many of the episodes narrated, for example, in *Letters from a Living Dead Man*, partake of this unreal character,—the people Judge Hatch met frequently living in what was obviously an entirely illusory world of their own, created by their imagination; as, for instance, the good lady who fancied that she was living at some fresh boarding house, even more undesirable than its predecessors! Still, the experiences, even in our dream states, illusory as we justly term most of them, are at least *experiences*, and it seems to me that the illusory character of our life on earth does not greatly detract from its importance in so far as our own growth and development are concerned."

What will perhaps attract most attention at the present time in connection with the communications of Private Dowding are the remarks which he records as having been made to him in a later interview by the Messenger above mentioned with regard to the causes and real character of the war as looked at from a higher and more spiritual plane. These certainly give food for thought, and throw a different light on the position to that with which we are familiar through our reading of the papers and the literature of today. "I am told" (he says), "that lust for wealth of one material kind or another was the real cause of the war. Nevertheless, as the result of the war, all the nations

engaged will be far poorer than they were before." More interesting still is another point which has probably not occurred to many. The war, says Dowding, is, he learns, being turned into a celestial instrument. It is, in short, an object lesson, to prove the impotence of material force. It is the faith in this which for many years past has been leading the nations, not Germany, only, more and more astray from the path of truth, and has been plunging the whole world deeper and deeper into the quagmire of illusion. The moral of the whole cataclysm is the worthlessness of Prince Bismarck's gospel of "blood and iron."

"Material forces" (says our friend from the other side) "are becoming exhausted; that is to say, the more they are used, the less they achieve." Strange thought! People will realize that material force leads nowhere, is indeed an illusion. . . . Apparently the impotent clash of material forces is creating a kind of vacuum. Into this vacuum spiritual power is to be poured and poured. He has seen with his own eyes the reservoirs. The Water of Life fills them. High beings, God's messengers, guard the sluice gates. They await the word of command. Then will the Water of Life be released.

All this Dowding confesses is rather beyond him. As he observes, "I never used my opportunities during earth life. My spiritual nature atrophied."

A great deal is said about reflection; how we can clear our own poor thoughts and illusions and allow the Christ-power to reflect through us. Evidently the power is wonderful. The Messenger seemed to love to speak of it; yet he was in awe of it. It clears away illusions as the sun clears away fog. He said: "I am still living in a fog, a fog of my own creation and



design. Well! Well! Once I thought I knew a lot. Then I was sure I knew a little. Now I know I know nothing.”

The Private was thereafter taken by his brother to a Hall of Silence.

“Strength and consolation came to me within its walls. All that the Messenger had said to me came back to me. Understanding of many truths dawned within me. One great truth has become my constant companion. I sum it up thus: ‘Empty yourself if you would be filled.’ The Waters of Life can never flow through me until I have surrendered my whole self. I begin to see the wisdom of this. . . . Somewhere within the soul there is silence. Attain unto it. It is a ‘pearl of great price.’ ”

Then he accompanied the Messenger to the Mount of Vision, where he was told that a spiritual revival was destined to take place within all the great world-faiths, when unity will be established, and universal peace become an accomplished fact. . . .

[NOTE. Since this book went to press, several important articles have appeared, by well-known authors,—giving additional facts and cases of value. Among these, I might mention Mr. Max Pemberton’s article in *The Weekly Despatch* (London); that by Dr. Horace Leaf, in *The Two Worlds* (Manchester); several articles by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, in *The Metropolitan Magazine* (New York),—and others. All these take the same general stand regarding the phenomena that I have taken in this book,—and supply additional material, supporting these conclusions.]

## CHAPTER XII

### THE SPIRITUAL REVIVAL AWAKENED BY THE WAR

“I WISH I were a poet, so that I could write, before setting out, a masterpiece dedicated to the Germans, thanking them for having brought back the age of the martyrs. I always used to picture to myself the atrocities of war, and now I see it as providing commonplace men like myself with the occasion, not so much of performing brilliant actions, as in dying in creating something, of which I am certain, although I see it incompletely. To fall under some pine-tree in the Vosges, to die without any knowing of it, appears to me as an act of life which cannot be in vain. Perhaps they will kill us all. They will murder France. Yet I cannot help but believe that we are already victorious. They say that those condemned to death, at the moment of their execution, see as though fore-shortened all their lives passing before their eyes. Last night I was rather like them. I saw the whole of my life at home: the old house, its nooks and corners, its furniture, the folks and the beasts, and the village, too, with its cries, its smells, and the old pastor, who was such a frightful bore, yet such an original one. I saw myself standing before him at my catechism, one day when he had told us to learn about the Devil, and the energy with which he makes war upon God, and I saw the ray of beauty which transfigured him when he replied, to some urchin’s questions: ‘God cannot be vanquished and

the Devil is His servant.' I did not understand then, what he meant, and I do not understand yet, but the words have stayed with me, and involuntarily I apply them to the present situation."\*

So wrote M. Sabatier, in his very interesting study of the religious revival which has swept through France,—and in fact all the belligerents, as one of the results of this great war. Religion is always a difficult thing to touch upon or write about, since no two people agree. There is this factor about religion, however, with which most people would probably be found to agree, and it is that, in times of stress and anguish, one feels keenly the sense of one's loneliness and helplessness, and the innate desire to seek help and comfort from some higher source; and further, that this source is capable at times of helping the supplicant who thus petitions. What the nature of this inner help may be we do not pretend to say, but—if human testimony goes for anything—it certainly has been given in many thousands of cases. Religion is not orthodoxy. It is something quite different from that, we all admit. . . . Religion comprises, if I am not mistaken, three series of facts: firstly, the intuition of a personal and social ideal above the present reality; secondly, a movement of our whole being, physical as well as moral, towards that ideal, when we feel that we are made for it, we also feel, despite all obstacles, that we are capable of attaining it: the act of faith which, plainly perceiving the difficulties, leaves to reason the task of studying them, and regards itself as certain of victory; if it must be, after many defeats, and even through every sacrifice. . . .

Is this definition exact? If it is, religion is the con-

\* Paul Sabatier: *A Frenchman's Thoughts on the War*, pp. 31-32.



trary of retrogression: the religious act *par excellence*, far from being the act by which bewildered man, losing his bearings, abandons the rudder of his life, is, on the contrary, the human act *par excellence*; it is, in the first place, the intuition by whose means man becomes conscious at once of his empire over the visible world and his subordination to an ideal world which we cannot see, yet which we perceive so surely that we proclaim it eternal; secondly, it is the act by which man, in the fullness of his life and strength, adheres to this ideal and finds in his adhesion the secret of individual and social life. Religion is therefore anticipation; it is activity at its fullest; it is conscious progress; it is liberty, love, creation. . . . And now if we return to the question we were considering a while ago: will this war result in a religious revival?—we must reply that the very basis of this war is in a sense religious or spiritual; it is characterized by the fact that it is, more than any war has hitherto been, an international conflict, an effort to defend not material wealth, but the ideal tendencies of civilization, against materialism erected into a systematic doctrine. . . .

We need not watch for the religious revival, for it has taken place, and those were blind indeed who did not see it. It is true that the Churches, which are to religion what the schools are to knowledge, are asking: "But who—which Church—will profit by the revival?" Just as an advance in knowledge profits all the schools, and shines before all the world, so it will be with the present religious revival: it will profit all the Churches, even all the anti-churches. In drawing nearer to that ideal towards which, by divers paths, we seek to climb, we draw nearer to one another. The religious revival

will profit most those who serve it, not those who make use of it.

This religious character of the war against Germany has been felt by all the belligerents; but the British have perceived it in all its plenitude. And I need only recall an engraving published in one of our periodicals, which symbolized the soul of this war by two persons. On one side of this picture was the King of the Belgians, dreaming alone in a ruined house, in the midst of a landscape which revealed, in all directions, nothing but devastated villages, and Wilhelm II. suddenly rose before him, and in a tone which he sought to render amiable, asked him: "Then you have lost everything?"—"Yes, I have lost everything," the King replied, "but I have saved my soul!"

The deeper spiritual issues of the war are indeed but imperfectly apprehended by us, and even "the churches," as Mr. John Jay Chapman so well says, "do not seem to be aware that these matters can not be expressed in terms of social betterment." Our piety he likens to the activity of Martha, since it is "preoccupied with the welfare of the troops, the care of the wounded, the succour given to depopulated provinces." But there is a "new war-music," he tells us, which even our churches, "tuned to the old materialism," have not heard the accents of. He feels a danger to be lurking "lest the churches, by clinging to the phrases and formulas of the nineteenth century, lose the key to the future." He foresees the possibility that the greater age now opening "will be accompanied by a destruction of much that the nineteenth century regarded as the foundation of society," and unless "religion discards the language of materialism, the churches may be left in darkness and despair even

while the great spiritual light of the world is burning for them." Mr. Chapman is the father of the brilliant aviator, Victor Chapman, who was the first American in the flying corps to give his life for France. And when he speaks in *The Churchman* (New York) of the personal relation each one of us must now bear to the conflict he speaks as one whose initiation in such thoughts and emotions came almost a full year before that of most of his fellow countrymen:

"When the war began many of us thought of it as a distant and transient thing. We adjusted our lives to it as to an emergency. As time wore on, however, the persistent influence of the dark on-moving cloud began to penetrate and to obsess every mind. And now each of us has come to feel that he has an inner relation to the tragedy which overshadows and swallows up his external relations to it. We are overcome by a feeling of awe and of helplessness, which, could we but know it, is the very elixir and antidote that nature distils in us—the cure for the plague, the road to salvation.

"In ordinary times men's spiritual knowledge generally comes to them through sickness or through grief. These things shut out the buzz and clamour of passing events, and open people's ears to the silent forces which really control their being. Now this great sickness of the war converts thousands daily, and one can hardly find a man who does not show signs of illumination. The young men, as of old, shine as the natural heroes of the race. Their readiness to die restores our faith in human nature. It reminds us that the sacrificial part is what counts in the spread of truth. This much we know, and we know little else, about morality and religion. To count the cost and dwell upon the life and property sacrificed in heroic action is to doubt the



value of truth. To what better use could these young heroes and all this amassed wealth have been put? It was for this that they existed. As for the pain involved in their engulfing, as for the agony of the experience, this is a part of the regeneration. People seem to desire the power of Christ, and the benevolence of Christ, without the Passion. The thing can not be done; and nothing but an age of materialism could have so softened the fibre of moralists as to lead men to think it possible. There is a species of tenderness toward human suffering which, if exhibited in the midst of a heroic crisis, turns into a morbid element. The best of men sometimes preach about the horrors of war as if they thought we suspected them of delighting in war. Having bathed all the mothers of the drafted men in tears, they think to lift the question to a higher plane by talking of the need to win the war. But it is too late. They have muddled the issue by commiseration, and no amount of reasoning will restore the temper of instinctive heroism to their words. Once dwell upon horror and indulge in analysis—as *Macbeth* did—and you confuse the conscience. Pathos is the enemy of courage. As for winning the war, the war is already won for those who died in it, and we do not need to wait for a Congress of Vienna to appraise the value of their service.”

All the preliminary obeisances to peace which good patriots put into their war-discourses are, indeed, done in the name of Christianity and on the theory that Christ valued peace above all things. We are corrected in this view, so as to take the stand that “the spiritual peace to which Christ refers, however, is a state of mind, not of politics.” Christian pacifism is an effort to define the indefinable.

“Under what circumstances may I use force to protect the oppressed or to prevent some profanation? God knows; but there are times when I must. If this be not Christian doctrine, then Christianity, or its interpreters, are in favour of suppressing a divine impulse. And the suppressing of this impulse leads to a sentimental attitude toward the value of life and property which is at odds with Christ’s whole conduct. I can not see that he valued his own life or that of others except as a means of spreading the truth which he taught. For this reason he heals the sick, for this reason he advises men to lose their lives that they may save them. For this reason his example has always made men disregard death. Death is a trifle. . . .”

Or, as Maeterlinck has so well expressed it: \*

“Nowadays, everything is changed; and death itself is no longer what it was. Formerly, you looked it in the face, you knew whence it came and who sent it to you. It had a dreadful aspect, but one that remained human. Its ways were not unknown: its long spells of sleep, its brief awakenings, its bad days and dangerous hours. At present, to all these horrors it adds the great, intolerable fear of mystery. It no longer has any aspect, no longer has habits or spells of sleep and it is never still. It is always ready, always on the watch, everywhere present, scattered, intangible, and dense, stealthy and cowardly, diffuse, all-encompassing, innumerable, looming at every point of the horizon, rising from the waters and falling from the sky, indefatigable, inevitable, filling the whole of space and time for days, weeks and months without a minute’s lull, without a second’s intermission. Men live, move and sleep in the meshes of its fatal web. They

\* *The Light Beyond*, pp. 217-218.

know that the least step to the right or left, a head bowed or lifted, a body bent or upright, is seen by its eyes and draws its thunder.

“Hitherto we had no example of this preponderance of the destructive forces. We should never have believed that man’s nerves could resist so great a trial. The nerves of the bravest man are tempered to face death for the space of a second, but not to live in the hourly expectation of death and nothing else. Heroism was once a sharp and rugged peak, reached for a moment but quitted forthwith, for mountain-peaks are not inhabitable. Today it is a boundless plain, as uninhabitable as the peaks; but we are not permitted to descend from it. And so, at the very moment when man appeared most exhausted and enervated by the comforts and vices of civilization, at the moment when he was happiest and therefore most selfish, when, possessing the minimum of faith and vainly seeking a new ideal, he seemed less capable of sacrificing himself for an idea of any kind, he finds himself suddenly confronted with an unprecedented danger, which is almost certain that the most heroic nations of history would not have faced nor even dreamed of facing, whereas he does not even dream that it is possible to do aught but face it.”

This thought—that death is nothing—an incident—seems, perhaps naturally enough, to strike all men at the front at one time or another, possibly because death is all about them, and they have grown familiar with his face. They know him for what he is—and they no longer fear him. As a soldier wrote not long since to a friend of his, in response to a letter of sympathy and encouragement:—

“Tell M.,” he wrote, “that if death strikes the best,



it is not unjust. The less noble who survive will be made better. Let her accept the sacrifice, and know that it is not made in vain. You do not know what a lesson the dead teach. I know it. In the spectacle of the soldier who falls there is a lesson of nobility and immortality which steels us, and by which we ought to wish those dear to us to profit. I know because I have seen how the soldier whose leader has fallen is transfigured with heroism.

“Mothers have overwhelming agonies to suffer in this war; but be of good cheer, nothing here is lost. What passes one’s understanding—and yet, after all, it is natural enough—is that civilians are able to continue their normal existence while we are in torment.

“Let us always, and in every condition, have faith in God. Like you, I feel we can only worship Him in spirit. Like you, I feel we ought to avoid every kind of pride which offends the beliefs of others. One consolation lies above the super-humanly clear conviction that the divine and immortal energy which acts in one race, so far from being weakened, is exalted and rendered infinitely more potent by these turmoils.

“Blessed is he who will hear the hymn of peace, but blessed already is he who divines it in the tumult. And what does it matter if this magnificent vision should be realized when the prophet has gone? He who has foreknown its coming has gleaned abundance of joy on earth.

“If there be one thing absolute in the realm of human sensation it is suffering. It is the instrument that clears the soul’s path to the Absolute.

“Human separations mean little; that which is really *ourselves* is the ardour of the soul.

“Everything here combines to impart peace of heart

—the beauty of the wood in which we are living, and the want of intellectual complications. It is paradoxical, as you say, and yet the best moments of my inner life are now being passed.

“One word only—we are in the hands of God! Never, never, did we so sorely need steadfastness and confidence. Death rages, but does not reign. Life is still noble. Truly,—

“God’s arms are around the undying dead  
Who serve Him. Torment seeks in vain  
To touch them, though because they bled  
Fools take their passing for a pain.”

This fact—that death ennobles and glorifies, and that the whole human race seems to be spiritually lifted up by the sacrifices made—which will not have been made in vain—is clearly perceived by Maeterlinck, who, with the true poet’s vision, when writing of the war, said:—

“It was so great a trial that we dared not, before this war, have contemplated it. The future of the human race was at stake; and the magnificent response that comes to us from every side reassures us fully as to the issue of other struggles, more formidable still, which no doubt await us when it will be a question no longer of fighting our fellow-men, but rather of facing the more powerful and cruel of the great mysterious enemies that nature holds in reserve against us. If it be true, as I believe, that humanity is worth just as much as the sum total of latent heroism which it contains, then we may declare that humanity was never stronger nor more exemplary than now, and that it is this moment reaching one of its highest points and capable of braving everything and hoping everything. And it is for this reason that, despite our present sad-

ness, we are entitled to congratulate ourselves and rejoice." \*

The increasingly religious or spiritual feelings which are sweeping over the soldiers at the front have been testified to by many observers, and may even be found in numerous communications and "cases" which have been received from those in the trenches. Here, for example, is a statement made by a French soldier, who evidently believes that some divine providence has protected him from harm, and that his life has been miraculously saved on several occasions. He writes, concerning his own experiences:

Here is the testimony afforded by a few "cases" which took place while I was at the front. When war broke out, I started on the second day of the mobilization to join up with the sixty-ninth light infantry regiment. I was full of trust, knowing that in the kingdom of God there was no war and that no evil could touch me. One day I was told off to patrol duty with three of my comrades. We were to reconnoitre a farm, and were going under cover of a corn field, when suddenly the enemy hidden in a ravine fired on us. We were a few metres from them, and my companions thought they were done for, but I remained calm, having the ninety-first psalm always present in my thought. We lay flat in the corn, and while the balls spattered all around us I declared the truth, and we came safely through this terrible experience.

During the retreat we were sent into the department of the Oise to stop the German advance on Paris. When at L—— we were ordered to hold on as long as

\* *The Light Beyond*, pp. 222-23.



possible; and we defended the position all day long under terrible artillery fire. When we had to retire, it was too late, for we were surrounded on all sides. We were much afraid that the whole regiment would be captured, but God was watching over us, and by what seemed a miracle we succeeded in getting out of the circle surrounding us. Then I heard several of my comrades say, "It is incredible; there must be some one or something protecting our regiment."

My best demonstration took place during the famous battle of the Marne. We were at a place on the road to M—— and were ordered to go toward another place, which was then occupied by the enemy. But we had to go a distance of four kilometres in open country, exposed to the fire of the enemy's great howitzers. We had to crawl all the way, on our stomachs. All of a sudden a shell fell and burst just where my squad was. Terrible cries were heard, and several of my comrades were wounded, while others were killed, and I was thrown to the other side of the road without a scratch, not knowing how it ever happened.

The next day we had to resist the enemy for twelve consecutive hours under the fire of artillery, for the order was that we should be killed rather than retreat; no shelter was available, and what a massacre it was! With this passage of the ninety-first psalm always before my thought: "There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling," I worked without ceasing. A piece of shell struck me near the heart, but when it struck it had lost all its force and had no power to hurt me.

Before closing, I will add a more recent experience which occurred at the time of the battle of the Somme. One of my comrades and I went to visit the cemetery

of the little village where we were staying, to see if among the unfortunate soldiers lying there, there was not one whom we knew. After a few moments I said to my friend: "This is not very cheerful; let us go away. I do not care to stay here any longer." We left the place, and we had not been gone five minutes, when a shell fell into the cemetery just where we had been standing, demolishing all the graves and making an enormous hole. Again I recognized God's protection.

VICTOR BLONDIS, Boulogne sur Seine, France.

Here is another instance, published in an Australian paper:—

*The Warning Voice*

Captain Wm. McKenzie, one of the Salvation Army chaplains with the Australian Forces, who was recently decorated by the King with the Military Cross, attributes his many hairbreadth escapes to what he regards as a Divine Voice prompting him in moments of extreme danger. On one occasion, according to an English contemporary, he was burying single-handed the bodies of a number of men. While thus engaged, he found it necessary to go on to a ridge in full view of the enemy from two points, and they began sending over "whizzbangs" and later big shells close to him.

"I was burying the seventh body, when I heard a voice say, 'Get away from here quickly!' Not having quite finished, I worked like a fury, but had only managed three more spadefuls when again the voice said, 'Run at once.' Then I made off, but had got away only some twenty-five yards when a big explosive shell landed directly on the spot where I had been standing.

. . . I could give at least six instances within a single week where prompt attention to this unseen voice saved me from big shells.”

Surprising natural phenomena are frequently attributed, by soldiers at the front, to supernatural causes, and omens seen in them of possible victory or defeat. Thus, on the Western front, numbers of soldiers testified that they had seen a Cross in the sky, glowing and of gigantic size, just before the Battle of the Somme. On another occasion, a vision of Christ was supposedly seen in the clouds, accompanied by streamers of light. The following incident comes to us from the Russian front, as having occurred early in the war:—

“When the Russian Armies were entrenched near Augustovo in the early autumn of 1914, shortly before midnight one night a sentry rushed into the officers’ headquarters to summon his captain. ‘I have seen something wonderful in the sky,’ he said; ‘it is a sign from heaven of victory, I feel sure. All the men are out there kneeling on the ground in prayer,—full of wonder at the miracle of the vision.’

“The officer followed the man, and saw that it was indeed as he had said. At one point the sky was dazzlingly illuminated, and outlined against its shining brightness, the figure of the Virgin, holding the Christ Child in her arms, could be seen. Lost in wonder, that great company of awestruck men gazed at the vision until by degrees it faded away, and there in its place, as though outlined in fire, was the sign of the Cross.

“This vision proved the forerunner of one of the chief Russian victories in the early part of the war. Its fame has spread all over Russia. From the highest to



the lowest in the land all place firm credence in the wonderful vision of Augustovo, as it is called from the battle which took place near that spot the next day."

The majority of the Russian soldiers are, of course, ignorant and illiterate men, superstitious and altogether ignorant of the causes of such natural phenomena; and no objectivity can be attached to such visions. At the same time they show us the attitude of mind of many of the soldiers—very different from the coarse materialism which we should have expected to find,—living the life they do. That this changed attitude *does* have an effect upon the soldiers is seen by the following incident, in which the religious faith of the patient effected his permanent cure.

### *A Soldier's Vision and Its Sequel*

"The Dublin correspondent of the *London Star* reports that much discussion is being created in that city by the remarkable story of a soldier whose speech and hearing were restored to him after he had seen a vision of the nun known as 'The Little Flower':—

"The soldier is Stephen Conroy, aged fifty-four, a private in the 2nd Leinster Regiment. As a result of shell-shock he was struck deaf and dumb six months ago. His case, because of the gravity of the functional disorder and the age of the patient, was regarded as hopeless. He was sent from hospital to hospital, and finally came under the care of the nuns in Jervis-street Hospital in this city.

"Conroy is a deeply religious man, and he adopted the suggestion that he should carry out the devotion to 'The Little Flower.' He states that on Sunday morning at about 2.30, a white form appeared at his

bedside 'all dazzling light and a wreath of flowers on her head, and having said something in plain English,' which he hopes to recall, counselled him to say certain prayers morning and evening, and vanished.

"Then the night nurse, to her amazement, was called by the excited patient, who told her what he had seen."

It does not concern us now whether the inner character of this experience was objective or subjective—an actuality, or merely the result of faith. What *does* concern us is that a cure was actually effected, in this case; and that it was the condition or attitude of the soldier's mind which brought it about.

The following account, appearing in the *International Psychic Gazette* for October, 1917, narrates a vision of a semi-religious nature, seen by a soldier at the front. It refers to the well-known apparition of:—

### *The Comrade in White*

"After having read of 'The Comrade in White,' which is a name given to a mysterious stranger said to frequently appear on the battlefields in Europe, and to assist wounded soldiers, I had a strong desire to know who that helper really was. I could not bring my mind to think he was the Master Jesus; I thought he must be one of the many astral helpers who have laboured on the Borderland during the war, as I myself can testify. After some months the thought passed out of my mind, but my desire, 'the soul's sincere desire,' was yet to be gratified, in a manner beyond my most sanguine expectations.

"One evening recently, I felt as though I were being raised to a great height, and was about to stand in the presence of a powerful, majestic Being. I then dis-

stinctly heard clairaudiently the following words:— ‘In such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh.’ I came to the conclusion that so-called Death was near, that some one was about to pass over, and wandered away from the house on to the lawn, attracted by the marvellous splendour of the starry, moonlight night. While gazing at the heavens I felt as though some one touched me, and found myself face to face with the ‘Comrade in White.’ He appeared to possess a physical body like that of any other man, but His vibrations were far more powerful than those of any other human being. With very deep sympathy He looked intently at me and said, ‘I am the Master Jesus, the Comrade in White.’ Then He vanished as suddenly as He had appeared, and I was left alone to ponder over this glorious experience, and my soul was filled with a song of thanksgiving, when I realized that the Master Jesus had deemed me worthy of such a visitation.”

Many religious visions and experiences of a like nature could be given—did space permit. But we will limit ourselves to one other case of this nature.

### “*The Angels of Mons*”

Peculiarly conflicting evidence has been presented in the case of a semi-religious vision which is said to have been seen by numbers of soldiers on the historic retreat from Mons—I refer to the now-famous “Angels of Mons.” The main outlines of this incident are doubtless too well known to need more than the briefest mention. At the very moment when the German hordes seemed about to overwhelm the British Army,



phantom warriors (so the story goes) intervened—English bowmen from the field of Agincourt—and kept the Germans at bay until the main army succeeded in making good its escape. Such was the report, circulated at the time.

No sooner had this account been spread than Mr. Arthur Machen, a well-known English writer, came forward, and asserted that he had invented the whole tale, in his story "The Bowmen," which was then published in book form. The whole story, he claimed, originated in his imagination. As opposed to this, however, several soldiers now came forward, and asserted that they had actually seen the phantom army referred to, or something very like it; and Mr. Harold Begbie published a book, *On the Side of the Angels*, in which he produced quite a volume of evidence, varying in excellence from first-hand reports to mere hearsay; and Mr. Ralph Shirley, the editor of the *Occult Review*, also published a booklet, *The Angel Warriors of Mons*, containing additional evidence.

The case is assuredly puzzling. I do not for one moment pretend to say that phantom bowmen actually took part in this historical battle, or that they saved the British army from destruction—as has been asserted in the past; but, on the other hand, it appears to me that the evidence which was presented at the time cannot be brushed aside as easily as it has been in certain quarters, as unworthy of serious consideration. Rather, we have here, it seems to me, on any theory, a remarkably interesting psychological problem,—one which is well worthy of being recorded and being studied,—*at least* from that point-of-view. Partly because of this, and partly because it throws so interesting a light upon the early days of the war, I repro-

duce here, by kind permission, a portion of an article by Miss Phyllis Campbell, published in the *Occult Review*, September, 1915. It runs as follows:—

The torrent of blistered, bleeding, stony-eyed Belgian refugees which had poured through our hands unceasingly, night and day, for the first hot breathless weeks of last August, was suddenly stemmed by the wounded. The miseries of those first wounded cannot ever be written. To those who tended them they brought like misery, for, individually and in the mass, they expressed a conviction of swiftly approaching disaster. They bore their sufferings with unexampled heroism; but their very dumbness suggested the hopeless silence of defeat. When they spoke at all, they spoke, if they were French, of “soixante-dix”; if they were British they said heavily they were “up against it now.” One man, a Highlander, opened his dying eyes and urged us to fly while there was time. “Get awa’, lassie,” he whispered. “Get awa’! They Germans is no men; they’re devils. All Hell is open now.”

Briefly, that is what all the wounded thought—what they all sought to convey to us, and as the days dragged on and the bloody toll increased, the members of the ambulance diminished. They, or their fathers and mothers, remembered “soixante-dix,” and those who could go went; and so our work became harder, and the wounded poured in and in, till the expectation of quick victory for the Allies faded, and though the small band of us remaining disdained to acknowledge fear, yet we also were instructed by the commandant to prepare for retreat, taking the wounded with us. Then came the torrid days of Mons, and suddenly a change in the wounded, utterly unaccountable. The French, who had tolerantly accepted badges and medals of the

saints from the Catholics of our post, now eagerly asked for them, and were profusely grateful for "holy pictures"—those little prints of saints and angels so common in all Catholic communities. But what puzzled the post was that these men, without a solitary exception, demanded invariably, "St. Michael" or "Joan of Arc."

Also, these men, in spite of their horrible wounds and great weakness from loss of blood, were in a state of singular exaltation. We thought at first that some of them had been supplied with wine, but that was clearly impossible, as our post was the first stop, and the trains came right through from the clearing station, without attention of any sort, as the fighting was then at its fiercest.

This curious mental condition in the wounded continued during the long retreat on Paris. Many of the wounded died in our hands, but the living no longer urged us to fly; they "died in hope," as if they were mentally visioning victory, where their immediate fore-runners had only seen defeat.

I tremble, now that it is safely past, to look back on the terrible week that brought the Allies to Vitry-le-François. We had not had our clothes off for the whole of that week, because no sooner had we reached home, too weary to undress, or to eat, and fallen on our beds, than the "chug-chug" of the commandant's car would sound into the silence of the deserted street, and the horn would imperatively summon us back to duty,—because, in addition to our duties, as *ambulancier auxiliaire*, we were interpreters to the post, now at this moment diminished to half a dozen.

Returning at 4.30 in the morning, we stood on the end of the platform, watching the train crawl through



the blue-green of the forest into the clearing, and draw up with the first wounded from Vitry-le-François. It was packed with dead and dying and badly wounded. For a time we forgot our weariness in a race against time, removing the dead and dying, and attending to those in need. I was bandaging a man's shattered arm with the *majeur* instructing me, while he stitched a horrible gap in his head, when Madame d'A——, the heroic President of the post, came and replaced me. "There is an English in the fifth wagon," she said. "He demands a something—I think a holy picture." The idea of an English soldier demanding a holy picture struck me, even in that atmosphere of blood and misery, as something to smile at, but I hurried away. "The English" was a Lancashire Fusilier. He was propped in a corner, his left arm tied up in a peasant woman's head 'kerchief, and his head newly bandaged. He should have been in a state of collapse from loss of blood, for his tattered uniform was soaked and caked in blood, and his face paper-white under the dirt of conflict. He looked at me with bright courageous eyes and asked for a picture or a medal (he didn't care which) of St. George. I asked if he was a Catholic. "No," he was a Wesleyan Methodist (I hope I have it right), and he wanted a picture, or a medal of St. George, because he had seen him on a white horse, leading the British at Vitry-le-François, when the Allies turned.

There was an R. F. A. man, wounded in the leg, sitting beside him on the floor; he saw my look of amazement, and hastened in. "It's true, Sister," he said. "We all saw it. First there was a sort of a yellowish mist like, sort of risin' before the Germans as they come to the top of the hill, come on like a solid wall

they did—springing out of the earth just solid—no end to 'em. I just give up. No use fighting the whole German race, thinks I; it's all up with us. The next minute comes this funny cloud of light, and when it clears off there's a tall man with yellow hair in golden armour, on a white horse, holding his sword up, and his mouth open as if he was saying, 'Come on, boys, I'll put the kybosh on the devils.' Sort of 'This is my picnic' expression. Then, before you could say jack-knife, the Germans had turned, and we were after them, fighting like ninety. We had a few scores to settle, Sister, and we fair settled them!"

"Where was this?" I asked. But neither of them could tell. They had marched, fighting a rearguard action, from Mons, till St. George had appeared through the haze of light, and turned the Germans. They both knew it was St. George. Hadn't they seen him with his sword on every "quid" they'd ever had? The Frenchies had seen him, too, ask them; but they said it was St. Michael.

The French wounded were again in that curiously exalted condition we had remarked before—only more so—a sort of self-contained rapture of happiness—"Yes" it was quite true. The Boches were in full retreat, and the Allies were being led to victory by St. Michael and Joan of Arc.

"As for petite Jeanne d'Arc," said one soldier, "I know her well, for I am of Domremy. I saw her brandishing her sword and crying, 'Turn! Turn! Advance!'" Yes, he knew others had seen the Archangel, but little Joan of Arc was good enough for him. He had fought with the English from Mons—and little Joan of Arc had defeated the English—*par exemple*'

Now she was leading them. There was a combination for you! No wonder the Boches fled down hill.

After the train crawled out, and we had time to speak, the President drew me aside, and confided to me, that a wounded officer of high rank had told her he had seen St. Michael at Vitry-le-François. He was quite close to the Blessed Visitant and there could be no doubt on the subject. At first he thought he was to die, and, as he had been a violent Agnostic and materialist all his life, that this was a warning to him to make swift repentance in preparation for judgment. Soon, however, he saw that, so far from requiring his life, God had sent assistance in the fight, and that so clearly was on the side of the Allies, that the Germans must needs therefore be evil, and of the Devil.

I then told Madame d'A—— the story of the two British soldiers who wanted pictures of St. George, and we decided to compare notes with the others. Only one of us had not heard the tale of the Angelic Leaders, and she had been detailed by the *majeur* to guard three wounded Germans, one of whom had died of tetanus, the other two had gangrene. Her duty was to stand some paces off and prevent any one touching them, so she had consequently no opportunity of conversation.

On discussing the matter between the trains of wounded, we remarked: First, that the French soldiers of all ranks had seen two well-known saints—Joan of Arc—to whom many of those delirious with the torrid heat and loss of blood were praying—that she was in armour, bareheaded, riding a white horse, and calling “Advance,” while she brandished her sword high in the air; and St. Michael the Archangel, clad in golden armour, bareheaded, riding a white



horse, and flourishing his sword, while he shouted "Victory!" Second, the British had seen St. George, in golden armour, bareheaded, riding a white horse and crying while he held up his sword, "Come on!"

There were individual discrepancies, naturally, but in the main the story was the same, seen in cold blood at a moment of despair, and continued in the realization of victory. It was always related quietly and sanely, in a matter-of-fact fashion, as if it were a usual and quite expected occurrence for the lords of heaven to lead the hosts of earth. Of one thing all were assured—that the Germans represented the powers of evil, and that so doubtfully did victory hang in the balance, that the powers of good found it necessary to fight hand in hand and foot to foot with the Allies, lest the whole world be lost.

That night we heard the tale again, from the lips of a priest this time, two officers, and three men of the Irish Guard. These three men were mortally wounded, they asked for the Sacrament before death, and before dying told the same story to the old abbé who confessed them.

That was our last night with the ambulance at the post, we were now moved on to the hospital, and took our regular work as *ambulancier*. There we had time to hear more, and the men told us in fragments of the long retreat from Mons, fighting all the way like Trojans, marching night and day, and day and night, of the men falling in the ranks and being kicked to their feet by the officers—of the officers falling off their feet drunk with sleep, and being kicked and pushed to their feet again by the men—of men who dragged and carried their officers, of officers who dragged and carried their men—of horses falling dead in their traces, and

of men who harnessed themselves in and dragged the guns—of motor transport that drove itself with drivers hanging dead asleep over the wheels, or sitting with wide-open eyes, and dead hands steering the munitions and food of the retreating army.

For forty-eight hours no food, no drink, under a tropical sun, choked with dust, harried by shell, and marching, marching, marching, till even the pursuing Germans gave it up, and at Vitry-le-François the Allies fell in their tracks and slept for three hours—horse, foot and guns—while the exhausted pursuers slept behind them.

Then came the trumpet call, and each man sprang to his arms to find himself made anew. One man said, "I felt as if I had just come out of the sea after a swim. Fit! just grand! I never felt so fit in my life, and every man of us the same. The Germans were coming on just the same as ever, when suddenly the 'Advance' sounded, and I saw the luminous mist and the great man on the white horse, and I knew the Boches would never get Paris, for God was fighting on our side. . . ."

Additional evidence, as to the actuality of visions seen by many of the men at this time was soon forthcoming. An officer, for example, who had shared in the historic Mons retreat, reading what Mr. Machen had said regarding the origin of these phenomena, wrote to the London *Evening News*, for September 14 (1915), giving an account of certain visions he himself has seen—differing, however, considerably from the "historic" phenomena. The letter was in reply to a statement made by Mr. Machen to the effect that:

"It is odd that nobody has come forward to testify

at first hand to the most amazing event of his life." "It is this remark," wrote the officer in question, "which inclines me to write," and he proceeds to tell his own experiences. It appears from this account that on August 26, 1914, he was fighting in the battle of Le Cateau. From this sanguinary engagement his division retired in good order and was marching all the night of the 26th and during the 27th with only two hours' rest.

"On the night of the 27th," says Mr. Machen's correspondent, "I was riding along in the column with two other officers. We had been talking and doing our best to keep from falling asleep on our horses.

"As we rode along I became conscious of the fact that, in the fields on both sides of the road along which we were marching I could see a very large body of horsemen. These horsemen had the appearance of squadrons of cavalry, and they seemed to be riding across the fields and going in the same direction as we were going, and keeping level with us.

"The night was not very dark, and I fancied that I could see the squadron of these cavalymen quite distinctly.

"I did not say a word about it at first, but I watched them for about twenty minutes. The other two officers had stopped talking.

"At last one of them asked me if I saw anything in the fields. I then told him what I had seen. The third officer then confessed that he too had been watching these horsemen for the past twenty minutes.

"So convinced were we that they were really cavalry that, at the next halt, one of the officers took a party of men out to reconnoitre, and found no one



there. The night then grew darker, and we saw no more.

“The same phenomenon was seen by many men in our column. Of course, we were all dog-tired and over-taxed, but it is an extraordinary thing that the same phenomenon should be witnessed by so many people.

“I myself am absolutely convinced that I saw these horsemen; and I feel sure that they did not exist only in my imagination. I do not attempt to explain the mystery—I only state facts.”

The above evidence, which is obviously of considerable importance, does not appear in Mr. Harold Begbie's book *On the Side of the Angels*, which claims to be a counterblast to Mr. Machen's *Bowmen*, the evidence apparently having come to light too late for insertion. Mr. Begbie, however, gives a very detailed account of another first-hand record,—which is perhaps,—at least up to the present date,—the most important statement of the kind with the exception of the Lieut.-Colonel's. This is the record of a certain wounded soldier, a lance-corporal, who was lying, at the time the statement was made public, at an English hospital, and, in fact, was awaiting an operation, which has since been performed. Though the lance-corporal's name is not given, it is well-known to a number of people who have been investigating these matters, and in particular Mr. Begbie went out of his way to have a long interview with the soldier in question. The statement was first made by him in conversation with the hospital nurse, who in turn repeated it to the Lady Superintendent of the Red Cross,—Miss M. Courtney Wilson. This account was first given with no idea at all of its attracting public attention, but merely in casual conversation with the nurse referred to, and the

narrator was a good deal surprised to learn of the publicity that had been given to it. "He is a soldier," says Mr. Begbie (quoting a friend of his who went to see him), "of many years' service, with a clean military record. I should take him to be a man of two or three and thirty. He spoke to me of his vision in a cool, calm, matter-of-fact way, as of something he had certainly seen. He made no attempt either to theorize or dogmatize about it. His whole narrative was marked by sincerity." The soldier's verbatim statement is given by Mr. Begbie, and it may be worth while reproducing it here, though it appears in an abbreviated form in *The Angel Warriors of Mons*.

"I was in my battalion in the retreat from Mons on or about August 28. The German cavalry were expected to make a charge, and we were waiting to fire and scatter them so as to enable the French cavalry who were on our right to make a dash forward. However, the German aeroplanes discovered our position and we remained where we were.

"The weather was very hot and clear, and between eight and nine o'clock in the evening I was standing with a party of nine other men on duty, and some distance on either side there were parties of ten on guard. Immediately behind us half of my battalion was on the edge of a wood resting. An officer suddenly came up to us in a state of great anxiety and asked us if we had seen anything startling (the word used was 'astounding'). He hurried away from my ten to the next party of ten. When he had got out of sight I, who was the non-commissioned officer in charge, ordered two men to go forward out of the way of the trees in order to find out what the officer meant. The two men returned reporting that they could see no

sign of any Germans; at that time we thought that the officer must be expecting a surprise attack.

“Immediately afterwards the officer came back, and taking me and some others a few yards away showed us the sky. I could see quite plainly in mid-air a strange light which seemed to be quite distinctly outlined and was not a reflection of the moon, nor were there any clouds in the neighbourhood. The light became brighter and I could see quite distinctly three shapes—one in the centre having what looked like outspread wings, the other two were not so large, but were quite plainly distinct from the centre one. They appeared to have a long loose hanging garment of golden tint, and they were above the German line facing us.

“We stood watching them for about three-quarters of an hour. All the men with me saw them, and other men came up from other groups who also told us that they had seen the same thing. I am not a believer in such things, but I have not the slightest doubt that we really did see what I now tell you.

“I remember the day because it was a day of terrible anxiety for us. That morning the Munsters had had a bad time on our right and so had the Scots Guards. We managed to get to the wood and there we barricaded the roads and remained in the formation I have told you. Later on the Uhlans attacked us and we drove them back with heavy loss. It was after this engagement when we were dog-tired that the vision appeared to us.

“I shall never forget it as long as I live. I lie awake in bed and picture it as I saw it that night. Of my battalion there are now only five men alive besides myself, and I have no hope of ever getting back to the



front. I have a record of fifteen years' good service, and I should be very sorry to make a fool of myself by telling a story merely to please any one."

Our author obtained further interesting information from the soldier when he went to interview him, especially as regards the impression that the vision made upon the other men in his regiment.

"It was very funny," he said. "We came over quiet and still. It took us that way. We didn't know what to make of it. And there we all were, looking up at those three figures, saying nothing, just wondering, when one of the chaps called out, 'God's with us!'—and that kind of loosened us. Then when we were falling in for the march, the captain said to us, 'Well, men, we can cheer up now; we've got Some One with us!' And that's just how we felt. As I tell you, we marched thirty-two miles that night, and the Germans didn't fire either cannon or rifle the whole way."

Mr. Begbie inquired of the lance-corporal if he had met any of the men who saw the vision since he had got back to England. He stated that he had only met one—a sergeant of the Scots Guards who was lying in Netley hospital, and added, "He remembers it just the same as I do." "Of course," he continued, "these chaps in here won't believe it. They think I must have dreamed it, but the sergeant in the Scots Guards could tell them. I have never seen anything like it before or since—I know very well what I saw."

Such is the character of the first-hand evidence which has come to us regarding the most remarkable religious vision of the war—"The Angels of Mons." Some see in this merely a wide-spread delusion; a systematic hallucination, followed by an eager public

credulity—a species of toxic delirium followed by a form of popular hysteria. Yet perhaps the case cannot be dismissed so lightly as this; visions of varying characters were undoubtedly seen by many soldiers at this time; and if ever the men of earth had need of the hosts of heaven to help them, it was then! Another view of the case might perhaps be tenable—for instance the following, communicated by a New Zealander to the columns of the *Harbinger of Light* (Melbourne):

“Testimony of a similar character has poured in ever since the memorable retreat from Mons, when General French’s ‘contemptible little army’ was saved from annihilation by what many people are convinced to have been the direct intervention of powerful spiritual forces. We know of no reason for questioning this conclusion. On the other hand there is abundant Biblical and other evidence which supports the occurrence of such phenomena, including the very significant incident in relation to Elisha and ‘the young man,’ when the latter, on having his spiritual eyes opened—or, as we say in these modern times, after he had become clairvoyant—saw the hillside covered with celestial horsemen, who had come to the aid of the hard-pressed prophet.

“The spirit world is a greater reality and much nearer to us than most people think, and the emissaries of the Most High keep constant watch over mundane affairs and unceasingly direct the evolution of the human race. This spiritual truth is not generally recognized today, but the time is coming when it will be universally accepted, and mankind will be compelled to realize it is literally true that ‘the angel of

the Lord encampeth round them that fear Him, and delivereth them.' ”\*

Whatever the ultimate truth regarding these “Visions” may prove to be, however, it is certain that, *from the psychological and historical points of view*, they deserve careful consideration and study; and it is because of these reasons that I have deemed them worthy of inclusion in this book. From any point of view—whether they be regarded as a species of remarkable hallucinatory experiences, or as a direct manifestation of the spiritual world—they constitute an essential historical part of the psychology of the present war; and, as such, they justify their insertion in this book, and particularly in this Chapter.

And thus, by dream and vision,—by deeds of heroism and self-sacrifice,—has the soul of man become regenerated—has a great Spiritual quickening and revival spread through all the nations—for nations have become regenerated no less than individuals.

Indeed, as M. Le Bon says—and what he says of France applies equally to the soldiers of all the Allies, though no one will begrudge France—bleeding yet glorious—the words of praise he bestows upon her:—

“France will no doubt emerge regenerated and all the stronger from the present tragedy, for the heroic qualities of her defenders show that the anarchy which seemed to threaten her was purely superficial. The dauntless courage of our young men is a consoling sight to the wondering eyes of us who behold it. They will have lived through the most prodigious adventure in history, an epoch whose grandeur transcends that

\* A few additional first-hand cases are to be found in the Rev. A. A. Boddy's booklet—*Real Angels at Mons*.



of the most far-famed legends. For what are the exploits of Homer's warriors, or the gallant feats of Charlemagne's fabulous companions, or the combats of paladins and magicians, compared with the gigantic struggles at whose progress the world looks on amazed?

"No one could have foreseen the marvellous efflorescence of the self-same virtues of men who come from the most widely sundered classes of society. Withdrawn from their tranquil existence on the farm, in the office, the workshop, the school, or even the palace, they find themselves abruptly transported into the heart of an adventure so stupendous and impossible that only in dreams have men ever had glimpses of its like. Truly they are new beings whom threatened France has seen rise up in her defense; being created by a rejuvenescence of the astral soul, which sometimes slumbers but never dies. Sons of the heroes of Tolbiac, Bouvines, and Marengo, these dauntless fighters felt all the valour of their glorious fathers revive within them at their country's first call. Plunged into a hideous inferno, they have often spoken heroic words such as history makes immortal. 'Arise, ye dead!' cried the last soldier in a trench surrounded on every side, to his wounded companions who had been laid low by the enemy's machine-guns. Greece would have plaited crowns for that man and sung his memory.

"To die a hero in a noble cause is an enviable lot for one who has believed himself destined to naught save an empty and monotonous existence; for not according to length of days is life worth living, but according to work accomplished, and the defenders of the sacred soil of our fathers, the handicrafts-men of our future, they who have forged a new France on the

anvil of Fate, our dead, who yet are immortal, are already entered into the pantheon of those demi-gods whom the nations adore and whom the hand of Time himself can no more harm."

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