

PERFECT FREEDOM

THIS BOOK BELONGS
TO

INEZ

FRANK

JOHN

AND OTHERS

*without whose help
it would never have been written*

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NOTE. New Testament quotations, unless stated otherwise, are from 'The New Testament in Modern Speech', by Dr. R. F. Weymouth.

PREFACE

Forty years ago, in early manhood, the writer's life was completely shipwrecked by what is sometimes called a nervous breakdown. For a long period his condition deteriorated until he found himself without health, livelihood or hope.

Five years later the spiritual experience came to him which proved to be the beginning of a complete change of outlook. A life of frustration and fear has been gradually replaced by one of steadily increasing confidence and tranquillity.

Twenty years ago, after some years of experience in helping others, he wrote a short pamphlet designed to bring hope and a way of escape to sufferers from 'nerves'. This small book, with very little publicity, has had a steady sale throughout the years and is still selling today, and has brought the writer into touch with many hundreds of people all over the world.

During all these forty years he has been learning, partly by study but mainly by experience, and today he is living a fuller and happier life than he has ever known in the past. This that he is now writing is in response to an urge to condense the experiences of those forty years into a small book in the hope that if he succeeds in expressing the liberating truth they have taught him he may have the great happiness of sharing that freedom with some of his readers.

Let not him who seeks cease until he finds. When he finds he shall be joyfully astonished; astonished he shall reach the Kingdom; and having reached the Kingdom he shall rest.

Sayings of Jesus.
Oxyrhincus Papyrus.

I EARLY DAYS

IN consequence, so I was told later, of a shock received in infancy, my early childhood was a cause of great anxiety to my parents. This was back in the 'eighties before child psychologists came on the scene. Night terrors were of frequent occurrence. I would dream of being *shut in* in a box which was continually shrinking and closing in on me, and would be found trying to escape by forcing my way out behind some piece of furniture.

This dream of being enclosed in an ever-narrowing prison was strangely prophetic of what was to follow.

These nightmares gradually faded away and I grew up into a fairly normal and rather cheeky schoolboy. At boarding school I managed to conceal a background of timidity, and enjoyed some small successes in games and other school activities.

On leaving school I took a job in the City of London. I was a somewhat irresponsible person without much consideration for others, extracting all the fun I could out of life on an income of next to nothing a year. The years passed with fluctuating fortune until I landed up in Western Canada where I secured a responsible job and married and had children. After a few years we returned to England where I continued on my self-centred way until the blow fell.

In the summer of 1911 I was in the West of England on a business trip. One lovely summer morning I was walking along the sands under the cliffs at Bude when, right out of the blue, from no apparent cause, I was seized by a terrible feeling of panic.

And that was the beginning of it all. The panics came again and again and my efforts of will to control them were utterly futile. They engendered a swarm of morbid dreads which more and more circumscribed my freedom of action. The time came when I feared to be alone and dreaded a crowd until, at last, I could not face the journey to and from the office. Thus I became a prisoner in my own house, my livelihood gone, a misery to myself and everyone else.

II

ROCK BOTTOM

THERE came a time when my 'self' hid not only heaven from me but the earth and my fellow men as well. The whole world seemed alien to me; in the faces of my friends I saw only my 'self'. I felt shut in, divorced from everybody and every familiar thing. I knew a terrifying loneliness such as one might feel alone on the dead moon.

And that was hell indeed. I was helled off, enclosed, imprisoned in 'self', unable to make vital contact with anyone, unable to feel anything apart from 'self', unable to care for anyone except my 'self'. My 'self' was the centre and the circumference of my world, and my world was a narrow cell with room for no one but my 'self'.

I know not which was less endurable, this ceaseless concentration on 'self' and the fears it engendered, or the humiliation of that self-love with all its morbid dreads.

There were some who came to help me but I could not receive their help and so, one by one, they fell away. The doctors passed me on to the parsons and one parson (may I never cease to be grateful to him) handed me over to God.

It was in this way. He came many times and we had long and fruitless discussions which must have severely tried his patience. One day he told me there must be an end to this since it was leading nowhere. He said his job was not to argue. He had one last word for me — 'Pray'. I asked how I could pray without faith, I should only feel a humbug. 'Do you think it would hurt you to feel a humbug?' he asked, and so left me.

III

A BREAK IN THE CLOUDS

I HAD rejected all the easy and comforting dogmas but still superstitiously feared the frightening ones, and I could not bring myself to my knees. That evening, standing at my open window I looked out into the summer night and from the bottom of my soul asked that I might know what it all meant. Within a few hours and for a moment in time I *knew*.

It happened quite simply and undramatically. In the continuous yet futile struggle to escape from 'self' I was reading a novel the name of which is long forgotten. In that novel I came upon the familiar words 'the peace of God which passes all understanding'. As I read them those words *came to life* and for a moment in time, though I believe at that moment I was out of time and in eternity, I knew that peace. At that moment after years of mental torment I was raised out of the depths of my hell into a glowing consciousness of love and peace and an assurance that all was well.

And then once again I was back in my prison. But by the grace of God I took back with me the memory of that blessed experience. I knew it was a *real* experience and that for a moment I had known something of the truth and meaning of Life. I believed that what I had once experienced I could hope to know again and again until it became an abiding state of consciousness.

That assurance which never left me gave me hope and purpose. I was convinced there must be a truth about Life which, could I realize it, would bring liberation, and so I became a living question mark. That day I started out on the quest.

IV

THE QUEST

THE quest was to be long and tortuous, but let me hasten to assure you that there is no need for you to be discouraged by this. Heaven and hell are both states of consciousness and the 'distance' between them must not be thought of in terms of time and space. It is common experience that one's state of mind, one's mood can vary from day to day, even from hour to hour, from anxiety to confidence, from despondency to hopefulness. These moods follow one another, frequently with no apparent cause. From the depths of misery to the heights of bliss there are many intervening states, culminating in 'the supreme Land of Bliss'.¹ We may learn to control these random changes and the time comes when we discover that it is possible in a moment to escape from discord into the perfect harmony of divine consciousness.

Also for your encouragement I feel it is true to say that my condition was exceptional. The nightmare state in which I was living was extreme. My temperament and all the cruder faults of egotism stood between me and liberation: very few who read these lines will have such a long and uphill path to climb.

In St. Paul's Cathedral hangs Holman Hunt's well-known picture, 'The Light of the World'. In this picture is the figure of Jesus, with a lantern in his hand, knocking at a door that is shut and sealed by creeping plants, a door that has been long since closed. There is no handle on the *outside* of this door, which must be opened from within. 'Behold, I stand at the door and

¹ *Poems of Kabir*, Macmillan & Co.

knock. The liberating truth lies deep within every one of us. Behind all the accumulated misconceptions, fears and superstitions of the race memory, which form such an effective barrier, there is 'an inmost centre where truth abides in fullness'. We may learn how to remove that barrier—open that door—and let in the Light which will illumine every dark corner.

Do not be discouraged into thinking there *must* be a long and weary journey before you. Your deliverance may be just round the corner. When I was a small boy I had a little metal money-box made to hold forty sixpences, and when the last, the fortieth sixpence was put in, the box sprang open. The analogy is a rough one but I think the application is clear. No one knows how many 'sixpences' of self-renunciation have gone into his spiritual money-box, nor how near at hand is his liberation. Therefore I urge you to put the time factor on one side and go forward with expectation knowing 'Your Father finds pleasure in giving you the Kingdom'.

I was argumentative, inclined to be arrogant and with my full share of prejudices and not a few superstitions. I had rejected the dogmas of the Church and had put nothing of value in their place. I and my associates regarded Christianity as an exploded superstition, and were much influenced by Wells and other contemporary writers. We would argue by the hour, and no doubt thought we were very clever. We deceived ourselves into thinking we were free to shape our own lives, that illusion of freedom, while in fact every thought and action was conditioned by the 'subconscious'. Much has been written on this subject of free-will. You will find implicit in all that I have to say to you the truth that no one is free while he remains in

egocentric ignorance. Self-centredness is slavery. While a man lives for himself he is a slave to his desires. As long as he remains in complete ignorance of Reality he is a slave to prejudices and superstitions. Turned in on himself he is a slave to fear. Until some measure of Truth begins to operate in his consciousness he is a complete slave to subconscious influences and is in the undignified position of a dog wagged by its own tail.

I have used the term 'subconscious' because by now it has acquired a popular meaning and is therefore a convenient word to denote something beneath the level of conscious mental activity which influences thought feeling and behaviour. We should be wise to accept the idea of the 'subconscious' provisionally and as a working hypothesis, for further knowledge may prove that it is inadequate to explain the whole fact.

And so I pursued my self-centred way until my little world fell in ruins and I was alone, imprisoned in self, with fear as my constant companion. In that prison house I remained, the weary months dragging on into years until all hope of escape had fled and in my despair I cried to God. The response to my call was swift and when that moment's experience of God's peace left me I retained the precious memory, and for the first time for years hope lived in my heart.

Like a man adrift on the ocean without chart or compass or knowledge of navigation, but with a sure conviction of an attainable harbour, the quest began.

And after forty years the quest goes on. For, to change the metaphor, man's pilgrimage may be likened to climbing a mountain. Every horizon reached reveals a vista of yet another, on and up, every height gained gives a wider view and the summit is ever calling.

The distance between the seeker and the Sought is

no distance at all, for that which we seek is within, and there is a response to every sincere prayer, for the asking and the giving are one. It is written, 'Thou wouldst not have sought Me if thou hadst not already found Me.' This yearning for the unattainable Good is the urge of the spirit within to effect union with the Spirit that transcends all.

I ask you who read this to pause for a while and consider the immense significance of that statement: 'Thou wouldst not have sought Me if thou hadst not already found Me.' Here is more than a promise of something to come. It is the assurance that you have *already* that which you are seeking. Jesus said: 'That is why I tell you, whatever you pray and ask for, if you believe that you have received it, it shall be yours.'¹

Try to realize, now, what a complete assurance of victory is here. It is certain you would not be reading these lines if you were not a seeker. And you are a seeker because the Spirit of Truth within your breast is urging you on to seek and find. Your longing to know the liberating Truth is God with you. And if God is with you can the end ever be in doubt?

¹ Mark 11: 24.

V

FIRST STEPS

THE experiences of a long life have convinced me that when anyone is one-pointed in the pursuit of an objective that which will serve his end will come his way. I had a friend, bless her, who, hoping they might help me, used to place pamphlets, cuttings from magazines and odds and ends of literature behind a vase on the mantelpiece by my chair. I was in the habit of taking them down, glancing at them, and throwing them away. After that experience of God's peace one of these papers 'rang a bell' and gave me a sense of direction. From then on I became an omnivorous reader and, given the opportunity, a persistent questioner.

I made the mistake of the builders of the Tower of Babel, thinking I could reach heaven by building an edifice of knowledge through intellectual activity. It was a long time before this error was finally disposed of and I came to understand the value of knowledge and the limitations of reasoning—one value of knowledge lies in its destruction of false theology, prejudice, superstition and the vast accumulation of wrong thinking which blocks the channel of intuition and with its constant clamour drowns the 'still small voice' of inspiration. Reason is limited to the three-dimensional framework in which we have our temporary abiding-place, and is not competent to function in the multi-dimensional world of Reality wherein will be found That which we are seeking.

I wish here to give you a warning against overmuch reading. It can be used as a drug to allay our fears and to give us no more than a fleeting stimulation. In each

new book we hope to find the answer to all our questions, that which will lift us up out of our troubles for ever, with no further effort on our part. Yet the most that one man can do for another in the spoken or written word is to point the way, to exhort and encourage. Not until we learn to still the never-ending arguments of our wrong thinking and with open minds come to commune alone with Spirit do the floodgates open, and infinite Love becomes operative, and our lives are gradually transformed into the likeness of 'God's sons'.

VI

CLEARING THE GROUND

ONCE upon a time I was sitting in a barber's chair surrounded by mirrors. I found I could count fourteen reflections of myself. I tried to see more but my *self* was always in the way blocking further vision. The idea came to me that if I could get that 'self' out of the way I would see Infinity. Little did I realize at that time that this thought was an intuition of a truth that lies at the heart of all true religion.

Jesus says: 'If any man wishes to follow me let him renounce self.'¹

* * * *

In the Authorized Version the words used are 'let him deny himself', and from this have come asceticism, lenten fasting, self-denial weeks and the suppression and sometimes even condemnation of normal bodily appetites. Weymouth's translation no doubt includes a reasonable measure of self-denial and self-discipline, but it will be my endeavour to show that renunciation of 'self' embraces so very much more.

What then is to be understood as the significance of this 'self' which has to be renounced? It cannot be an integral part of our essential being or we should speak not of renouncing but of improving or redeeming it.

It happens sometimes that we express ourselves in words the full significance of which we do not realize. How frequently we hold converse with our 'self', admonishing or encouraging—I told my 'self' not to be a coward—I said to my 'self' 'Why did you repeat that

¹ Matt. 16: 24.

unkind gossip?"—I was ashamed of my 'self'—and so on. Who is this 'I' which is so much wiser, kinder, braver than the 'self', this 'I' which knows intuitively how much is to be won by bringing the 'self' under control?

I cannot be mistaken in thinking that it is I who am speaking to my 'self.' I am that 'I'. Then what is this 'self' to which I speak? It is a *misconception*, a mental abstraction which appears to have an identity in a three-dimensional abstraction from Totality. It is a misconception in a still greater misconception.

At first sight these words may convey little meaning to you but be patient for a few moments. This phase of life in which we are at present involved is limited to the comprehension of three dimensions only, whereas Reality is multi-dimensional. This truth is known intuitively by each one as his consciousness expands to include more of Reality. It is also being developed by contemporary physical scientists. We are under the impression that we have our being in a solid *material* world made up of form, colour, sound, fragrance and so on. But physicists imply that the world we live in is much less objective than seems to be the case. They tell us that all those qualities that give meaning and value to life are subjective and not objective at all. They tell us that what actually happens is that vibrations of different frequencies impinge on our sensory nerves by which they are conveyed to the brain, where, by some unknown alchemy, they are transmuted into the design and colour of a landscape, the form and fragrance of a rose, or the inspiring wonder of a Beethoven symphony.

If this is true then the *vital* part of human experience is entirely outside of the three-dimensional frame; it does not exist out there in space, apart from us, but is

in truth a 'creation' of the mind. I do not wish to imply that there is no reality apart from us, only that *things are not as they seem*, and that which comes to us from without is the essential stimulus for the creation of that which we know within us as vital experience.

The scientists also tell us that our senses can respond to only a very limited range of vibrations. There are colours and sounds beyond our apprehension. There are delicate instruments which respond to a slightly extended range, such as ultra-violet and infra-red rays, but Totality escapes us. It is beyond our present reach.

We must not assume from this that our senses are at fault or that they are deceiving us. Our senses are in no way to blame, the misconceptions arise solely from a wrong interpretation of the impressions they bring to us.

Out of this misconception of Reality the material interpretation of Life has been built up, and just as we *feel* that each day the sun rises in the east, travels across the sky and sets in the west, although we *know* it is not so, we *feel* that there is a solid world of form and colour and sound out there, away and apart from us, and that each one of us is a separate self-contained entity, living out his brief existence in an alien universe.

Out of this misconception have come religions and philosophies. Having abstracted a fraction from Totality, we have come to believe that that fraction is all there is. Many systems of thought have been built up on that misconception. Man has come to think of himself as a material body with a material brain and nothing more. Many admit the possible or even actual existence of the soul, but in fact there is an almost universal belief in a mortal, material existence in a mortal, material body, that the universe itself is slowly

running down, and that each individual from the moment he is born comes under a law of condemnation to degeneration, decay, death and extinction.

Just as that appearance of reality, a material world, is an abstraction from Totality, so the 'self' to be renounced is in like manner an abstraction from the true self, having no reality but appearing to exist as a separate entity in that greater illusion, a material universe.

This 'self' is not to be destroyed. One cannot destroy that which does not exist. It has to be renounced because it has no validity, no actuality. It has to be renounced because its acceptance as a reality has engendered the whole nightmare dream of life, the age-long tragedy of mortal existence.

It is the 'Old Adam' which has to be put off in order that we may 'put on Christ'.

I am convinced that the theme of this book has universal application, yet as I write I have in mind one person only, someone who is reading these lines because he or she is out of tune with life, frustrated, rather frightened, and groping without much hope for a way of escape. So I say to you if the foregoing is a bit obscure, read this chapter again and again if necessary until you have grasped and I hope accepted the fact that your fears are without foundation, because they are centred around a fallacy, a misconception of your true nature. You will then read on with eagerness, for all that follows is an attempt to reveal to you the perfect freedom that will be yours when you find your true free Self in the world of Reality.

VII

BONDAGE TO 'SELF'

It is imperative that man should seek to renounce 'self', for until he begins to do so he remains a slave to that 'self' with all its limitations and vanities and fears. This 'self' to which man is in bondage and by which I was so desperately enthralled is, as has been said, a misconception of the 'I' that I am, and is a denial of our true nature. For, whereas the pseudo-self is based on the belief of self-centredness, of separation and apartness from all else, yet when a man begins to realize his true nature he becomes aware that he is centred in Spirit and at one with all created life.

The Kingdom of Heaven is within you, and whoever shall know himself shall find it. Strive therefore to know yourselves and ye shall be aware that ye are the sons of the Father; and ye shall know that ye are in the City of God, and that ye are the City.

Self-centredness distorts every value. Every experience, every choice, every decision is considered in the light of how it will affect *me*. One can be fond (for we are fond of that person or thing which seems to minister to our sense of well-being) but the pseudo-self cannot love, for love goes out, love is self-giving. 'Love seeketh not her own.'

In this distorted consciousness 'self' is put in the place of God and fills the horizon. Self-centredness implies self-love, and self-love is always accompanied by self-concern, producing a swarm of morbid dreads, fears that are without any foundation in fact, but which rob life of all tranquillity and joy.

¹ Sayings of Jesus. *Oxyrhincus Papyrus*.

(This self-obsession, this intoxication of self-esteem produces extreme sensitivity. The individual is always seeing imaginary slights, and so debars himself from friendships. Everything seems to conspire against him and he is filled with self-pity. There are few emotions more harmful than self-pity. He can see but one point of view, his own. By putting the blame on everyone and everything but himself, the individual denies himself any chance of escape from his prison. A hard but necessary lesson that each one must learn is that we have no mandate, and seldom sufficient knowledge, to judge another, and that our concern must always be to discover our own errors, our own faults of thought, feeling or action, and deal with them.)

(The prisoner to 'self', unable to love, lives in a grey world of his own creation. He longs to receive that which he cannot give. Nostalgic memories of 'the peaceful hours I once enjoyed' serve only to aggravate present suffering. And in that prison he remains until the very intensity of his suffering compels him to abandon the struggle, and that surrender makes it possible for divine intuition to indicate the way of escape.)

Walking on the hills a man was overtaken and surrounded by a thick mist. Feeling his way foot by foot, he slipped and fell and slid down a sharp declivity, clutching at everything to save himself until a shrub arrested his fall. Calling for help, he held on, feeling the strength going out of his arms. At last he could hold on no longer, and, with a despairing cry, let go and fell—a few feet on to solid ground.

(So it is with all those who are in the grip of morbid dreads, in whom self-concentration has produced an ever-present sense of the need for self-protection. They

see threats to their safety everywhere, they are for ever playing for safety. They feel they are fighting a losing battle but fear to give up the struggle. They dare not let go until through sheer weakness they can struggle no longer. Through that surrender they will learn that they were at all times safe, and that there never had been any need to fight.)

The description I have given of the miserable position of the prisoner to 'self' is drawn from my recollection of the state in which I once lived, and also from much that I learned at a later period when I was occupied in trying to help other prisoners.

Reorientation of self will bring emancipation to everyone and must, in time, profoundly ameliorate the human situation. Our standard of normality is not a very exalted one and the difference between the average man-in-the-street and the inhibited neurasthenic is only one of degree. (Very few if any can be entirely free from subconscious interference with freedom of thought and action.)

The story of the Garden of Eden may be read as the parable of the coming of self-consciousness to the human animal, of the first man to stand erect and say 'I am'. The awareness of nakedness is a striking symbol of the birth of self-consciousness. Picture the result of thousands of generations of men groping through the darkness of ignorance and superstitious fear, misinterpreting the true significance of 'self' and thereby building up a false philosophy of life, based on egocentricity. This inevitably resulted in a growing exaggeration of egotism, the idea of the survival of the fittest and the ideal of self-aggrandisement. This misconception produced also a sense of separation, isolation, each one for himself, so that the strong learned to dominate and

exploit, and the weak went to the wall and developed ultra-sensitive morbid temperaments. At one extreme is seen the overweening tyrant and at the other the frightened neurasthenic. The solution to this tragic consequence of the initial error will be found in full, unqualified 'self' renunciation.

This misconception of the true significance of the 'self' and the systems of thought which have been built upon that misconception have resulted in a materialistic explanation of life which excludes the possibility of design or purpose, and this seems to have been accepted without question by the majority of educated people today.

It may be assumed that when a crab discards its shell and seeks a secluded spot of comparative safety while another and larger shell is hardening around it, it does so because it can no longer fit comfortably into the old shell. It may be assumed with equal justification that when an individual has lost his peace of mind and is no longer able to adjust himself to his mental environment it is because his consciousness is expanding and will no longer fit comfortably into the cramping limitations of a purely materialistic view of life.

It may well be that this inability to *fit in* is in many instances the cause of that distressful condition popularly called 'nerves'.

Using the same analogy, the individual, while his consciousness is expanding, should seek shelter from the attacks of sceptical criticism, but unlike the crab, should be on his guard not to allow these new vistas to crystallize into new dogmas. He will be wise if he seeks to keep thought fluid and expectant of further expansion.

VIII

FINDING THE WAY

For me there was no sudden influx of light, no dramatic conversion. That brief encounter with the peace of God left me with the conviction that there was an attainable truth which would make me free if only I could find it. After so long a time I do not recall my first steps towards understanding. Today I am writing in my room surrounded by books, many of them very old friends. From books I have received unfailing entertainment and education and it would be impossible to overstate my debt to them. I read everything that came my way that seemed to have any bearing on my quest.

But my reading was not an orderly progression, far from it. I was frequently sidetracked by theological, philosophical and other speculative writings which led me down blind alleys from whence I had to find my way back, and not without trouble. For those of us who have to satisfy reason before we can experience intuition this is probably a troublesome necessity.

People differ so much in tastes, in temperament and intellectual equipment that it would not be practicable to lay down a course of reading that would suit everyone. It is well to remember, too, that intuition can give us so much more than we can get from books. I am satisfied that anyone who is sufficiently one-pointed in his quest will find for himself the books best suited to his developing understanding.

My reading ranged through mysticism, philosophy, and popular books on physics and psychology, and I was impressed by the thought that these branches of

knowledge might be synthesized into a harmonious and comprehensive picture revealing an acceptable meaning to Life.

During these years of reading, with help from many sources, I was experimenting in a practical application of all I was learning. What follows must not be taken as an arbitrary method but it will, I hope, provide you with material from which you may experiment for yourself and thereby discover your own best way of working towards the freedom of Spirit.

Things began to move when I saw clearly that most of my troubles, if not all, arose from concentration on self and what I was thinking about my 'self.' I came to see that nothing less than a complete reorientation or re-identification of self was required.

I will speak later of the mistakes I made and the hindrances I met with, and will first attempt to telescope into a brief outline the daily practice which in actual experience was evolved over a considerable period of time.

I experimented in meditation and soon came to the conclusion that I was not by temperament a meditative. I soon saw also that the short periods during which I endeavoured to think with God were heavily outweighed by the many hours of wrong thinking which intervened. It was then that I learned the immense value of watching and when necessary, reversing the thoughts that came into my mind.

From my reading I was beginning to see the nature and purpose of true prayer. I saw that effective prayer is a mental or spiritual attitude—'The heart's desire uttered or unexpressed'. I saw that prayer must comply with psychological necessities, with the individual's particular psychological complexities. I saw that invoking

God, out there, to come down to my level to aid me in fighting my weaknesses and temptations was false in theory and devastating in practice. False in theory for in truth we live and have our entire being in God, and we contact God in the depths of our own being. Devastating in practice because prayer can operate in a direction quite the reverse of our intention. I saw that to pray 'O God help me to overcome this fear, give me strength to resist this temptation' was in effect a concentration on self which fastened still more firmly upon me the consciousness of fear and futility. The time came when I could no longer use supplicatory prayer or even pray for my 'self' at all.

If the object of prayer is to effect union with God, to realize our intimate relationship with Totality, then the prayer of *affirmation* alone will avail.

'O Infinite Spirit, all-embracing Love, I thank Thee for Thou art ever with us.'

'I thank Thee for the understanding and strength which Thou hast given us and which is ours *now*.'

At an early date I had an intuition of the significance of the words 'I am that I am.' I saw that in those words to Moses God was claiming the 'I am' of each one of us. Later on this was confirmed by the mystics—'God became my second self, that I might become His second self.'¹ This was to have a profound effect in the formation of my prayer life.

By degrees it became clear that the little 'self' must be dropped right out of the picture, and that the ideal of prayer was to seek to say 'I am' in unison with God. I came gradually to the recognition of this ideal, and since it may present a difficulty to you at first sight I propose that we leave it in abeyance and return to it later.

¹ Eckhart.

ve spoken of the necessity for coping with the hours between our times of communion with the practice of reversing thought. Our thoughts are spiritual, and obeying the law of inertia will continue along the old grooves unless or until some agency is brought to bear upon them. The prisoner to 'self' is a slave to his thoughts and it calls for persevering effort to bring them gradually under control. But how enormously rewarding is that effort, for lacking control he is the victim of any morbid thought that may enter his mind and continue to torment him until it fades out or is pushed out by some other still more distressing suggestion. This consideration alone should be sufficient to encourage anyone to make the necessary effort to gain thought control, but in addition there is the further inducement when we understand that control of thought is essential to spiritual development. Undesirable thoughts will constantly enter the mind, and at one time I accepted them without question, gave rein to them and was hag-ridden by them. The time came when I began to resent them. I learned that the best way was not to fight them, but to repudiate and turn away from them, and if at that moment I could not find a corrective thought to put in their place, I could at least hold my attention to something else, anything else that had no *personal* application, and directed thought away from 'self'. An evil suggestion has no power of itself to remain in consciousness. Its appearance of life depends solely on the attention we give to it. Ignore it and, having no life itself, it must fade out. I will try and put before you some suggestions concerning these two activities, prayer and thought control.

The broadcast programmes afford a remarkable analogy to the present subject. The conception of the

omnipresence must have puzzled many, but it should be more readily comprehended when it is remembered that a broadcast programme is omnipresent, anywhere on the planet, and how far beyond who knows? Down in a mine, up in an aeroplane, or at the bottom of the sea if there is a receiving-set, there the programme may be received. In relation to the Omnipresent Divine Broadcast, every man is by nature a receiving-set and may learn to tune-in to God.

If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold Thou art there.¹

The analogy will still serve. The object of prayer is to find union with our Source, to tune-in to Infinite Mind. Turning our thoughts towards God, turning the knobs of our 'receiving-sets', we are seeking God's 'wave-length'.

That they might seek God, if perhaps they could grope for Him and find Him. Yes, though He is not far from any one of us. For it is in Him we live and move and have our being.²

In practice I have found it expedient to have a regular time for prayer when and where interruptions are less likely to occur. Try to relax and be expectant. Always remember you are seeking That which is already with you. A short time well used is better than a long period with much mind-wandering. What is at first a duty will in time become a privilege and a joy in itself. Remember too that as well as the set time, there are always occasions during the day when one may tune-in. In a train or bus, while waiting for an appointment, any odd moments not otherwise occupied, afford oppor-

¹ Psalm 139: 8.

² Acts. 17: 27.

s. (A few moments employed in this way on waking the morning and just before falling asleep at are of special value.)

There is little that need be said about thought control throughout the day. The purpose is, plain, not to let negative thoughts run on unchecked. It is not always possible to replace a harmful thought by a constructive one, but it is always possible to dismiss a wrong thought by using a 'word of power' as for example—'This is not true of me, a child of God.' A word of power is a statement of truth which has for you the conviction of truth. As I have said before, the practice of thought control is greatly rewarding, it is not only a necessary complement to the quiet time, it may well be of equal value, since your liberation will come about through your remembrance, and affirmation, of who and what you are, and, conversely, of who and what you are not.

Wow
You are not a self-centred mortal, condemned at birth, to death and extinction. You are not a self-dependent creature with a strictly limited and exhaustible supply of vitality and mental power. You are NOW an immortal spiritual being with infinite resources of power and wisdom, and creative love which will become more and more operative in your life and affairs as the inhibiting barriers in your mind are dispelled.

It is not possible to over-emphasize the importance of forming a habit of reversing negative, destructive suggestions immediately they come into your mind. If they are allowed to remain for a while, or if you make the mistake of trying to dispose of them by argument, it will be more difficult to dispel them later. I remember that at one time I formed a habit of shaking my head

at any morbid suggestion and for me this proved to be adequate. If you have grasped fully the principle involved you will find your own words of Power, the way best suited to your temperament to deal with the situation.)

IX

MISTAKES AND HINDRANCES

DISCOURAGEMENT comes to everyone at times and we must be on our guard against it. It is devastating and can neutralize all our sincere efforts, and if given in to may persuade us to abandon our quest. It comes in many guises. 'How can such a faulty creature as I am ever hope to reach the goal?'—'I can see no progress anywhere'—'What a fantastic idea is this that I by thinking a few muddled thoughts and saying a few half-hearted prayers can effect anything'—'Last night I was trying to make real to myself the indwelling love of God and this morning I was as irritable and bad-tempered as ever.' In these and many other ways will discouragement attack us, and it is always without justification, for it is always based on the misconception of self. This 'faulty and imperfect creature' can never be perfected, it has to be renounced so that one day I may know my true Self God's 'son'. And now is the time to renounce it.

It is probably true that you can see no progress. That change which is taking place in you will be almost entirely below the threshold of consciousness, and you may know nothing about it until one day, for no apparent reason, you are aware of a lightening of heart or an increased sense of confidence. *Do not keep feeling your spiritual pulse, it is bad psychology.*

It is a fantastic idea that I, by taking thought or by much prayer, can do anything to affect the situation. 'Which of you by taking thought can add to his stature one cubit?' But your sincere endeavour, your yearnings and aspirations can, and surely will, open your soul to

Spirit. 'And thy Father, which seeth in secret Himself shall reward thee openly.'¹

The same fallacy is inherent in every form of self-condemnation. It is right to condemn the pseudo-self provided you are not identifying your true self with that nonentity. The pseudo-self can neither do nor be any good thing. Much of this wrong thinking can be traced to bad theology, the teaching that man is inherently depraved, the error that identifies God's 'son' with the 'old Adam', the teaching which implies that a miserable sinner is to be gradually perfected.

This utterly false notion of the relationship existing between God and man may have disastrous consequences. More than once in my experience of helping others I have had to do with individuals who were so obsessed with their sinful nature that they were convinced they were beyond the pale of God's forgiveness.

Therefore remember always to be quite clear that in condemning self you are judging that false 'self' (the old Adam) which it is your desire and intention, by the grace of God, to renounce for ever.

Thereby He has granted us exceeding great and precious promises, in order that through them you may become sharers in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is now in the world by reason of earthly cravings.²

Another source of discouragement may be found in reading books the subject of which is based on a materialistic philosophy—or in allowing oneself to be drawn into arguments with sceptics, those who affirm agnosticism, thus subjecting one's dawning understanding to the destructive criticism of those who have no knowledge of the Reality into which you are seeking to

¹ Matt. 6: 4.

² Peter 1: 4.

enter. I cannot advise you too earnestly to talk about your inner life only with those who, you are confident, are on the *same path* as yourself, and who have a little more understanding than you at present possess. It is foolhardy to do otherwise until you have an inner assurance that your faith, the outcome of experience, is so 'rooted and grounded in God' that no adverse criticism can possibly shake it. And lastly, *never* let yourself be drawn into theological arguments.

You will be very fortunate indeed if you do not now and then run into periods of staleness, or aridity. There appears to be a swing of the pendulum from increasing understanding and hope to a sense of deadness and, if we are not on our guard, of despair. It will comfort you to know that this experience has been *shared by everyone who has sought and found union and liberation*. In mystical writing it is spoken of as 'the dark night of the soul'. If you will bear this in mind, you will refuse to be discouraged if it happens to you, for you will recognize it as *part of the process of awakening*. Leaves fall in winter, but growth *underground* continues all the time. If you will be patient and persevere in your practice of *tuning-in* and *controlling thought*, looking for no present rewards, the feeling of deadness will very surely pass and your fidelity will be rewarded by an enhanced sense of confidence and poise and a stronger conviction that you are on the right road.

As well as discouragement there are other hindrances to progress which it is well to mention.

I was always interested in politics (and rather too fond of airing my views and trying to show the other fellow how mistaken he was), and there were times when I became so immersed in passing events that my main pursuit was neglected or even lost sight of for a

while. Your interests may be in other directions, and I ask you to be careful about this. The time will come when universal Mind will begin to be operative in your consciousness, and then, if you still wish, you will be able to give your attention to those things which are the concern of the newspapers with changed values and an increasing ability to distinguish between fact and fiction.

Laziness or sloth attacks most of us. There is a temptation to rest on our oars when things seem to be going well. There is no need to enlarge upon this, it will suffice if I urge you to let *nothing* interfere with your *daily quiet time* and *your constant watch on the thoughts you entertain during the day*.

A more subtle temptation which, while it lasts, will be a complete barrier to progress, is self-satisfaction or spiritual pride. The little 'self', the false ego, seems to be insatiable in its appetite for self-importance, and we may be tempted to take personal credit for the change that is taking place in us, once again falling into the error of trying to make something of the false ego. For a time I succumbed to this temptation and must have been insufferable in my self-complacency and my busy-body attempts to put everybody right.

I urge you to take this warning seriously, for temptations can come in angelic guise, and it is easy to deceive ourselves and attribute worthy motives to our self-important attempts to influence the lives of other people. It is a fundamental fact of being that only the 'poor in spirit', the humble of heart, may enter the Kingdom.

The 'Law of Reversed Effort' is I believe fairly generally accepted by psychologists. Its operation is expressed in this way: 'When the will and the imagination are in conflict the imagination always wins.' I can

bear witness to the truth of this from personal experience and that is why I bring up the subject here, for misuse of the will can be a very serious hindrance to progress.

The word 'imagination' is used here with a precise and special meaning—the creative faculty of the mind. The will has its part to play and is concerned almost entirely with the control of thought and direction of attention. The imagination has a far more important function, for when the will has brought thought under control then the imagination is used to bring an ideal into being, into living experience.

It is worse than useless to try and control phobias, complexes and other subconscious disturbances by the exercise of will. At one time I tried to break out of my prison by using will to control morbid fears. The result was a humiliating failure; I was driven back into my prison and it took some little while to recover lost ground. These upsets (phobias and the like) must be circumvented and not directly attacked. By control of thought the attention is directed away from the morbid suggestion and by the use of creative imagination the cause of the trouble in the subconscious will be dispelled gradually and leave the whole mind free to function in a healthy manner. This right use of will and imagination applies with equal force in coping with any form of intemperance or excessive indulgence of appetites.

One more word in this connection. Do not strive so hard to be good. Do not think that you can by an effort of will alter and improve your character. Within you is always the Source of all Good, all truth and all beauty, and the transformation that is to take place will come about as you, by right co-operation, remove the barrier so that Spirit can operate freely and your true Self become manifested in your daily life.

X DOGMA

FOR a long time I was hampered by many prejudices, and prejudices are obstinate things to remove even when it is seen that the seeker for Truth must come with an open mind. I wish here to write about the influence of early religious teaching and the unquestioning acceptance of views strongly held by one's close associates. My sole purpose in speaking of controversial subjects is my earnest desire to help you over difficulties which were for long a serious hindrance to me and which may possibly be standing in your own way.

In the nursery I was taught to be afraid of God and what He would do to me if I were naughty. Hell was a very real place, and it was many long years before I was free from this terrifying background. This picture of an angry God punishing His ignorant and foolish children, even to the point of condemning them to eternal torment if they do not repent and ask His forgiveness, has alienated numberless people from Christianity. A psychiatrist once told me that in his experience bad theology brought more people to him than any one other cause. It can be said with some truth that there is a different spirit in the churches today, but the old bad teaching is still to be heard from the pulpit and comes again and again in prayer book and hymns.

Dismiss your fears little flock, Your Father finds
pleasure in giving you the Kingdom.¹

This is an epitome of the 'Good Tidings' and any-

¹ Luke 12: 32.

thing whatsoever that detracts from or denies this liberating truth must be rejected.

God is no judge. It is divine grace working in our hearts that awakens us to the 'beauty of holiness,' to a dawning appreciation of our true nature, so that we become our own judges and condemn and seek to renounce that which is not an expression of our real self.

Love does not punish. We suffer because we break the Law, which is the Law of our being and of our felicity. Love withholds nothing. Love is for ever giving. Forgiveness does not enter into the relationship between God and man. *Love is giving even while man is sinning.* And this divine gift redeems mankind. Nothing less than this self-giving Love (exemplified in the life of Jesus) can save mankind from the consequences of all the wrath and condemnation and punishment and torture of 'man's inhumanity to man', all done in the sacred name of truth and justice until the whole race is becoming blinded by fear.

Beloved let us love one another; for love comes from God, and everyone who loves is a child of God, and knows God. He who does not love has no knowledge of God; because God is Love.¹

Our salvation lies in learning to trust our Source, to trust so completely that the thought 'God with us' will instantly banish fear; to trust so that the recollection of the Omnipresence brings with it the *feeling*, not merely the thought, that *now* all is well.

Bad theology teaches the *fundamentally* sinful nature of man, man 'born in sin'. How can this be? Our certain hope, our assurance of liberation from our chains

¹ 1 John 4: 7.

is in the supreme FACT that we are *now* God's 'children' living in a nightmare dream. 'Awake! thou that sleepest.'

A rudimentary knowledge of psychology must convince anyone that to form a habit of calling oneself a miserable sinner is in effect to hug one's chains. Can anyone overcome an evil propensity if he is firmly convinced that it is his *nature* to give expression to that evil? Thank God it is our true nature to express God; and the realization of this fills us with hope and courage and determination, and shows us where to look for the wisdom and the power to meet and overcome the 'enemy'.

Beloved we are now God's children but what we are to be has not yet been manifested. We know that if He appears we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him, purifies himself as He is pure.¹

It is certain that much confusion of thought arises out of misunderstandings as to the use and significance of terms. It is unfortunately true that many words have been so misused and spoilt as to have long since ceased to have any precise meaning. That word, that immeasurably great word 'Christ' is referred to by St. Paul as 'the Power of God'—the 'Wisdom of God'—He speaks of 'Christ who is our life', and again 'Christ who is all and in all'; and, by implication, as the universal Son of God. Theology has narrowed down the meaning of the word 'Christ', and for many people it is an alternative name for Jesus and no more. That the word is applicable to Jesus is evident, but he was 'the first born of many brethren' and *we* are exhorted to 'put on Christ'.

¹ 1 John 3: 2.

For me and for countless others, I believe, the life of Jesus has had an incalculable and abiding inspiration as the Way-shower, which it could never have had if we believed that he was unique, of a fundamentally different species. But his own words deny this. He said, 'Why do you ask me about this thing that is good? There is only One who is truly good.'¹ He was continually speaking of his Father and our Father. 'My Father works unceasingly, and so do I.'² 'Of myself I do nothing; but as my Father has taught me, so I speak.'³ In the garden he prayed 'Oh, my Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me', and in his agony, 'My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?'

In our predicament it is the sublime humanity of Jesus that calls us to come up higher. We, who are prisoners to 'self', if we obey that call and renounce 'self' may hope by following him to overcome the belief in sin and death and in 'the mystical body of Christ' discover that we are co-heirs with him in the Kingdom.

Though Christ our Lord a thousand times
In Bethlehem be born,
And not in thee, thy soul remains
Eternally forlorn.⁴

The divinity of Jesus is the assurance of man's attainable divinity. He is the prototype of divine humanity, and of the perfect freedom which all will enjoy, here or hereafter, when through renunciation of 'self' the true Self is found in divine consciousness.

¹ Matt. 19: 17
³ John 8: 28.

² John 5: 17.
⁴ Angelus Silesius.

XI

THE CHARGE OF 'ESCAPISM'

At one time I had to cope with an almost paralyzing sequence of thoughts which might easily have put an end to my quest almost at the outset. 'Religion is escapism.' How many times in my reading I met with this assertion, and not only in books but also in conversation. I remember being told I was living in a fool's paradise.

I could not ignore this suggestion. Was it true that I was deluding myself into believing abstractions with no truth in them in an attempt to escape facing up to the grim realities? Was I imitating the ostrich and burying my head in make-belief without substance? Was I like an opium-eater seeking escape from reality into a world of happy dreams? Why—look at the world—the ugliness and misery and crime to be seen everywhere. Consider the terrible toll of disease, with all its pain and frustration and wastage. What can be said of the teeming horror of life beneath the placid surface of tropical seas? What answer is there to the long story of man's appalling inhumanity to man?

I will spare you a detailed account of all the shocking aspects of material existence. But there can be no denying them. There they are for all to witness, they are *facts of experience*. Nevertheless there is something that may be said about them.

The purpose of true religion must be to save man from himself. Most people are agreed that man's standards of behaviour may, in time, by education, political action and other means, be raised to an almost unlimited degree. Men have dreamed of Utopias. This

being so, the day may come when man's wickedness and inhumanity may be removed from the tragic picture and religion may prove to be the answer.

There still remains the terrifying spectacle of savagery and suffering present in wild life, an apparently irremediable evil which can in no way be affected by religion.

There is reason to believe that with the exception of dogs which have lived in close contact with man, all animals other than man live in the present moment with little if any memory of the past and no foreboding of the future. I have myself seen a rabbit run screaming from a stoat, and a minute after placidly nibbling the herbage. We are prone to measure the suffering of animals in relation to our own, almost certainly greatly exaggerating it by so doing. If suffering is limited to the present moment without memories or anticipations, that suffering must thereby be immensely lessened. In observing wild life one sees no *tragic* picture at all but, on the contrary, the birds' morning chorus, the beauty and dignity and *playfulness* of all wild creatures exhibit a joy of life which there is no mistaking. Is it not possible that the tragic element we see in animal life is a projection of our own morbid imagination?

But what I have written is no full and sufficient answer to the problem and we must look elsewhere.

I have said that the shocking aspects of human existence are facts of experience. I have already written of the error of forming a philosophy of life on the evidence received from a partial three-dimensional picture. A partial view of anything may well be a distorted view. A fact of experience may not be a fact of *being*, for a fact of experience is a partial and therefore imperfect appre-

hension of Reality, and may have no relevance to Life seen as a whole.

That there is an all-embracing Mind which under certain conditions becomes operative in human consciousness is not a matter of speculation or belief, but is a vital reality in the experience of numberless individuals through the centuries and living in the world today. The effect of this Mind in individual consciousness is nothing less than transformation. 'And do not conform to the present age, but be transformed by the entire renewal of your minds.'¹ In an expanding view of life the partial picture will be absorbed in a dawning awareness of Totality; with an extended horizon comes increased discernment and greater wisdom which will enable the individual to do what may be done to remove or alleviate avoidable present suffering.

Oh, believe it, Life is immensely greater and infinitely more beautiful than can at present be imagined. Do not be deceived by appearances. When all the pieces of the jig-saw puzzle are seen in place the loveliness of the revealed picture will bring us to our knees.

¹ Romans 12: 2.

XII PRAYER

THE ideal of Prayer should be nothing less than integration, not alone of the individual but also of his relation to the universe. The conflict between the various elements that constitute a man's character is the cause of untold misery, and to the sense of isolation, of separation from his Source may be attributed the underlying apprehension which can dog a man throughout his life. The realization of the fundamental unity of all life will ultimately banish all discord and strife.

Man has been defined as a 'religious animal,' and it is as natural for him to pray as to breathe. In his evolution from darkest ignorance to inspired understanding his prayers take on many forms, mostly superstitious, and from the prayer-wheel of the East to the rapt contemplation of the saint, are his interpretation of experience.

True prayer must be based on an understanding of the actual relationship which exists between God and man.

He is not far from any one of you, For it is in Him we live and move and have our being.¹

Can any relationship be more intimate than this?—life in God 'whose centre is everywhere and His circumference nowhere.'

Whither shall I flee from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy Presence? If I ascend up into Heaven Thou art there, if I make my bed in hell behold, Thou art there. If I take the wings of the

¹ Acts 17: 27.

morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there Thy hand shall lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me.¹

Wherever we may be there is the sustaining Power. Whatever we may be thinking or doing, to whatever depths of degradation we may have sunk, still the transforming beauty of Creative Mind is with us, 'nearer than breathing'.

~~Prayers addressed to a god afar off, away and apart from us are faulty, based on a devastating error.~~ Such prayers may be answered, for it is not the form of the prayer, the words employed that is the deciding factor, but the underlying thought and feeling of the one who prays. It may well happen that the prayer is expressed in language which has little or no relation to the truth of 'God with us', yet if the thought, the feeling behind that prayer is one of complete trust in divine Power then the prayer will be answered.

But complete trust is a blessed state which has to be won, and a right understanding of the Omnipresence will enormously lessen the difficulties of attaining it.

It is not in the nature of Spirit to grant or withhold gifts. When man in his need turns to God he does not approach a judge who will consider his case on its merits and decide whether to grant or deny the petition. When he turns to God he turns to the Source of all good. Spirit is for ever giving, but man does not know how to receive. Man's whole being is inextricably woven into the fabric of God so that no act of man can ever separate him from God.

Life is arid, sterile, futile, not because we are cut off from the well-spring, but owing to a mental barrier, for the seeming separation of man from God exists

¹ Psalms 139: 7.

✓ solely in consciousness and is never a fact of being.

It is seen then that prayer is the technique of tuning-in to the *ever-present* inspiration of divine Mind, of contacting the restoring Power of Spirit.

Ⓢ The understanding of this is so vitally important that I urge you to be sure you grasp the *full* implications of what has been said before you go on to read what follows concerning the practical application of that truth.

Since Spirit is the Giver of all good, the Source of all life and health and energy, of wisdom and understanding, we now see that the *whole* purpose of prayer is to remove the mental barrier that impedes, and can almost entirely check the free circulation of our spiritual life-blood. I say 'almost entirely check' because, thank God, man can never separate himself from his Source, which would be extinction. The fact of being alive at all is evidence of this, since *all life* comes from God and there is no other source whatever.

There is one other factor of supreme importance in considering the subject of prayer which, while not actually a part of the *technique* of prayer is intimately concerned with it and strongly reinforces it.

Ⓢ It is to have a thankful heart, to gain an abiding sense of gratitude to God. This will come about, inevitably, when the individual awakens to the radiant prospect of life shared with God, life *expressing* God. But meanwhile it is wise to do what we may to encourage this constant attitude of thankfulness. Let us remind ourselves frequently that all we are and have and hope for that is *good* comes from Spirit alone, and now and then give verbal expression to this.

'O God, we thank Thee for life, we thank Thee for having brought us into being to share Thy life.'

God may not be thought of as a person since God is all-embracing Spirit. We use the word 'God' for That which is indefinable, and although that word is so overloaded with superstition that it can stand for any number of quite different concepts, yet it is difficult to avoid using it at times. The wisest have always affirmed that no positive definition of the Deity can be true or possible since That to which we refer is ineffable. Man is insatiable in his desire to label everybody and everything, but if That could be comprehended and defined by a human mentality then It could be contained in that mentality and the effect would be greater than the cause, which is a reduction to absurdity.

But, thanks be, there is no need for definition. God is not to be defined but to be *known*. Can the creature be entirely unconscious of its Creator? Can an effect know nothing of its Cause? Man's thought has been darkened by his symbols and his arrogant assumptions.

In truth I tell you whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God like a little child will certainly not enter it.¹

Ⓢ Therefore give the head a holiday and trust to the heart and do not trouble to be particular in the use of terms. Let the heart speak. Express your mood. Call to your loving Father—Adore the Infinite Beauty—Worship your Creator—Laugh and sing and play in the Presence—Bow your head in utter humility before the Altogether Perfect—and always always trust, utter and absolute reliance. Let be to God, underneath are always the everlasting Arms. He is always with us, a Rock, a Fortress, a wise Father, a loving Mother. Every conceivable need of the adventuring soul is provided for.

¹ Mark 10: 15.

So be true to your intuitions. Let us stop trying to understand God and begin to live in Him, with Him, and we shall be upheld and guided through the shadows into the Light of the Perfect Day.

* * * *

Returning to the technique of prayer, of tuning-in to God, which as already said is concerned *solely* with the removal of the mental barrier, when that barrier is down, if but for a moment, prayer is answered. The continued practice of tuning-in will gradually wear away the barrier so that the individual will become increasingly conscious of the Presence of God.

Once again let me remind you that what I say is derived from personal experience and that misunderstandings which stood in my way may not trouble you.

One of these difficulties was the idea of 'Surrender to God.' I have met people, and I myself was one of them, who were afraid to pray 'Thy will be done', fearing to invoke suffering. It is important to distinguish between surrender of a problem to God, and the surrender of self to the 'enemy'.

Surrender has nothing to do with resignation as that word is usually understood. People have been taught that there is virtue in accepting misfortune in a spirit of resignation to the divine Will, in kissing the rod, and that God sends suffering for educational purposes. There may be some excuse for thinking this because suffering may be remedial. It sometimes happens that when an individual has sought every other means of escape from his suffering he will in desperation, and as a last resort, turn to God.

But surrender to God must not be confused with resignation to suffering. When we learn that it is God's

pleasure and *nature* to give us every good and perfect thing, then we gladly surrender every problem to Him, and will pray 'Thy will be done' eagerly, hopefully, because we see it to be the highest and greatest and best thing that can ever happen to us.

We have seen the error of trying to influence God in prayer. Our *whole* purpose in tuning-in is to be receptive to the Divine Broadcast.

The entire Universe is governed by Law and that Law is utterly beneficent. The word 'law' as used colloquially has various meanings, as will be seen in the dictionary. I am using the word with a precise meaning, that which is fundamental, invariable, the nature of that which is being observed, *the way in which it works*. If I understand the scientific approach in its enquiry into truth, it is just that—to seek to find out how anything works, the law by which it operates. To make the point I will use the somewhat hackneyed illustration of electricity. If the law which governs electricity is ignorantly or carelessly disregarded it may blast and destroy. But when the law is understood and strictly obeyed then electricity will light and warm our homes, drive our trains and perform innumerable valuable services. The Law which governs the Universe is the way in which Mind works in Its creation. If man disregards the Law he may be crushed, if he wilfully disobeys it he will inevitably suffer, but if he seeks to learn and be obedient, his life will be blessed in innumerable ways. In the service of the Law is perfect freedom.

It can be said with truth that the purpose of prayer is to bring those for whom we pray within the circuit of divine Law. My first tentative prayers were in the main superstitious. I tried to assume what I imagined was an essential religious posture of mind and body

and succeeded only in feeling self-conscious and foolish. In this connection I suggest that since, in prayer, we are seeking to forget 'self' in finding God, it is sensible to assume a position in which the body is least likely to make itself felt.

For a long time I made the mistake of thinking that thoughts, words, had an efficacy of their own, an improved abracadabra, and I approached God as one does an automatic machine, thinking that by putting in so much prayer I could pull out the answer. Words have value as a means to inducing an *attitude* of mind which will remove the barrier. Whatever may be the need for which we pray, God and nothing less is always the answer. God is *always* the positive and operative factor, the only Actor in successful prayer.

We should keep before us the ideal of prayer as a constant attitude of mind. 'Pray without ceasing.' This will come about gradually if we are assiduous in watching and reversing thoughts, for then the time will come when a wrong thought, through force of *good* habit, is met with a word of power and to do this is to pray without ceasing.

As already said, I came to see that it was inexpedient to pray for oneself. I found when I brought self into prayer I became much more conscious of the 'self' I was seeking to renounce. The 'law of reversed effort' seemed to operate, and the more I prayed the more I defeated my object which was to lose 'self' in finding God. So I came to make all my prayers impersonal and intercessory.

As understanding cleared, the form of my prayer underwent frequent change until today it is my practice to link-up mentally with those *with* whom I am praying and also with those *for* whom we are praying

—affirming that we are all one in the unity of Spirit, resting in the Omnipresence where, all barriers removed, God's will is being done.

During this period of waiting upon God I find it necessary to stay my mind on Him by occasional affirmations of the truth of being in God. I always bring my 'Quiet time' to a close with thanksgiving. 'All embracing Love, receive our thanks for every good and perfect thing we have and hope for—for the understanding of our fellowship with all mankind, in or out of the body, and for the vision of the full free Life that awaits us.'

I know that this is but a feeble groping after a perfect relationship and that it will inevitably give place to other forms as vision clears and this development will continue through time into Eternity.

For at present we see all things as in a mirror, obscurely; but then we shall see face to face.¹

* * * *

As a footnote—please understand that I do not presume to word another man's prayers. Each sincere seeker will be guided by intuition in his approach to God.

It must also be understood that all I have written about prayer, and in fact everything in this book, is offered in the hope that what has done so much for me may do as much for you. If I feel any temptation to dogmatize it is about those things which I feel very sure are *not* true. In relation to God and Reality the ideas I express are the gropings of finite intelligence peering into Infinity, and the last lines of Keats' sonnet

¹ 1 Cor. 12: 2.

On first looking into Chapman's Homer, express my state of mind:

Like stout Cortez when with wild eye
He star'd at the Pacific—and all his men
Look'd at each other with a wild surmise—
Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

XIII

'HEAL THE SICK'

EFFECTIVE prayer is always followed by some measure of healing, for it wears away the barrier and gradually brings about integration. 'They that be whole need not a physician.'¹

In giving his disciples their commission Jesus commanded them to 'Heal the sick . . . freely ye have received, freely give.'² On another occasion he said: 'In very truth I tell you that he who trusts in me shall do the deeds I do, and he shall do greater deeds than these because I am going to my Father.'³ It is implicit in the entire ministry of Jesus that healing the sick is in the forefront of the good tidings of the immanence of Spirit.

Extreme introverts, such as I once was, and all who suffer from neurasthenia and kindred conditions also suffer from misbehaviour of the body. One neurosis can follow another, frightening the sufferer into a belief of organic disease and inducing a tendency to hypochondria. This was my experience and so, naturally, I was attracted by the possibility of spiritual or mental healing. For a time I read every book I could find on the subject, experimenting in one system after another, occasionally encouraged by an apparent result, more often discouraged by no result whatever. However, the credible accounts of healing of which I read convinced me that spiritual healing was a fact, but it was not until I began to understand a little of the nature of true prayer that I found an acceptable method of working

¹ Mark 2: 17. Auth. Version.

² Matt. 10: 8. Auth. Version.

³ John 14: 12. Weymouth.

which with modification from time to time has stayed with me to this day.

In all that I read about non-physical healing I was impressed by the great diversity of method employed—the sacramental laying-on of hands—intercession by a congregation or group—the practice of Christian Science—the technique of Coué—healing at Lourdes and other shrines—the King's touch—suggestion treatment by psycho-therapists.

Many years ago I attended a series of lectures given by eminent psychologists to an audience mainly of doctors. At one of these the subject was 'The Psychological Cure of Organic Disease', and the speaker was a famous European psychiatrist, a personal friend of Freud. He told us some very dramatic and convincing stories from his records and at the conclusion of his address, one after another, well-known London psychiatrists got up and cited similar cases out of their own experience.

One may add to the list instances of spontaneous healing in which a patient recovers completely from some grave condition for no other apparent reason than that he thought he was going to recover. One such case came under the observation of a friend of mine and I am convinced of its authenticity. A woman suffering from cancer, came into the hospital in which my friend was working. The surgeon began the operation, but finding the disease had progressed so far that nothing could be done, stitched up the wound. He informed the husband, who begged him not to tell his wife, saying 'she was so sure she was going to get well'. The surgeon agreed not to tell her if she asked no questions, and since there was a wound to be dressed daily she took it for granted that the operation had been

carried out. The surgeon, with my friend in attendance, saw the patient regularly and within a short while noticed a change, and ultimately the whole trouble disappeared. I call this spontaneous healing because as far as can be known there was no agency other than the state of mind of the patient, and I have described what actually happened because of its profound implications.

I thought about this for a long time, looking for a common factor in all these various methods, all of which could claim successful results. Finally I decided that it must be a state of *expectancy* in the mind of the sufferer.

Two blind men appealed to Jesus for help. He asked them 'Believe ye that I can do this?' and they answered Him, 'Yea, Lord.' Then He touched their eyes saying, 'According to your faith be it unto you.'¹ And their eyes were opened.

I do not wish it to be thought that I am saying that expectancy is a *sine qua non* of healing, only that it is a very important factor, and the probable explanation in many instances. There is no doubt that healing takes place where there can be no expectation, as for example in a return to sanity of the mentally afflicted, or the restoration to health of an infant. There are also frequent instances of healing by 'absent treatment' of those who are unaware that they are being helped. We are seeking to understand the Law so that we may co-operate with It. We may rest assured that whenever the barrier is down the beneficent Will comes into operation, but as yet we have only a very immature understanding.

Jesus, on another occasion, reading the thoughts of

¹ Matt. 9: 29.

the scribes, asked them: 'Why are you cherishing evil thoughts in your hearts? Why, which is easier, to say "Your sins are pardoned" or to say "Rise up and walk"?'¹ I think we may read into this question the implication that the same Power that will restore the soul will likewise heal the body. And this truth has been confirmed again and again in present-day practice of spiritual healing, in fact it is a matter of frequent experience that the healing of the mind is followed by a return of bodily harmony.

The necessity for faith may well be a stumbling-block to you who read this. Often has it been said to me, 'But I have no faith', or 'if only I had faith'. Let me try and help you with this. Faith is not a rare virtue found only in saints; it is found in sinners as well. I am prepared to say that almost everyone has faith, faith in some person or some thing. How prevalent is the use of mascots of one kind or another. People have faith in patent medicines, in this or that practitioner, and doctors realize how important it is to win and retain the faith of their patients.

It is almost certain that you have faith even though it may be misdirected. If you seek spiritual healing you must learn to direct that faith towards the fundamental Source of all health and healing. In their practice physicians realize that the most they can do is to co-operate with a power resident in the patient, which they refer to as the healing power of nature. No man has ever healed a wound, the most that any one can do is to keep it clean and leave the rest.

I think it was Oliver Wendell Holmes who said: 'God heals and the physician takes the thanks.' This expresses a truth which has the greatest possible bearing

¹ Matt. 9: 4.

on the subject of spiritual healing. When man provides the necessary conditions the healing power of Spirit, which is ever present, will unfailingly come into action and the sufferer will be restored to health of mind or body according to his need.

To return to the question of faith, I repeat that you possess it already, and it is probable that on several occasions you have lost faith in some person or thing and transferred it to another agency. It is now necessary for you to transfer your faith to the Source. Directly you begin to do this your feeble efforts will be reinforced by Spirit within you and so your faith will grow from a mustard seed into a great tree.

Please do not think that I am advising you to take your faith away from your doctor. On the contrary, I think you will be wise to cherish your faith in your doctor. But if at the same time you are learning to have faith in God as the Source of all life and health, it is very certain you will respond much more readily to medical treatment. As your faith in God grows in strength, your bodily health will respond to a degree that will astonish you, and you will have few if any occasions to call in the help of your doctor.

Spiritual healing should never be thought of as relating solely to bodily health. The apparent barrier between God and man is solely in the clouded consciousness of the individual, and whenever that barrier is down, if only for a moment, the Mind of God is operative. If we persevere in tuning-in to that Mind a gradual transformation of the whole man comes about.

If you have accepted what has been said about effective prayer you should have no difficulty in also accepting the principle of spiritual healing, especially in relation to yourself. But if you sit down for the

definite purpose of seeking healing for yourself there is a probability that your attention will be drawn to your need rather than directed to the Source of your healing. To overcome the difficulty I adopted the expediency of *always* praying for others and *never* for myself. I am convinced that when anyone surrenders himself to God, unselfishly desiring to be used to help another, he himself will also be blessed.

And the Lord turned the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friends; also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before.¹

You may be a little puzzled as to how it can happen that your prayers can benefit another person. The principle is precisely the same, every time the mental barrier is down the divine Will comes into operation. But how does it come about that one man's prayer can remove another man's barrier? I suggest that telepathy throws some light on the subject. Telepathy is the action of one mind on another from a distance without the use of the senses. Telepathy has been exhaustively investigated by the Society for Psychical Research as well as by private enquiry and experiment, and may be accepted as an established super-sensuous fact of being. When an individual is tuned-in to God so that his own barrier is down, and at the same time his heart is going out to another with sincere desire and intention, then the necessary condition is fulfilled and beneficent Law comes into operation. Three factors are essential—our sure faith in God's presence and willingness, our complete surrender to His Will, and our unselfish desire to help another.

¹ Job 42: 10.

XIV

FREEDOM FROM 'SELF'

THE theme of this book is summed up in these words, 'freedom from self', and the writer believes that in that freedom lies the solution to every problem that besets mankind.

The Atlantic Charter frames 'the Four Freedoms'—freedom from fear, from want, freedom of thought and of worship. Freedom from 'self' will be found to comprise these and all other freedoms, for it will be no less than perfect freedom.

It has been admitted that my condition was exceptional, but I have also suggested that freedom from 'self' is a universal need. Complete freedom from 'self' will be union with Spirit, with Totality, perfect integration. This can have been won very rarely in the short span of material life and for most of us will be worked out in Eternity.

It is probably beyond finite intelligence to know whether the necessity for the individual to work through the illusion of 'self' to union with God is part of the infinite Design, but there can be no question that it is the situation in which we now find ourselves. Some of the cruder evils of egocentricity have been considered already, but there are less obvious ways in which it operates for our undoing. The glorification and aggrandisement of self is thought of as quite a respectable ideal for a young man to keep before him. Success, by many, is measured by the multiplication of possessions and a place in the New Year's Honours List. There was inspiration at work when the Constitution of the United States was drawn up, and I believe it is still on the Statute Book of that country that no citizen may accept

honours for himself, but only for his country, where they are preserved in the national archives.

I would like to remove any vagueness or mystery from the distinction between the 'pseudo-self' and the real 'self that I am'. In the simplest language it is getting the right idea in place of the wrong idea. There are not two selves, as might seem to be implied by much that has been written. There is the real (immortal) self and a misconception.

We cannot know, but I will venture to speculate that individuality will never be lost, not even in perfect union with God. Analogies may be misleading, but they are sometimes useful aids to imagination. I suggest that we can find a helpful one in considering that unity in diversity, a symphony orchestra. It is composed of many players, each one playing an individual part, but all acting under the direction of the conductor, and each part is absolutely necessary to produce the perfect symphony. Each player loses any sense of separation in uniting with the whole orchestra. Each player is conscious of his own contribution but much more acutely aware of the whole production.

In this shadow-show of Reality in which we find ourselves, every player sets up as a soloist, and in defiance of, or perhaps only in ignorance of, the law of Life (which surely must be co-operation) competes with every other player, and the result is an appalling discord, a terrifying confusion.

As already said, a dawning awareness of union with Spirit brings with it a dim but growing sense of the fundamental unity of all creation. It follows from this that what benefits one benefits all, and equally that what hurts one hurts all. However it may seem, it is literally impossible to win any good at the expense of

others. No one can snatch happiness at the cost of unhappiness to any other individual. The law of cause and effect is inescapable. 'God is not to be mocked. For whatever a man sows, that will he also reap.'¹

If you are tempted to doubt this, ask any psychologist, though it might be more profitable to seek for confirmation in a quiet study of your associates, or better still of your own personal experiences.

I will tell you a story which I read some years ago in a magazine, and which I have no reason to doubt actually happened. It was during the first World War. An American business man living in the Middle West was taking a walk one Sunday morning about the time people were coming out of church. He was in a very depressed mood. At the back of his mind was a constant fear for the life of his son who was fighting in Europe. His business was in a bad way, and everything seemed to conspire to give him a despairing and cynical view of life. He sneered to himself about all these church-goers. What was the good of it all? Just look at the state of the world after two thousand years of Christianity. And so his mind ran on as he took his disgruntled self home to lunch.

That evening, sitting in his chair, another mood came to him, and he saw he was wrong in condemning Christianity out of hand, since it had never really been tried, never been adopted as a *way of life* by the *majority* of people. That thought led to others to which, in a short while, he gave expression, calling a meeting of all his employees. His factory produced ready-made clothing. He explained that from now on he proposed to run his business according to the Golden Rule. 'This means,' he said, 'that I will treat you as I should

¹ Gal. 6: 7.

wish to be treated if I were an employee. And I will ask you to work for the business as you would wish if you were the head of it. Together we will try and produce clothing we should be glad to wear, at prices we should be pleased to pay if we were the consumers of our goods.'

The plan was put into effect and the business prospered beyond expectation, and it had an interesting and unlooked-for sequel. After a few years the authorities of another great city in the State approached him with special inducements if he would open a factory in their city. It had been brought to their notice that his factory had a remarkable influence for good in the surrounding neighbourhood.

I think this story speaks for itself, and calls for no moralizing. The Golden Rule is infallible. One who tries to live by it may, at times, act in a way that seems detrimental to his present interests, but it invariably works out to his ultimate well-being and happiness. It is hardly necessary to point out that to try and live according to the Golden Rule is to give practical expression to 'self' renunciation.

God is often invoked to aid man in his attempts to cope with the evils around him. Too often it is forgotten, or perhaps not understood, that God's Will can operate in the affairs of men only through man's co-operation. God, infinite Creative Mind, will greatly reinforce man's intelligence and strength in coping with any situation. This reinforcement comes as an answer to effective prayer, but God needs an agent in human affairs and that is why we are here. Infinite Mind must have the co-operation of an engineer to turn a desert into a garden, and of a Beethoven to give us the Ninth Symphony.

When people gather together over a cup of tea, at a

committee meeting or wherever it may be, a desire to dominate the conversation is too often observable. In conversation between two people, one will listen to the other with what patience he can muster, until a chance occurs to jump in and occupy the floor. This may seem to be making too much of a small matter, but enlarge the scene a little and it will be the same desire of the pseudo-self to dominate which hampers constructive work on boards and councils and in parliament.

The national will, except maybe in totalitarian states, is the multiplied expression of the individual will of those who form a majority, and as long as the individual will is to dominate, the national will must also be to dominate. Until individuals desire to work in co-operation with their neighbours for their mutual good, there can be no such desire manifested in international relations, and all the peace conferences will achieve nothing. The wranglings between sovereign states are the quarrels between neighbours enacted on a larger stage. When man behaves to his neighbour as he would wish his neighbour to behave to him then social life will be transformed. Never again will a parson have reason to write a book about life in a country village with the title *Twenty-five years in Hell*. Then will follow co-operation between nations and no further need for peace conferences. When, instead of exploiting undeveloped peoples, there is a wish to take the good life to them, the health and happiness of everyone on the planet will be very greatly enhanced.

It has been said already that freedom from 'self' is a universal need, and this can be expressed in another way by stating that slavery to the pseudo-self is the cause of all the troubles in which man finds himself involved. If you have accepted this as a fact you will

find it interesting and profitable to trace the operations of the pseudo-self in the tragic story of mankind.

Beware man of thyself,
Self's burden thou wilt rue.
It will impair thee more
Than thousand devils do.¹

When the necessity for this reorientation of self is more widely appreciated, it will find its place in education, thus bringing about a change in thought and conduct which will gradually transform the entire human situation.

The more thou thine own self
Out of thyself dost throw,
The more will into thee
God with his Godhead flow.²

How is victory to be won? There are no short cuts. Each one must be prepared to use his will-power in bringing thought under control. As understanding grows he will discriminate more surely between falsity and truth, and will persevere in dismissing all negative and destructive suggestions, striving ever more faithfully to express that which he now begins to perceive is his true nature.

Kabir says: 'The truth-seeker's battle goes on day and night, as long as life lasts it never ceases.'³

Let not this discourage you for one moment, for it is a joyous adventure and victory is assured. From crosswords to Mount Everest there is something in man that finds joy in contending with and overcoming difficulties. If these difficulties are great we shall always receive strength sufficient to overcome them, and the GOAL will shine before us in ever-increasing glory.

¹ and ² Angelus Silesius.

³ *One hundred Poems by Kabir*, Macmillan & Co.

XV

LIFE IS CONSCIOUSNESS

IN liberation from 'self' we shall enjoy an expansion of consciousness in which we shall find perfect freedom.

Set free from the thralldom to decay to enjoy the liberty that comes with the glory of the children of God.¹

This perfect consciousness which awaits us all is omnipresent, and in it we shall learn to live, in or out of the body, in perfect fellowship and communion. The entrance to this native land of ours, and from which we are now exiled, is open wide. Nothing bars the way, but our shadows hide it from us.

Rise sleeper
Rise from among the dead
And Christ will shed light on you.²

And with that Light, a torch in the blackout of mortal existence, we shall see the entrance and walk through it into perfect freedom.

On earlier pages reasons have been given in support of the statement that appearances are entirely deceptive, or to state it more truly, our interpretation of experience is altogether misleading. The material sense of life is illusion and the inner life is the only reality. This inner or mental life is Consciousness and it will be found to clarify the whole picture if we are able to dismiss all the pairs of opposites such as spirit and matter, religious and secular, and think of all life as one consciousness, as in truth it will be seen to be.

¹ Romans 8: 21.

² Eph. 5: 14.

Our aim must be to see Life whole and undivided, a fundamental unity in which all opposing elements are harmonized. From the Centre which is Creative Mind to the unbounded circumference which is Its perfect manifestation all is the free and unimpeded expression of creative activity in infinite diversity of beauty. While we still think in material terms of spirit and matter, near and far, past and future, we remain mesmerized by the illusion and overwhelmed by a feeling of helplessness in the contemplation of a gigantic inertia. But when we are able to comprehend Life as Consciousness all will become fluid and pliant to the will. In the true Consciousness we shall be free from the limitations of time and space and transportation. On the wings of thought, with the speed of light we may be transported in a flash to a happy day last year on the other side of the world. In the boundless HERE and NOW of divine Consciousness, past and future, near and far, are omnipresent in unimpeded freedom.

In our present consciousness, limited as it is to three dimensions, it is only in rare flashes of intuition, illumination, that we can have glimpses of the wonder that awaits us, these foretastes which come as a reward for tuning-in. Mystical literature is full of attempted descriptions of the joys to be experienced, and since language has grown up to meet the requirements of three-dimensional existence, there are no words to describe life in multi-dimensional Reality, and the mystics have been compelled to use sensuous images such as tasting and feeling. The remarkable similarity of the reports of what they have found, given by mystics of many races and creeds, separated from one another by hundreds of years in time, are shared by those living today who are seeking union with Reality.

Of one thing we may be confidently assured, Reality will be wholly satisfying, for it will be the fulfilling of our true nature. When anyone is sincerely seeking to renounce 'self' and to live from his true centre there is one thing he need never again fear, and that is the future, for whatever will be *must* be supremely natural, and moving towards the fulfilment of his destiny.

Everyone, unless his outlook is grossly distorted, must always be repelled by everything which is contrary to his true nature, such as cruelty, perversion, disease, decay and death. To material common sense these and many other evil things are looked upon as the inescapable facts of life. To one gradually awakening to Reality comes the assurance that the light of truth will illumine all the dark places and in that perfect Consciousness which awaits us evil will be no more seen.

Oh, believe it, nothing exists apart from Consciousness, and Consciousness is omnipresent Spirit. There is this one pure and perfect Consciousness in which clear seeing will find no evil. Therein you and I and all men, heirs of heaven, will find the meaning of our deepest intuitions. Our just hopes will be justified, and thwarted love by Love be satisfied.

XVI

'THE BEST IS YET TO BE'

There is not room for death
Nor atom that his might could render void;
Thou THOU art Being and Breath,
And what THOU art may never be destroyed.¹

EVOLUTION of Consciousness is a law of Life, and from protoplasm to divine humanity that law is seen in operation. As man evolves out of the material concept of life his consciousness expands to include the realization of immortality *now*, and not at some future date. With this realization comes the perception that death is an incident in the process of evolution and furthermore that there can be no possibility of any break in the continuity of evolving consciousness.

Matter is continually disintegrating into other forms but consciousness flows on and on ever expanding, and in that flow is the life of man.

It is a mistake to think of two lives, one in a material body and another in a world of spirit. There is only one life, in or out of the material body, and that life is Consciousness. From the moment when an infant first says 'I am' until in the apotheosis of being he echoes the 'I am' of Creative Mind, there is no break in the evolution of his destiny.

Do not be deceived, in the perfect Design there is no place for death. Man uses one body, and when it is outworn discards it for another, since mind must ever be expressed in form. Life flows and man goes with it, out of one dimension into another, out of one into another of the 'many mansions' man proceeds on his

¹ *Last Lines*, by Emily Brontë.

destined way. Immersed in love, surrounded by beauty he moves towards that consummation which is the crown and glory of all being.

Since life is one and indivisible, to make a distinction between spiritual and material is a misunderstanding of truth, a misconception of Reality. Life includes all the dimensions, and the three-dimensional world in which we *seem* to be living is, as has already been said, a mental abstraction from Totality. It is a fact of present experience but in no sense a fact of being.

All life is a perfect unity and all is Law; Law which is wholly beneficent. That which is not the operation of Law is but a temporary experience with no foundation in fact, and will vanish in the light of clearer vision. Thus it may be seen that the word 'supernatural' has no factual reality. In everyday speech it is used to describe anything outside normal three-dimensional experience. Much that is called supernatural is delusion, self-deception, but some happenings which are called supernatural are misnamed. Everything that has reality (permanence) in God's world is the operation of Law and is divinely natural. In Reality there is no place for the supernatural, and so we may dispense with the word in the present context which has to do with Reality.

In daily life we are constantly accepting as normal experience the evidence of things not seen. In an earlier chapter it has been explained that that which *appears to be* an objective world is in fact a subjective (mental) experience, and that the external reality is a matter of electrons and protons whirling round one another at unimaginable speeds. No one has ever seen an objective poppy, but, thanks be to the Giver, all have enjoyed a field of poppies blazing in the sun. We do not deny

their existence because no one has seen ultra-violet or infra-red. We do not say a bat is dumb because few are able to hear its squeak. It is wise to keep on reminding ourselves that in our *present* environment, and under normal circumstances, we have a very limited range of perception, and are tuned-in to a narrow wave-band. 'Now we see in a glass darkly.' In order to become aware of anything beyond our three-dimensional boundaries we have to tune-in to higher vibrations by means of a transformer, as in fact we do every time we listen to a radio programme. How quickly miracles become humdrum. I remember that when I first read in a newspaper that people in America were dancing to the music of an orchestra in Philadelphia, a hundred miles away, I refused to believe it.

Infinite Life comprises the whole gamut of vibrations and in the life that lies before us we shall experience them all. It is a fact to which many have borne witness that now, given certain necessary conditions, contact is made with life that is being lived in a higher vibration than our present one, where those we love who have gone on before us are now playing their part in that vibration.

Vibration is so fundamental that something more must be added. Physics appears to be approaching ever nearer to the frontier between three-dimensional and multi-dimensional consciousness. Everything that exists has its origin in vibration. Light and heat, sound and colour, and matter itself are all manifestations of the fundamental substance functioning in varying frequencies. Life on this side of death is lived in one wave-band and on the other in a higher wave-band. Totality will be found to include succeeding stages of being in increasing frequencies. The etheric wave used in radio

transmission needs a transformer to bring it into the atmospheric vibration which we hear or, in television, see. Those who have their being in a higher vibration than ours also need a transformer to communicate with us and Nature has provided us with such transformers.

In the room in which you are now sitting you are receiving light through the window, warmth from your fire or the sun, you are seeing colour in the sky or the trees and hearing a number of sounds all of which are vibrations. Furthermore the waves of every radio transmission on the planet are present in your room as well as vibrations from higher planes of being. All these waves are present in your room at the same time and any one may be selected and received independently of the others. Given the necessary conditions you may receive any one of them. *Totality is always present wherever you are.*

It is almost a truism that the ego never grows old. The body waxes and wanes and may become a burden but the soul is ever young. It is a true saying that every man is a boy at heart (except perhaps a few who never were boys at any time), and when they are together, and no man present, one may hear the girlish laughter of sedate matrons. The ego (the soul) is immortal and when the body is broken or worn-out it is discarded and a new body, already prepared, is put on and the soul marches on to fresh adventures.

The fear of death is almost universal and like most fears is the fruit of ignorance. Illness of the body may be, and too often is painful, and the last illness may be accompanied by pain, but there is no pain in death, death is the liberator from pain. The unknown can be unnerving and it is the unknown element in death that causes trepidation. Man shrinks from a supposed jour-

ney into a dark emptiness. His imagination calls up frightening pictures of what may await him. He is in love with Life (and rightly so) and has no thought that on the other side of death there can be any form of life such as he has known and enjoyed. The unknown that we fear is the creation of morbid imagination, the unknown that we will enter may be unexpectedly familiar, and *must* be entirely acceptable. Since evolution of Consciousness continues without a break it would be strange if it were not so.

Death is always associated with separation, a parting from loved ones; but death is also a reunion with those who have gone on ahead, and those we leave behind will one day follow us. It is natural and right that we should grieve when those we love leave us. I recall a feeling of desolation when one of my daughters said goodbye to me before she sailed to Africa, and I feared I might never see her again. But it is not right to indulge our grief. Those who have gone on ahead must deplore our concentration on graves. They may even be watching us as we place flowers on a plot of earth under which is nothing but outworn 'clothing'. They may be saddened at seeing our tears watering those flowers. They may know and grieve over our despairing thought that the one we loved lies there. If they wish to be near us at times, as we may suppose that they will, surely they will look for us not in cemeteries, but in our homes, and if, as is natural, we wish to give some outward expression to our love, we can make a shrine of a beloved portrait, and those emblems of love may be seen and give comfort and joy.

Those who claim to know assert that we do not pass out of life into a cold and empty darkness, and that when the time comes for us to put out to sea we shall

be met by those we love. Loving arms will welcome us into light and warmth, and we shall be helped to adjust ourselves to our expanded environment before we enter fully into the immensely happier and more satisfying life that lies before us. Let us forget what we may have been told of harps and crowns. In the very nature of things, that life cannot be very dissimilar to the one we have left, and we may confidently expect to find that every need of our true spiritual nature is fully provided for. It has always been so, and must continue to be so. It is certain that the life before us will be one of continuing development towards the fulfilment of our destiny. We may hope to find unlimited opportunities for work and relaxation and the full expression of our true Self, and companionship such as we may never yet have enjoyed.

~~This expansion of consciousness will be for all of us a change for the better beyond expression. Fear will be left behind. The Four Freedoms will be absolute, and many others as well, not least perhaps freedom from slavery to clock and calendar.~~

What will be the fate of those unhappy victims of heredity and environment, the vicious and degraded? Their desperate need is for rehabilitation and education. Need we doubt that they are included in the perfect Plan and that more than earthly wisdom will be directed to their need and that ultimately each one will be reclaimed and his feet set firmly upon the road of his destiny.

The life we now live is but a beginning. There is one thing only that we need fear and that is the devil of 'self', which, unless we are on the alert, may continue to impose itself upon us with almost hypnotic power. If we are striving to reach up to the ideal which is in

each one of us then all will be well, for it is the striving that counts. Our hopes for mankind cannot be too exalted. We may be pessimistic about the trends of so-called civilization, but it is not possible to be too optimistic about the destiny of individual man.

Do not be deceived by appearances. The Design is perfect and the Great Spirit working in and through all will perfect the pattern in which every son of man will play his destined part. In expanded Consciousness each one will know himself and all men to be immortal, and that Reality which is all Good is his to share and enjoy with all men in 'the glorious liberty of the children of God'.

So let us lift up our hearts for we are awakening out of a nightmare dream into unbounded Life wherein we shall find our fulfilment and felicity. In losing 'self' we shall find All. Beyond 'the last enemy' we shall enter the full free life of Spirit.

All of us as with unveiled faces we mirror the glory of the Lord are transformed into the same likeness from glory to glory even as the Lord, the Spirit inspires.¹

¹ 2 Cor. 3: 18.

POSTSCRIPT

MY FRIEND,

I speak to you who have read this testimony of mine and I feel I may call you friend because you have shared that secret part of my life which has been known to very few of my personal friends, and I have spoken to you from my heart, without reservations. If you feel a *real* need to write to me, as far as time and my own limitations will permit, I shall find happiness in replying.

I have another purpose in addressing you personally. Every word I have written has been carefully weighed, every hour I have spent, writing and revising, is in response to an urge to help you personally to meet the very real difficulties of living in the world as it is today, with more than stoic fortitude.

Why, the sufferings of the present I deem not worth considering compared with the glory soon to be disclosed to us.¹

If you meet with intellectual or other difficulties in accepting any of the things I have told you, I believe you will not doubt my sincerity but you may perhaps suspect my credulity. Of this I am very sure, if you had shared *all* the experiences I have drawn upon you could have no shadow of doubt of the truth of what I have written. I have had you in my mind throughout. Could *you* write to someone who may be very unhappy and try and comfort him or her with unproved theories or fairy tales? Would you not take very great care to be sure of your facts before you offered them to another in

¹ Romans 8: 18.

his need? I am sure you would, and I ask you to attribute to me the same sincerity and sense of responsibility.

If I have been enabled to bring to you a feeling of the reality of all I have written then my purpose will have been achieved, and I shall have the great happiness of knowing I have helped another along the road.

May you be increasingly conscious of the beneficent Omnipresence. May you always be aware that Love sustains and nourishes you, and may you learn to wear the shining armour of your true SELF which will unfailingly protect you in every vicissitude of life.

W. D. KENDALL.

Summerhill Farm,
Nutley, Sussex.
Summer 1951.