

Site Search

Select Destination..... ▾

Go

Philosophic Encyclopedia

In the Land of the Living Dead by Prentiss Tucker

Chapter V The Elder Brother in the Flesh

Select Core Concepts..... ▾

Go

Jimmie and Louise awaited the opening of the door with similar forebodings. Louise did not believe a single word of the wonderful story which Jimmie had told her, though she was firmly convinced that Jimmie himself believed it. Jimmie on the other hand, with his vivid memory of the adventure was certain that it had really happened, but was distrustful of the outcome of this physical and concrete test, and was wondering what excuse he could give if, as he feared, the house should prove to be tenanted by strangers.

Louise expected the door to be opened by an ordinary concierge and that the inevitable disillusionment would follow; she was trying to determine in her own mind what she could say to help Jimmie over his disappointment.

Jimmie feared much the same thing and was casting about for a possible reason to give Louise for the collapse of his peculiar vision and was finding himself quite unsuccessful in the attempt, when the door opened.

Before them, with a welcoming and slightly quizzical smile as though he had in some way divined their perplexities, stood the man of his dream, identical in every particular of dress and feature with the strange and powerful being who had become familiar to him in the Land of the Living Dead by the appellation of the "Elder Brother."

Mutely accepting his cordial invitation they entered a well furnished library and were seated. Not until then did Jimmie recover sufficiently from his bewilderment to introduce his companion. With some embarrassment he presented Mr. Campion to Miss Louise Clayton, with the brief statement that Miss Clayton was the nurse who had taken care of him during his recovery; that he had told her of his great adventure, and had asked her to accompany him on this expedition.

"I am very glad that you did so, Lieutenant Westman, for Miss Clayton was selected as your nurse for several reasons, not the least of which was the fact that she is quite an advanced soul and it was determined that the work of re-integrating your vital body would be more easily and quickly done with her help than through any other of the available nurses. You see, Miss Clayton, I am quite well acquainted with you though we have never met before."

Louise answered politely and somewhat formally but was unable to quite conceal her incredulity at the statement which Mr. Campion had made.

"Nevertheless," Mr. Campion continued as though answering some objection, "you were selected and the wisdom of the choice is apparent in the result. You have a strong and well developed aura, and your vibrations are harmonious, owing to certain stellar combinations of which you are probably unaware; that was a great

help when Jimmie here (I am not going to call him Lieutenant) was recovering consciousness. You will, perhaps remember that as you bent over him to make out what he was mumbling, he asked you why you didn't glow and where your aura was and then immediately apologized by assuring you that you **did** glow?"

Louise was perplexed. No one else had been present to overhear that whispered conversation. The head nurse had not been out of the hospital and so could not have hunted up this man and told him of it, besides she had not told the head nurse much and had not spoken of it at all to any one else. Jimmie she was sure, had not been out of the hospital grounds except the one time when they had almost quarreled. Could he have written to this man or was the man a mind reader? If Jimmie had written, then he was deceiving her. If the man was a mind reader, then he was an uncannily shrewd one. She did not know what to say and so kept silent, but her glances roved about the room.

Mr. Campion spoke:

"Miss Clayton, you will pardon me, I am sure, if I endeavor to set your mind at rest and, incidentally, Jimmie's also. In doing so it will be necessary to make some statements which cannot be proved to you now and the explanation of which would require too much time, so I am going to ask you to hear me patiently and reserve your judgment until later.

"To begin with, I must assure you that you are not the victim of any prepared plot and that Jimmie has not written to me nor did the head nurse give a second thought to what you told her." Louise looked up quickly, her eyes wide with wonder. "Then, too, your surprise at meeting a mind reader without the usual trappings of his trade was perfectly natural.

"There are here none of the customary paraphernalia of the professional wonder worker, and you looked in vain for skulls and stuffed owls and somber drapery. I assure you that while mind reading is not at all difficult to the trained esotericist, yet I was not reading your mind when I spoke of your few words with Jimmie when he regained consciousness. I know what you said because I was there at the time—"

Louise looked up, again with a gesture of surprise, and started to speak but remembered his request.

"I was there, although you did not see me and I followed you when you went to make your report to the head nurse. If you remember, she was sitting at a desk writing and when you spoke to her you were alone in the office with her. She did not turn around but merely stopped writing when you spoke to her. Then she answered you, 'I don't think there is such a thing, child.' Also, as you passed out of the office you met two orderlies bringing in a wounded man on a stretcher and just then one of them stumbled. You thought he was going to drop his burden and you gave a little gasp and started forward—There!" he smiled at her. "I think I have fully exonerated our friend here, for he could not have written me these things."

— Back to Top —

Louise made an inimitably graceful little gesture of surrender.

"And now for the reason underlying all these strange doings. The human race is made of a multitude of individual spirits who are evolving or learning by repeated rebirths into physical bodies on the physical plane, where they learn to obey the great laws of our Father in heaven just as children learn their lessons day by day in school. In this great scheme of evolution we are subject to the

operation of two great laws: First, that of rebirth, which brings us back to the concrete physical world again and again, in constantly, though slowly improving bodies and surroundings. Second the law of consequence which decrees that we must suffer the natural results of our mistakes, which are usually called sins, even though many lives may sometimes intervene between the mistake and its result.

"In order that this period of birth and death and learning and suffering may be shortened, as much help as possible is given the race by great hosts of spiritual beings who have themselves passed through similar schools. There are times (just as there are examinations in every school), when a turning point in evolution is reached, and the race is, as we might say, examined or quizzed to see which classes of entities are worth of promotion.

"This great war is the most tremendous turning point yet reached in human evolution, and the need of the race for help and instruction is greater than ever before. Help can be given in some respects more effectively by advanced members of the same race, and for that reason many individuals are being promoted just now for the assistance and teachings which they are able to give. The need is tremendous—much more so than either you or Jimmie realize, and it was because of this fact that Jimmie was sent back to the physical life, for he would otherwise have remained permanently on the other side. It is for this reason that you have been brought here with him for you must not think that it is the custom of esotericists to give displays of power merely in order to entertain people."

"You and Jimmie are both advanced souls (I am not saying this to flatter either of you) and in a few more lives would naturally reach the point to which it is hoped you will presently attain in this

life if you are willing to work. Help will be given you, but you must remember the words of the Master that 'Unto whom much is given, of him much will be required.' So the choice of engaging in the work must be a purely voluntary one and not be made lightly, for as the benefit is great if we receive this teaching worthily, so is the danger great if we receive the same unworthily."

Jimmie and Louise glanced at each other, both recognizing the allusion to that beautiful sentence in the communion service. Jimmie spoke:

"You said something to me before, sir, about the great work, but you did not say what it was."

"No. For some time it was uncertain whether your etheric body could be re-integrated in time, and when that was accomplished there was no opportunity for instruction."

For more than an hour Mr. Champion went on, telling them about the different planes of being and the different bodies corresponding to those planes, and outlining the work of the [Invisible Helpers](#) with both the living and the dead. Louise and Jimmie listened with wonder which gradually changed into awe as the tremendous Plan was sketched out for them. Never had they heard the like of it and yet it all seemed strangely familiar, just as though they ought to have known it anyway. As Mr. Champion proceeded and showed how it all fitted in with the Scriptures and particularly with the words spoken by the Christ, explaining the parables and throwing light into the dark and hidden places, Louise began to realize that all her doubts were swept away and felt ashamed that her mind had ever harbored them. No longer did she think of "proofs." No proofs were needed. No man, however great, could have invented such a scheme as this. Not even Mr. Champion,

mind reader and esotericist or whatever he was, could have originated such a complicated, interlocking plan. He did not need to assure her that it was true. She **knew** it though she did not realize how she knew it. It bore the imprint and signature of Divinity itself.

Jimmie, too, had listened, absorbed. The things Mr. Champion was telling them explained some of the apparent contradictions which he had observed during his brief stay on the other side, and when the theory and practice of attaining the freedom of the other planes of being were detailed, he began to understand that it really is not necessary to die in order to prove immortality.

"But why was it, then," he asked, "if there is all this hard work to be done on the other side—why was so much trouble taken to send me back?"

"Because the crying need is for those on this side of the veil who know the fact of immortality, who have visited the other country and have returned, who are willing and able to make their knowledge known, who can comfort the dying and more especially those who are left behind. The need is for those who can say, 'I know,' as well as, "I believe.'"

— Back to Top —

"Then if I persist in the exercises you have outlined, you think that I can develop my spiritual sight?"

"Undoubtedly you can, and while I must not influence you one way or the other, since the choice must be of your own free will, yet you know how I long to meet you again as a volunteer in the Great Army in which you are enlisted anyhow."

Jimmie felt that it was a very serious moment. He wanted to help. His heart flowed out in sympathy with those who are suffering and dying and yet—yet—that thing of "living the life"—could he do it? When he got back to his regiment and his company—could he keep it up? Then a doubt crept into his mind. Mr. Champion had said, or had as good as said, that in sleep almost every one helps, more or less, so why could he not do whatever was possible during conscious hours and trust to being an unconscious invisible helper during sleep?

Mr. Champion sat watching them. Louise was looking at him but not watching him. Her eyes had that "far away" expression which showed that her mind was busy with other things, as quickly became evident when she spoke.

"Please tell me, Mr. Champion, if you will, just why the embodied worker who has the freedom of the other planes is so much more valuable than the disembodied worker or the worker who cannot consciously visit the higher worlds—does it not have something to do with the will power?"

"You have the idea, Miss Clayton. The embodied worker has a power which the same man, having lost his body by death does not have. The explanation is a long one but you have come very near the mark when you speak of will power. Also, the worker on the other side is dealing largely with those who have just passed over, whose day in school is done, and whose period of reviewing the physical life has commenced. The worker on this side of the veil, however, may be able to influence the lives of many causing them to refrain from things which they otherwise would do, and to avoid much of the pain of purgatory by leaving undone actions which would bring on them a great debt of destiny."

Jimmie and Louise walked back to the hospital very quietly. Each was busy thinking and their occasional intervals of conversation were to review some of the things Mr. Campion had said.

Just before they reached the big gate Louise spoke:

"Jimmie! I have a confession to make."

"What is it?"

"Do you know, before we went into that house I really did not think that your adventure was anything but imagination. I thought it was just one of those 'shell shock' dreams."

"I was afraid you did."

"But you needn't be afraid any longer. I believe every word of it now."

The very excusable pleasure which Jimmie showed plainly on his face and which arose entirely from satisfaction at having his story finally believed must have caused the old French porter at the gate to draw some highly erroneous conclusions—judging from the smile with which his wrinkled old face was wreathed as Jimmie and Louise entered the hospital; or else, it is possible, we may have failed to overhear the entire conversation.

Back once more with his company and after the hearty greetings and congratulations at his escape were over, Jimmie settled down to the steady grind of drill and training which took up a considerable part of the time, even though they were now in a "rest billet" behind the lines.

The everyday, well known affairs of the now familiar army life, the constant contact with his men and his brother officers with all of whom he was a prime favorite, tended to dull the keen edge of his enthusiasm, and prosaic, commonplace thoughts usurped the place of the high ideals and noble aspirations which had so thrilled him. The glamour of his trip into the Land of the Living Dead began to pale somewhat. Pressing, urgent duties—insistent, demanding duties—claimed his time. When drill and the various forms of training were over, he was tired and only too willing to be swept along with the crowd on a visit to the "Y" or some entertainment. Always he tried to quiet his conscience with the promise that he would do something in earnest soon, just as he got well rested.

In the meantime, as he had promised, he kept up the foolishly simply little exercise that Mr. Campion had given him and which he went through with every night just as regularly as clockwork, though he could not see, to save his life, how so ridiculously elementary a thing could have any great effect upon him. It stood to reason, he thought, that Mr. Campion was wrong, else why should not this exercise be widely known? Why did not some of the ministers of the different churches know about it and teach it? He knew that some of the criticism leveled at the heads of ministers was deserved, but he knew that, taken as a whole and averaging them up, the ministers were honest and conscientious and doing their best according to their light. Why, then, did they not know of such a thing if it were really true?

— Back to Top —

He was seated one afternoon, writing in a corner of the "Y". Not many men were there but close to him an elderly and somewhat overzealous secretary was taking to task a little group of soldiers

who were evidently remiss in their attendance at the services. These men had been in battle. They had seen their comrades die—wounded—blow to atoms—gassed, gasping with raw and bleeding lungs for one breath of air they could not seem to reach. These men had seen their friends, young, brave, with all of life before them a broader or a deeper or a higher, at any rate, a different, attitude toward the great enigma of life.

The secretary had just come over and was full of zeal to save the souls of these poor, lost wanderers, to snatch the brands from the burning. They must come and be saved. They must put on salvation. They must accept Christ or forever they would burn in hell as children of the devil. They must become converted and filled with grace before it was too late and the bottomless pit yawned for them with the everlasting fires and—

"Oh, can that brimstone stuff!"

This interruption of a new voice with an evident note of impatience in it caught Jimmie's attention and he looked around at the speaker with interest.

Chapter VI

A Doughboy's Ideas on Religion

The tone of voice of the last speaker attracted the attention of our friend Jimmie and he listened with interest.

"What—what—what do you mean?" stammered the horrified secretary.

"Just that. Can that everlasting fire stuff. It isn't logical and it isn't scriptural and it isn't Christian and it isn't in the Bible anyway,

and a God who would act the way you say He does would be a devil and not a God."

It was a tall, lean doughboy who spoke. The interval of silence caused by a stupefaction of the horrified secretary, who really could not believe his ears and was dumb from amazement, gave Jimmie a chance to take a hurried glance at the group before the doughboy continued:

"Who is God, anyhow?"

"Who is God! Who is God! Oh, my poor, poor brother! Can you be so ignorant as to ask that question?"

"You bet I can! You seem to know a lot about Him, at least you are allowing that you do. Now tell me just who He is and what is His business."

"Who is He? Oh, dear, dear! With a rod of iron he rules the world and could break it in pieces like a potter's vessel. He made you and He gave his only Son to die for you to save you from eternal damnation, and you ask who He is!"

"Now listen to me, parson. I don't mean to be unkind and I don't mean to be irreverent, but I've been through that hell out yonder and I saw my chum, the finest fellow that ever wore shoe leather and the bravest man—" here he glared around the little circle as though challenging any one to deny the fact—"the bravest man that ever lived. I saw him hit with a shell which took both his legs off, and he died right there in my arms and he didn't have a chance. I saw him die and I've got to go back when this thing is over, if I'm alive, and tell his wife and his mother how he died. And you tell me that God made the world and rules the world and He allows things like this war to happen? Why didn't He stop it? If

He is as great and holy as you say, why didn't He stop the men who began this thing?"

"My poor, poor, ignorant brother. God did not permit this war. It was the devil, that great Adversary, who brought this on."

"Then God doesn't rule the world! He made us but He made such a poor job He had to send His only Son to die to save us, and even at that He only saves a few—by your own reckoning the great majority are going to hell; I heard you say so when you spoke of the broad, easy way that leads to destruction."

— Back to Top —

"Oh, but, my brother, that is all in the Bible. Do you mean to deny the Word of God?"

"I don't know just what I'm denying, but I don't believe the Bible says that at all. I believe you go to the Bible and get out of it just what you happen to want to get out of it and not what the Bible wants to give you. Now you listen to me for a moment and tell me if I make a mistake. God is almighty. Is that so?"

"Yes, yes, it is indeed and—"

"Now, just wait a minute, parson, if you'll excuse me, it's my inning right now and I am after getting at the truth if I can. Now to start over again—God is almighty—that means He is able to do anything?"

"Yes indeed."

"And I heard a minister say once that He is omnipotent?"

"Yes."

"That means that He is almighty but it means a lot more too."

Gee! You're a regular lawyer!" was the admiring interjection from another soldier in the group.

"Well, I studied law a lot and practiced a little too, but I never trained for this kind of a fight."

"Now, my brother, let me give you some tracts to read—"

"No parson, I don't want to read any tracts. They all shy away from the big questions. You began this thing and I want you to stand up like a man and see it through because I'm not trying to damage religion any. I'm really and honestly looking for light, but I want real light—sunlight—not any of your tallow candle variety. I want to get at the truth. I've been in hell out there past the trenches and I've walked face to face with death and so have all these boys here, and we are looking for truth—fact—true truth, not any counterfeit. Now I am right here to tell you, parson, that my eternal happiness is worth just as much to me as yours is to you, and I'm not trying to shock you—I want the truth—so do all these boys."

"But, bother, I have told you. Accept Christ—put on the Gospel armor and you can resist all the wiles of the enemy."

"There you go, parson, evading the issue. The questions are: Who is God, why did He make us, why did He allow this war to come on?"

"Oh, but you are wrong. He didn't allow it. It is all against his will—"

"Against His will and He omnipotent? No, parson, you've got to try again."

"But I tell you, bother, you must come humbly to the throne of grace. Accept Christ with the right hand of fellowship and even now you may be saved."

The tall soldier looked at the secretary for a moment, gave a sigh and turned away.

"It always ends this way," he said to another of the group; "I never knew a parson who could hold up his end in a real discussion with any one who wants to know the real truth if there is such a thing to be known. They always shirk and dodge. So long, parson," he said pleasantly as he passed out of the building.

Jimmie hastily folded his letter, stuck it in his pocket, and followed. Here, perhaps, was chance to begin on the great work. The Elder Brother had said that the work would not be forced on him but that he would be given chances to work if he were in earnest. Perhaps this was a chance. He overtook the man, who quietly saluted as he fell into step with him.

"I overheard part of your talk with the secretary," said Jimmie, "and I want to ask you, if I may, whether you were really in earnest when you said that you wanted to know the truth?"

— Back to Top —

"You bet I was, Lieutenant, but I never can get a minister to answer the questions I want to ask, and yet them seem reasonable to me."

"I think I can answer your questions. If you will let me take the parson's place, and anyhow I think we would enjoy the discussion."

"All right, sir."

The tone was a resigned one, and Jimmie sensed the situation. The tall soldier had told the truth when he said that he wanted light but was disgusted at the idea that a very youthful second lieutenant should take up the scanty leisure of a tired soldier with a lot of useless discussion on a subject of which he must be completely ignorant. He (the soldier) had applied frequently for light to the regularly appointed light-bearers and had received—darkness. For this second lieutenant to presume to have what none of the ministers had was like a grammar school boy offering to teach a major-general the rudiments of strategy. However, the tall soldier was good-natured and decided to put with the affliction for a few minutes to see what the lieutenant had to say.

Jimmie said after a little awkward silence:

"You know, I felt sorry for that poor secretary back there; you put some hard questions to him."

The tall soldier chuckled:

"They did kinda get his goat, didn't they?"

"They sure did. Yet the answers are very simple."

"I wish you'd give them."

"Well—ask your questions."

"Is there a life after death?"

"Yes."

"How do you know?"

"Because I've been there and come back."

"Gee! You scored that time, maybe. But here's another: How do you know that you've been there and come back?"

"I thought you would ask that question. I know that I have been over there and come back because I have met and talked with people there whom I knew in earth life, and also because I met and talked with a man there whom I had never known before but who had not laid aside his physical body, and by following his instructions I have met him in the physical body afterwards. Still, I fully recognize the fact that what is proof to me is not proof to you, because you have only my word for it; and even if you knew me well and did not doubt my word, yet there is a large margin for error of judgment, so that strictly speaking there can be no 'proof' for you except through your own experience. But, there may be a secondary proof, circumstantial evidence as you might say, which would be ten times more convincing 'proof' than anything I might tell you, even if you did not doubt my word."

"Just what do you mean?"

"I mean this: You have been told from your childhood that there is a God, that He is wisdom, knowledge, love, etc. You see certain facts in the world around you which you find hard to reconcile with such an idea of God. You see injustice, misery, war, pain, sorrow, parting; you see some who are lucky all their lives and some who are unlucky through no fault of their own. You see all these things and you naturally want to know why they exist in a world which has been created by a Being whose name is love. Since they do exist and since they are not the evidences of love, you argue that God either does not exist at all or that He is lacking in some of the attributes you have always ascribed to Him or that there is a Rival Power of darkness, almost, if not quite, as powerful as God. Is that not so?"

— Back to Top —

"That's the case exactly, Lieutenant."

"You ask for the reasons why such things are allowed in the world and you are met with evasions and platitudes which show you that the men who are supposed to know most about the things of God are really as ignorant as yourself but not always honest enough to admit it. They believe certain things on what seems to you to be insufficient evidence, and they wish you to believe just what they do but are wholly unable to answer any of your questions and even resent the asking of the questions. Yet the whole matter becomes plain as day when you realize that we are all evolving spirits, parts of God just as the Bible says, who are growing in experience and knowledge and power through living many lives on earth one after another. We are subject to two great laws, first, that of rebirth which brings us back again and again to life on the physical plane, and second, that of consequence which decrees that we must reap just what we sow—again just as the Bible tells us. In between our earth lives we are in another state of consciousness in which the experience of the past life is incorporated into our spirit as conscience. Sin is the result of ignorance of God's laws, and the resultant suffering in time teaches us how to obey these laws, just as a child that has burnt its finger learns to avoid a hot stove. But some are fortunate because they have progressed farther on the path of evolution than others, have learned more lessons, and are able to live more nearly according to God's law. Others are unfortunate because in past lives they have done wrong and have laid up more of a debt; or rather because they have not progressed as far upon the path of evolution and so have not paid off as many of their debts, for no one in all God's universe is called upon to suffer anything which he has not deserved by his actions in the past; but you must

remember that the past extends over hundreds of lives. In the great scheme of human evolution there are great turning points where extra help is given. This war is one of those points and was allowed to come on because the race was becoming bogged in materialism, and a great shock was needed to turn the thought of humanity back to the only real thing in the world, which is the study of the laws of God and the attempt to obey them. And the laws of God were never better summarized than by Christ when He said to love God supremely and thy neighbor as thyself. Do I make myself plain?"

"Y-e-s, but if I have lived before, why don't I remember it?"

"Well, the causes which operate to prevent your remembering your past lives are complex and would take a long time to explain. But the fact remains that it is a merciful provision of nature, because if you **did** remember all your past lives you could not advance at all, for the old loves and hates of the past would compel you to wrong actions. A boy in school uses a slate until he is past the primary grades and does not make many mistakes in figures. Later on he discards his slate and uses pencil and paper, and still later he uses ink. So with us. When we learn to live right and not make so many mistakes, when we are freer from the passions of hatred and revenge, we shall remember all our past lives."

"It seems to be all right but I can't see why I don't remember if I have lived before."

"Think it over and maybe you will see."

Jimmie judged it best to drop the subject here and left the man to go on his way. He was disappointed, too, for to his enthusiasm, the inability to see so plain a matter was a little disheartening. He

had not realized the fact that each one has his limitations and that the limitations of one are at a different distance from the center than those of another. A large circle can contain a smaller and can comprehend it and the fact that there is space beyond the confines of the smaller circle, but the smaller one cannot comprehend the large one until it has learned to reason from the existence of still smaller circles that there may be something beyond its own limitations. It is easy for us to see the limitations of others but hard to see our own until we learn first to cast out the beam which is in our own eye before we attempt to remove the mote which is in our brother's eye.

Now began for Jimmie a life in which he found little time for the particular work he was so anxious to do. His regiment was sent back to the trenches and the strenuous life and the little real privacy and quiet which he could command hindered his attempts to further his own advancement. He did, however, manage to perform most of the time the simple exercises which Mr. Campion had given him and managed to say a few words about the higher life now and then when the chance offered. But the excitement of the actual fighting, for his regiment was brigaded with a British army contingent and was holding back the German advance in the spring of 1918, focused his attention almost wholly upon military affairs. The matter, though, was in stronger hands than his, and one day, in a charge to retake a trench, he received a bullet in his right arm and was sent back to a hospital, fuming at his ill luck.

In this hospital there was no Louise, and he had been there hardly long enough to get his wound well dressed before he received orders to sail at once for America for instruction duty in one of the big training camps. He tried in vain to get long enough leave to hunt up Miss Clayton, but the situation was urgent and his orders were peremptory. He wrote a despairing letter to Mr.

Campion but received no reply and was forced to board a returning transport, in charge of a small contingent of wounded men, his great work undone, Louise and Mr. Champion left behind in France, his comrades still fighting tooth and nail to hold the grey flood and himself in what he bitterly asserted to be perfect physical condition, forced to go home before the war was won.

— Back to Top —

Oh, the bitterness of that embarkation, leaving behind him in France the Great War in which he wished to continue, the girl whom he had grown to love and the man to whom he looked for guidance in the great work which he had dimly sensed! Leaving behind all the great activities which had entered his life and had changed it so completely, leaving it all for what? A safety which he despised, a work which he felt others could do far better than he, a life of unwelcome ease and that dreadful, gnawing sense of separation from those whom he wished to be near.

Jimmie went aboard the transport, weighed down with a feeling of injustice and calamity. His arm gave him considerable trouble for it was encased in a sling most of the time, and yet he knew that at the front he would have hardly noticed such pain as it caused. But now little things annoyed him and trifles seemed important, and he grew, not peevish, for Jimmie had naturally too sunny a disposition for that, but less buoyantly joyful than he had generally been. He spent as little time out of his cabin as possible and was generally supposed to be suffering more from the shell shock than from the wound in his arm. As shell shock is a most peculiar thing and acts in a thousand different ways, his little foibles were passed over without remark and he was humored in them to the greatest possible extent.

The ship had been two nights and two days at sea and it was late in the evening of the third day, long after dark, that he stood at the rail alone looking wistfully out over the water. The moon was setting, a brand new moon, giving too little light to dim the beauty of the friendly stars. The breeze was blowing gently from the southward and the great ship drove through the darkness without even the glimmer of a light to mark her way, heaving slowly and gently to the long, easy swells and rolling with something of dignity in her motion as though in a dim way she sensed her separate existence and the value of the precious human freight she bore.

Jimmie leaned against the rail drinking deep breaths of the salty air which tasted so clean and fresh after the reek of No-Man's-Land, fouled with human hatred and the wrecks of human war, and watched each long, low roller brimming slowly to the vessel's side and raising her so easily, so quietly, as though the lifting of a score of thousand tons of weight were the merest play. The exhibition of such tremendous power slowly brought into Jimmie's mind, torn with grief and disappointment, a feeling of calmness and rest, and when he looked from the ocean to the sky and watched the great stars shining quietly above him as they had shone above Columbus and the sailors of the Spanish Main, as they had shone above Rome and Carthage, above Babylon and Baalbec, above the builders of the pyramids and the armies and the navies of old Atlantis, he felt stealing over him a faint perception of that great Power whose Being they attested and whose majestic purpose could not be thwarted a hair's breadth even by the great upheaval of all the peoples of the globe.

His mind ran back over history and he pictured to himself the wars and plagues and pestilences and famines, the myriad scenes of battle and murder and sudden death, of quiet lives of unknown

peoples, of the loves and the hates of men and women dead a thousand or ten thousand years ago, upon all of whom these same stars had gazed with the same quiet calm, waiting unperturbed the working out of God's great Plan.

It seemed to him as the pictures of these things flashed through his mind, as though the world swung on its way through space leaving swirling behind it like a dense cloud of smoke visible to spiritual eyes the prayers and tears of all humanity, the screams of the wounded and the dying upon all the battlefields since human history began, the appeals for mercy, the agony of despair, the strife of nations, the rise of races and their fall, the cry of the starving—all united in this dense black cloud which must roll upward to the very Throne of God. And through it all there sounded that same despairing appeal—Why!

And then he thought of his own little part in the mighty Drama, how he had been protected and shown a little of the great Plot, how a corner of the dark Curtain had been lifted for a moment so that he might catch a glimpse of that which lay beyond in order that he might know how to help.

How had he fulfilled his mission? What had he done? In his talk with the soldier who had asked such pointed questions at the "Y" hut, what had he accomplished? Nothing!

His conscience troubled him, yet, after all, what could he have done by argument? This question, as he began to feel, was one too great to be solved by any burst of enthusiasm, however ardent. It must be the quiet, steady work of time, unremitting, unrelenting, seeking every opportunity, undaunted by failure, and satisfied if, here and there, one person could be helped though ever so slightly. Then, perhaps, after the war he might return to

Paris and meet again that wise man, Mr. Champion, the "Elder Brother," and learn how to fit himself for the great work.

And as his thought steadied itself into that firm resolve to "carry on," no matter how hopeless the task might seem, the calm of the great stars filled his heart and he turned away to seek his cabin and perhaps write a few more words in a letter to Louise which he intended to mail to her as soon as he got ashore.

As he carefully closed his cabin door before turning on the light which he as an officer was allowed and which was so thoroughly screened that no glimmer could possibly escape to be seen by lurking submarines, his mind was filled with the magic of the stars, of the sea, and keyed with the resolve to prove himself worthy, in time, of the confidence which had been placed in him; to show Mr. Champion, if he could ever find that gentleman again, that he was not an utterly unworthy pupil.

— Back to Top —

But he was not prepared for the shock which met him as he turned away from the door. Sitting quietly in the one chair which the cabin boasted, as though his presence were the most natural thing in the world, was the very man about whom Jimmie had just been thinking—Mr. Champion.

Jimmie started with surprise, gasped out, "Wh-wh-why!" and held out his hand to his unexpected visitor. Beyond that monosyllabic utterance he could not seem to think of another word to say for an instant, so completely was he taken aback. But Mr. Champion did not offer to shake hands, merely motioning Jimmie, with a smile, to sit on the edge of the berth.

"I am not here in my physical body, so I can't shake hands with you, but I am delighted that you are able to see so plainly. I have come to take you on a little excursion, if you are not afraid to venture, and as our time is short if you will lie down in the berth and fall asleep we will start on our travels."

Jimmie might have asked a few questions or have expressed some misgivings if Mr. Campion had not used that expression "If you are not afraid," but after that challenge he felt that it would not do for an officer in the American army to hold back. So he quietly turned off the light, disposed himself comfortably in the berth, and in what seemed to him almost no time at all found himself standing on the floor, looking down upon his recumbent body, the whole cabin as plainly visible as though filled with daylight, and Mr. Campion, no longer avoiding physical contact, standing at his side with one hand on Jimmie's shoulder.

"This is your first conscious leaving of the body, and you must not fear that we shall not find the ship again or that anything will happen to her while you are away. Take my hand and trust me implicitly, and whatever you may see do not give way to fear. Come."

They soared away right through the fabric of the ship, hovering for a moment above her masts, looking down at her, for she was a beautiful sight as she plunged ahead through the smooth, rolling swell, plainly visible to their etheric vision.

Despite the assurances Mr. Campion had given him, Jimmie was afraid. There was his body, lying down below in its bunk, safe enough perhaps, but going one way while he was going another. The weather was calm but it was not weather which caused the ship to sail at her full speed without a light. Suppose a sub—he

checked himself. Often had Jimmie gone over the top and never had he done so without fear, but no one who watched him would ever have known that Lieutenant Westman was afraid. Jimmie had the true courage to do his duty whether or not he was afraid, to act just as though he did not know what fear was, and he had heard too many brave men admit constant fear to be ashamed of being afraid. But he would have been ashamed to **show** that he was afraid and never had he done so. He resolved that this experience should never drag from him any expression of the fear he really felt, so he turned away from the ship and looked his guide full in the face with a smile of readiness for anything that might come.

Chapter VII

Helping a Slain Soldier to Comfort his Mother

Mr. Champion turned to him smiling:

"You have not forgotten the 'glide' I see, so we'll start on our trip."

They began at once to move with tremendous rapidity, Jimmie holding Mr. Champion's hand and noticing as they sped along that he seemed to see many more people traveling like themselves through the air than he had observed on his former visit to the Land of the Living Dead. They were moving in all directions, some quickly, some slowly, some merely drifting and apparently asleep. His own gait was so rapid that he merely made a mental note of the fact and hoped to ask Mr. Champion about it later.

In less time than it takes to tell about it they found themselves on the fighting line in France, and they stopped in front of a little dugout within which several men were talking. Jimmie recognized

one as the tall soldier whom he had met in the "Y" hut. It developed from their talk that they expected to take part in a drive which they were sure would be made within a day or two, and were discussing the conditions of the after-death state, if there were such a thing. But they were going about it in a most peculiar way—it seemed as though they were trying to hide under a camouflage of flippancy their genuine hunger for information.

— [Back to Top](#) —

One said:

"I don't believe death ends it all, but it don't seem to me like we've been given the right dope about it. I remember an old hymn I heard at a revival once. I forget just how it went, but it was something like this:

'One moment here my soul shall be,
The next, beyond the stars.'

That's sure going some, ain't it? St. Peter wouldn't have no chance to fire any questions at a guy going such a pace as that!"

"Also the guy would be goin' so fast he'd just naturally pass right through heaven an' out the other side before he could stop."

"He'd be out of luck wouldn't he? But I don't believe the man who wrote that song knew anything about it. I don't believe people change like that when they die. Look at Slim Johnson. That guy is so slow he just naturally can't keep out of his own way an' do you think he'd change to a skyrocket like that if he was killed? No sir! He'd never show no speed like that. It'd take him a week to find

out he's dead. I bet when a man's killed he just hangs round a spell an' then moseys along."

"Where to!"

"I dunno. Wherever he had any business, likely. Some might like to go to heaven an' play on a harp an' then some might not. For me, I never played on a harp an' I can't sing so I'd just like to sorter hang around an' see how things was goin'!"

"Maybe you couldn't. Supposin' you found you had an engagement some place an' a big fellow behind you with a pitchfork urgin' you to keep it?"

"Nothin' doin.' I don't believe in such things as that. I don't believe in any devil at all. I've heard some of these Englishmen tell of things they seen out at night when the war first started an' they were different from that."

The inquisitive soldier with whom Jimmie had talked broke in here:

"I believe a lieutenant I got talking to a few weeks ago had the right dope. He said we had lived before and we would live again and that we kept on being the same kind of men after we were killed as we were before. It sounded foolish to me then, but the more I think of it the more I believe he was right."

Here Mr. Campion drew Jimmie away.

"We have so little time," he said, "that we must make the most of it. You see that the seed you planted and which you thought was wasted has really sprouted and has started the man to thinking. Later, if he should come in touch with the esoteric

teaching, it will not be a novelty to him and he will be ready to consider it."

They had been moving rapidly while he spoke, and he had hardly finished before they stood in a room where an elderly couple, evidently man and wife, were sitting. The hour was past midnight, but for these two there was no sleep. An official envelope on the table would have told the story had it been needed, but it was not. The woman was crying audibly, the man silently, though the tears were rolling down his cheeks. Standing at one side was a soldier in a torn and muddy uniform, with a row of bullet holes across his chest where a machine gun had evidently done its work. He winced and cringed when the woman cried, stretched out his arms to her and called her "mother," but she did not hear.

Mr. Campion approached the soldier:

"Friend," he said, and Jimmie thought that never had he heard so kindly a voice.

The soldier turned to him.

"I can't make her hear. I can't make her hear. If she only knew that I am alive and not-not-suffering! She thinks I'm dead! but I'm not. I'm just as alive as I ever was, but I can't make her hear!"

"Friend!"

Again that gentle voice seemed to change the tense vibrations in the room—

"You are not dead, indeed but you have laid aside your body of flesh and I can help you. Listen to me and do exactly as I say:

"Think of yourself in a clean, new uniform, without a wound and happy, and try to impress that thought upon your mother's mind."

— Back to Top —

Slowly, as Jimmie looked, the torn, dirty uniform, became clean and fresh, the bullet wounds disappeared, the man's face lost the lines of pain which had been seared upon it. He looked down at himself and gave a gasp of surprise.

"Now," said Mr. Champion, "always think of yourself as clean and fresh and happy and keep on saying to her 'I love you, I love you!' and after a while when she goes to sleep you will be able to talk to her for at that time she will leave her body for a while. Then try to make her realize that you are alive and well and that you love her. Love is the greatest force in all the world and in time you will soothe her pain; at night when she sleeps you can be with her and talk to her."

The soldier gave him a look only, but in that look were manifest a gratitude and respect which no words could have expressed. He began to follow the directions.

Jimmie and Mr. Champion withdrew to a corner while the soldier, forcing a smile to his lips, kept repeating the formula, bending over the woman as she sat sobbing.

Gradually the sobs died away and a look of peace crept over her face. "Henry," she said to her husband, "it is all right with him, I feel it. He is alive and well."

Again Mr. Champion took Jimmie by the hand and they began to travel. This time it was back to the ship, and Jimmie soon found

himself poised directly above the vessel on board of which in a little cabin his own body lay sleeping quietly.

The moon had gone down and to the physical eye the face of the ocean would have been dark, but those who travel in the Land of the Living Dead need no sun by day nor are they oppressed by darkness at night.

Natural laws run through all the cosmos, which is but another way of saying that God rules everywhere. But the operator of certain natural laws differs in the different worlds, and those who find themselves suddenly projected into the higher realms of being are often apt to be much surprised at the things they see and hear.

Jimmie gazed at the beautiful sight which lay spread out below him where the great steamer was plunging onwards through the gently rolling ocean, all around her the interminable stretch of waters, ever restless, which ran brimming from horizon to horizon with no human eye to watch the slow dignity of their great rollers as they heaved themselves like mighty giants over the beautiful, foamy lacework where the combers broke.

"Jimmie" said his companion as they hovered in the air, "some day perhaps I shall take you on a real journey through space and time, and I will show you old Atlantis and the things which happened there long before history had its beginning. We read tales of romance and of fiction, but I tell you that neither romance nor fiction ever could rival some of the wonderful things which happened in that strange old land which these very waves have traveled over. Now, let us go to your cabin."

They swept gently downward and entered the cabin where Jimmie stood looking down at his body which was quietly

breathing in sleep.

"Queer thing, isn't it?"

"What?" asked Mr. Campion.

"Why, its queer what makes it go! There is is, breathing just as regularly as clockwork, and here I am, outside of it and disconnected, as you might say, and yet it's working just as nicely as ever."

"The sight of it this way may help you to realize that the body is only a tool to be used by the 'you' which is now standing before it. Later on you may grow to realize that the 'you' now standing here is only the tool of a still higher 'you.'"

"I wonder," said Jimmie musingly, "would I have known of it if the ship had been torpedoed and my body drowned while I was away from it?"

"You certainly would have known, had it happened, but it was because I knew that it would not happen that I came for you. Later I shall teach you to leave your body when you will."

— Back to Top —

"Didn't I leave my body tonight?"

"No. Not as I mean when I speak of leaving the body. Everyone leaves the body in sleep. You left yours after falling asleep and then I woke you, but you did not leave your body consciously. Had you done so you would have met the Dweller on the Threshold."

"What is that?"

"The sum of the evil of your past lives. But there is something else I want to speak of now instead of the Dweller, and that is this: What did you notice particularly about the soldier who was trying to make his mother hear him?"

"Why,—er—I don't know. Let me see, he had been killed by a machine gun, was that it?"

"No. I mean what lesson could you draw from him? Every time you are taken out on a trip into the Land of the Living Dead it is not to gratify your love for adventure but to teach you a lesson. Every time in the future when you are able to 'travel' alone you must be on the lookout for some lesson to learn. I showed you the inquisitive soldier for a purpose, and I took you to the other place also for a purpose.

"After this you will have to search out the lessons for yourself, for a great part of the good they do is brought about by the trouble which is taken and the thought and concentration spent in looking for them. But this time, to show you what I mean and to start you right, I will help you.

"You must learn to look for the big little things, not for the little big things. You took a wonderful journey such as kings might envy you, such as you used to read of in fairy stories or in the Arabian Nights, a most spectacular thing had there been any one to watch it, but that journey was of no importance compared with a number of little things which apparently you did not notice.

"The things which you must look for are those which emphasize great truths; things which are true for everybody, for all people. The journey was great, in its way, but it was great for you alone. If you went out into the world and spent your time telling people about that wonderful journey they would not believe you, but even

should they believe you, what would you accomplish? From the standpoint of the evolving spirit you would accomplish nothing.

"But take one of the little things which you noticed but which did not impress you because you were not on the watch for such things, the little fact that the soldier shrank when his mother cried—take that fact and ask yourself: Why? Why did he act as though some one had struck him with a whip? Was it not perfectly natural that she should cry? Had she laughed and smiled would he not have had a perfect right to have felt badly, to have felt as though she was glad to get rid of him? Well, the key lies in this: He knew, on account of being more sensitive to her thought than when he was in the physical body, that she had a subconscious fear that death is the end of all and that once dead he was lost to her forever. That was what caused him such pain. That was why he shrank and quivered so. He was alive and he knew he was alive. He was on another plane of being, true, but he was alive and not dead. Had he been able to tell her so, to show himself to her for just one moment as living, she would have lost the keenness of her grief, death would have been robbed of half its sting, no, more than half, nine tenths. There is your lesson, what do you learn from it?"

Jimmie hesitated, watching his body sleeping in the bunks. He was not just sure **what** the lesson was. The Elder Brother did not give him long to think, however, for he began again.

"To find out what the lesson was is easy if you will go about it methodically. Take from the situation the permanent, universal truths. You have a son who has been killed, a mother who knows that he has been killed; you have the mother showing a perfectly natural grief; you have, (since you were able to see on both sides of the veil) the natural grief of the mother causing the son (unseen

by her) the most acute sorrow. These things are universal as death is universal, for in the problem which we are considering, the manner of the son's death is of no moment. We have, then, the fact that deep and hopeless grief causes the dead to suffer. We have also the fact that lamentations for the dead cause them pain and take their attention away from the new conditions surrounding them, and hence hold them back in their evolution. Also, since the peculiar intensity of these lamentations is caused by the belief or fear of the living that death is the end of everything, you have an utterly needless suffering, arising from ignorance, which is harming both the dead and the living. Is the case growing more clear?"

"Yes, in a way. I can see where grief disturbs the dead and how the living suffer much more than they need to suffer and all through ignorance. Is that the lesson?"

"Partly, but only partly. On the other side the suffering is much keener than on this side because it is not deadened by the flesh, so the dead man suffers far more than is necessary. Also the ones left behind suffer a great and needless amount of pain because they do not know that death is not the end. But there is a positive side. Not only do they suffer needlessly but they miss a great deal of joy which they might have, did they know the real facts of the matter. The mother who mourns her little child, could she see the child in the surpassing bliss of the heaven world, might still grieve, but her grief would be for herself not for the child. Death is, in many cases, a promotion, not a loss; a benefit, a reward, a thing for which to be thankful. We need to get rid of that old idea which still clings so closely that death means permanent cessation of physical activity.

"But there is a further consideration. In the average death, not the result of sudden accident or of battle, the soul reviews the events of the past life, and it is this review which forms the real basis of our progress in evolution. I explained it to you when I gave you that long talk in the Rue de l'Ex. You remember that the subconscious memory, which is a property of the vital or etheric body, is impressed on the desire body at death while the soul is reviewing the past life. That impression forms the basis for the life in purgatory and also in heaven. When the attention of the passing soul is distracted as by the lamentations of those who are left behind, the record is not impressed on the desire body, hence the purgatory life and the heaven life both fail in their real purpose to a large extent, and just to that extent the past life of the man is wasted. You have seen how the dead are hurt by the grief of the living; not the calm sorrow of absence but the emotional outburst of despair. This is one lesson blocked out for you. In the future, wherever your life of service takes you, do all in your power to explain these facts to people so that in time this terrible injustice to the dead will cease. In just so far as you can do this, will you help evolution and bring nearer the great Day of Liberation."

— Back to Top —

"What was the other lesson of which you spoke?"

"I have shown you one; the other I think you would remember better if you find it out for yourself."

"But I don't understand how the subconscious memory is impressed. You say that it forms the basis for the life in purgatory, and that according to the keenness of the life in purgatory so is the completeness of our conquest over our sins?"

"That is it, exactly."

"And yet, in the deaths that I have watched from this side of the line there has been no review of the past life. Take Sergeant Strew, for instance. When he was killed he simply stepped out of his body and there he was. There was no lamentation, but he never stopped to think of his past life. Now why was that?"

"Because it was a departure from the normal way of dying. Nature intends to use a method consisting of death, then a review of past activities and mistakes and a purgatory and heaven life based on that review. That is the scheme of evolution, normally, but man with his divine prerogative of free will and choice often upsets Nature's plans—temporarily, of course. Normally man is not intended to die by violence or accident. Death on the battlefield or death in some accident which suddenly removes the Ego from a young and vigorous body is not the normal method planned for the race. It interferes with the review. Death by burning, such as sometimes happens to people in a house or a railroad wreck, may so terrify and excite the soul that for a long time after the actual severance of the silver cord and long after the review has become impossible, the soul is still frantically re-enacting the scene of its violent separation from the physical body.

"In the event of those who die from shell shock the review is usually impossible. In the case of sergeant Strew, he was removed from his body instantly and was not aware of the fact, but even had he been aware of it, the violence of the vibrations at the time would have prevented his review even though no relatives interfered. But you will remember that he saw you at once and had hardly ceased greeting you when he was excited by the soldiers interfering with his body. However, even if you had not been there he would not have had any review on account of the suddenness of what was practically accidental death, also the very unfortunate vibrations which obtain generally all over the battle

line, and several other contributory reasons which I won't go into now; but you see that death by accident or violence or battle is unfortunate, as it interferes with the normal process of Nature. Nature, however, is too powerful to be thwarted. Natural processes may be interfered with and thrown out of normal but they cannot be thwarted in the long run. Nature always employs the very abnormalities to further her ends, so that when an account is finally totaled, it may be seen that what at the time seemed to have been a wasted life was really not wasted at all, but that every part of it was used. So, in our Father's great universe we find the most wonderful evidence of wisdom everywhere, wisdom without limit, wisdom whose heights we cannot scale and whose depths we cannot plumb."

Jimmie was looking at his friend while the latter was speaking and saw a sight new to him in his experiences in this wonderful country. He saw the soul body of a Master who was wrapped in adoration of the Divine Wisdom and in love for the Divine Creator.

Brilliant beyond description was this beautiful vision. The little cabin was aflame with the glory which filled it with coruscations of intense light in many shades from pure white to violet. In the center of this terrific radiance was the etheric body of the man, standing with bowed head as though in prayer.

Unprepared for such a vision, Jimmie staggered back against the wall, and it would have needed but little to have brought him to his knees had he not remembered the words spoken by the angel under somewhat similar circumstances, "See thou do it not." So he did not worship, but he stood in awe and wonder as the glory began to fade and his own friend, familiar once more, looked at him and with outstretched hand said:

"Forgive me, friend. For a moment I was thinking only of the Father and His Divine love, His wonderful forbearance towards us, and the wisdom with which He makes even our weakness and our failures serve him."

"And now I shall leave you for the present. Keep up the exercises which I gave you. Seek out the other lesson, and as you tread the path may the Father's blessing rest upon you."

Slowly the cabin grew dim and dark, the movement of the vessel became noticeable; Jimmie felt the edges of the bunk and the softness of the blankets and with his outstretched hand touched the hardness of the wall. He was awake.

[— Back to Top —](#)

Chapter VIII

A Study of Auras

Jimmie slept no more that night. He lay awake, pondering over the things which had happened, and gradually there came over him the conviction that the greatest lesson all had not been told him but had been left for him to find out for himself.

He began to reason the thing out. Why had he been selected and shown so many wonderful things? It was not to gratify his curiosity, that was certain. It was not that he might here and there pick out some one to whom he could bring a moderate degree of consolation for the loss of loved ones, although that was doubtless one of the minor purposes. What could it be, the great idea which lay behind?

It was not that he should heal the sick, although Mr. Campion had told him a great deal about the curing of physical illness by

work upon the vital body. It was not that he should tell the story of his adventures in the Land of the Living Dead, for he had been especially warned that he must not do this since spiritual experiences will not stand repeating; and besides, he had been told that people would not believe him.

He remembered that the greatest Healer who had ever lived, had never, so far as he could recall, gone out of His way to heal. He had healed many, it is true, but only, so to speak, as a side issue, only healing those who had obtruded themselves upon Him and whose demands had been more or less insistent. Then what was he to do? For what great purpose had he been instructed?

Healing was not the great reason, nor comforting the sorrowful. Training his own personality as an end in itself was out of the question—for that would have involved the element of selfishness. It must be something which he was to pass on to others—that much was clear, and he began to reason from analogy.

Suppose, he thought, he were a wealthy man, what could he do with his money in order to accomplish the most good? For one thing, he could give money to those in need. But, on the other hand, giving money to the needy is not always wise. It is apt to breed more troubles than it cures.

He could build factories and divide the profits with his employees. That would be better. That would be helping others to help themselves. When Christ was on earth He performed many miracles, and the Power which could multiply a few loaves and fishes until they were enough to feed thousands could doubtless have turned stones into gold. Why then, did not Christ abolish poverty by giving gold to all the poor people whom He met?

The Christ, he reasoned, looked at the matter from the standpoint of the great Sun Spirit that He was. He knew these people to be evolving spirits whose progress from the pain and unhappiness of the lower stages of evolution to the great joy and happiness and splendor of the higher grades was dependent solely upon spiritual advancement and not in any wise upon their accumulation of money or property. He knew that spiritual advancement is more often retarded by the possessions which, being close at hand and prominent, seem to their owner to be the most desirable things which life has to offer. Therefore He gave them those things which were the most valuable—help, encouragement, and teaching along the lines which, if followed, would bring the only real and permanent reward. In other words, Christ helped His followers to help themselves along the lines of spiritual achievement.

This life, Jimmie realized, taken as a whole from the first differentiation of the individual spirit within the great being of God before it starts on its long pilgrimage, until the final day of liberation when the aspirant can speak the glorious words, "It is finished." is like a school, and in it we learn our lessons. The same law holds good as in our childhood school days, and that is that no one else can learn our lessons for us. A teacher can only help and encourage, lead and point out the way. The actual acquirement of learning must be through work done by ourselves.

True, the child at school can be forced by fear of punishment to study; questions and examinations can disclose fairly well the extent to which he has applied himself. But the punishment or the fear of it does not accomplish anything except to spur on a careless or lazy mentality. The learning acquired is the result of the child's own effort regardless of what may have been the incentive.

So, carrying the analogy farther, spiritual advancement for the majority of mankind is the result of the spirit's own work, since they are entirely ignorant of the fact that they are in school, ignorant of the law of spiritual growth, hence devoid of the true spiritual incentive to progress.

The education of a child who will study only under the threat of punishment is of very poor quality compared with that obtained by one who knows that it is receiving a training which will help it to get on in the world and who consequently tries to study and assist the teacher. But this education, although far surpassing the first, makes a poor showing compared with that obtained by the child who has a real thirst for knowledge and who needs neither the lash of fear nor the spur of self-interest to urge it on.

So with spiritual growth. At first it is fostered by fear—fear of death, of eternity, and all the other fears which operate on mankind.

— Back to Top —

This stage of spiritual growth is excessively slow, life after life showing but little gain. When self-interest becomes the motive, progress is a little more rapid. It is, however, only when self is forgotten and the man works for love alone that progress is swift. Then he has reached the stage described in the parable of the Prodigal Son who, being yet a great way off, was seen by the Father who went to meet him.

Jimmie pondered these things carefully. The great purpose was not healing nor consolation. These were by-products, so to speak. The great purpose must be connected with helping people to help themselves. The key to the problem evidently lay hidden there.

Now, how was he to help others to help themselves? Spiritual advancement can come like education, only through the spirit's own efforts. But achievement, when made only under the spur of the law of compensation and when the result is not incorporated into the spirit until after death, is very slow.

The child at school, even if unwilling to learn, can see and understand the geography or the spelling book whose lists of names and words it is required to memorize. The spirit learning under the last of the great Twin Laws of Rebirth and Consequence does not understand but is learning blindly.

A knowledge of the laws of Rebirth and Consequence would be a great aid to many. It would show them what they were doing and why they were doing it, and in a great number of cases it would accelerate spiritual progress wonderfully.

Jimmie felt that this was not the real answer to his problem, but he also felt that it was a start toward that answer, and he was sure that if he should do his best to spread the knowledge which he had gained—not the details of his adventures, but the great fact that a tremendous and wonderful spiritual life is going on around us all the time, and that at death we merely step out of our physical cocoon into a glorious freedom—if he should do his best to spread this knowledge and that of the great Twin Laws, he would later be given his real answer.

At the training to which he had been assigned Jimmie soon plunged into his work, with earnestness. It was not hard work as yet, for his superiors had consideration for his physical condition, and made things as easy for him as they could. In fact he had had one entire week after landing with nothing at all to do, and he spent that week getting acquainted with the city near which his

camp was located. He had thought of visiting his home, but the leave given him was not quite long enough and he was unable to get it extended.

Walking around this unfamiliar city, he amused himself and practiced his newly budding powers by watching the auras of the people whom he met, not the people with whom he became acquainted, for Mr. Campion had been very particular to point out that it was forbidden to any esoteric student to investigate the auric colors of any person whom he might personally know merely to practice his powers. Such investigation must be concerned only with strangers and those with whom it was not at all likely that an acquaintance would be ever be made.

It had not been long that he had been able to see the aura, and at first he had not realized what it was but supposed that he was affected in some way by shell shock. When first he had glimpsed the lightly changing colors which come and go around the head and shoulders, he had thought his eyes affected. Marjorie had told him of auras, and he had seen the color around the head of his nurse when first recovering consciousness, but somehow or other these impressions had been vague. When he actually saw the real thing after the first glamour of the life behind the veil had worn away, he did not recognize it.

He had first seen it in the trenches. A number of new men had been assigned to his company when returned to the front, and he had been watching one of these men, when a well aimed shell of small caliber had whizzed very close above the top of the parapet and near where this man was standing. The man did not move nor did he exclaim but stood as calmly as though he had been a veteran of twenty years of trench warfare. But to Jimmie, watching him, he appeared suddenly to be enveloped in a cloud of gray as

in a fog. This was modified by considerable scarlet around the head, which showed that the man was afraid but that it was the fear of a brave man, for he was angry too, partly at himself for being afraid. It showed, too, that while the man felt fear, yet he was in perfect control of himself and would not allow himself to show it; thus he proved himself, to Jimmie, to be one of the bravest of the brave.

This first glimpse which Jimmie had of the aura was not a very clear one. He had the impression that his eyes had suddenly clouded a little with moisture which, he thought, might explain the gray mist, but the appearance of scarlet had puzzled him. For several days he had no recurrence of the sight, but after that it had come more and more frequently, especially after he had recognized it for what it was and had begun to practice the use of it. Later still he found that he could look at men and determine whether they were afraid or not, whether they were angry or not and to just what degree.

And still later he had begun to tell the difference between the aura and the vital body, which he had not been able to distinguish at first except that he knew the aura to be considerably outside the vital body in its extent.

— Back to Top —

During his voyage he had exercised his budding power on the members of the crew and those with whom he was sure he would not be thrown into companionship later. This had been unsatisfactory, however, for the members of the crew did not display much variation in their auric coloring, and the colors they did have were generally of a muddy and confused variety. Even when they had little bickerings among themselves, they never

showed the pure scarlet but only a muddy, dirty red, considerably mixed with other colors.

Here in the city, however it was different. There were plenty of people who showed only the undeveloped colors it was true, but there were some whom he saw on the street whose auras were beautiful. He visited a church the first Sunday morning, thinking that there at least he would find the higher shades of the rarer colors, but was disappointed. The most beautiful shade of blue he witnessed was that unconsciously owned by a little old lady who would, no doubt, have been very much surprised had some one told her that she was more spiritual than the minister himself.

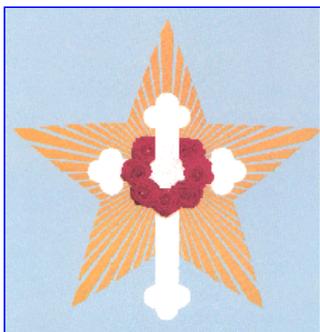
Often on the street Jimmie would see a well dressed business man with a most kindly and benevolent expression yet with an aura which denoted greed, envy, lust, cruelty, and he would wonder what such a man would do in a world where such things were visible to all. If we can keep our self-respect here only by making others believe we are what we are not, although possibly trying to be the latter, then in a world where the character is an open book to all who care to read, what shall we do? Obviously it is "up to us" to lay the foundations of character of which we shall not be ashamed when it is visible to all.

Jimmie made a mental note that the driving home of this truth was one of those things which it was intended he should accomplish. Perhaps it was part of his answer.

-
- Click [here](#) to continue....
 - [Table of Contents](#) »
 - Click [here](#) to return to home page.
 - [Browse by Category](#) »
-

Select Destination..... ▾

Go



Contemporary Mystic Christianity

- [Home »](#)
- [Back To Top — Site Search »](#)
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- [Philosophic Encyclopedia »](#)
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