



# On the Threshold of the Spiritual World

HORATIO W. DRESSER

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## **A Study of Life and Death Over There**

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YoceBooks: Hollister, MO

YOgeBooks by Roger L. Cole, Hollister, MO 65672  
© 2015 YOgeBooks by Roger L. Cole  
All rights reserved. Electronic edition published 2015  
ISBN: 978-1-61183-324-9 PDF  
ISBN: 978-1-61183-325-6 EPUB  
2015:10:20:04:25:08  
[www.yogebooks.com](http://www.yogebooks.com)

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## Preface

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WITH THE signing of the armistice, November 11, 1918, something altogether splendid in human history began to come to an end. The cessation of actual hostilities gave an opportunity to those who had been participating in the war to look back over the months and years of the great struggle to find its meaning in human terms. Their spirits had been called into action. They had been led for the time being into something like the fulness of life. They had made the great venture, achieved the victorious attitude, won the triumphs of faith. The war had in fact been more and more truly a moral protest as it drew to a close. It had enlisted the noblest young life of the nations. It had attained spiritual significance for the world. What was needed, when the center of activity shifted from warfare with guns to the regulation of far-reaching social issues among the nations, that the world might win lasting peace, was that the moral and spiritual values should be recognized and interpreted while there was yet time, while the impression of the war's effect upon the souls of men should still be fresh and strong.

In this volume I have tried to gather some of the human impressions and permit them to point the way to their own interpretation so far as possible. I have not narrated events as mere history but only by way of suggesting their effect on the inner life. I have assumed that in endeavoring to learn what

the war has meant for those who fought it we have been asking the great questions of human existence anew, we have been wondering what part the divine providence played in the war, how it affected those who came closest to the enemy and witnessed sorrow and suffering on every hand in the war-countries. We have also asked what results it produced on human belief, notably with respect to religion, the human soul, death, the future life, and the compensations of the spiritual world.

The answers here given to these and other questions are based on intimate acquaintance with American and French soldiers at the front during the year ending with the armistice. The soldier is interpreted in it as a friend to humanity. He is regarded as a soul fighting for moral standards, as a spirit coming to know himself in profounder measure. The result is a direct clue to the religion of courage and to the meaning of the war as a spiritual awakening needed by the world.

Taking the clue from what soldiers have said and written about death, the transition is here regarded as incidental to the soul's progress, as a "step in life," into a larger, freer world already near and already implied in our natural existence. Man is described as a spirit, with other powers than those functioning through the fleshly instrument, with higher resources than most men are aware of, and with the capacity of verifying by inner experience these evidences of existence in the spiritual world. This view of the human spirit makes possible an estimate of psychical or threshold experiences, and will perhaps aid the reader to discover what is real in psychical research and spirit-communication. A way is indicated through the psychical to the spiritual. Instances are narrated to show how splendidly our men rose above circumstances and triumphed over hardships. These evidences of spiritual faith lead in turn to a study of some of the more serious problems growing out of the war, such as the re-education of the wounded, the readjustment of life under changed conditions. The victory won by the Allies is interpreted as moral. It implied the law of all true success. It showed the union of the ideal with the concrete. It pointed the way to true unity and

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brotherhood. It was a remarkable human attainment from the point of view of organization and concentration. In participating in it our soldiers showed the way to a truer view of the spiritual life, a life that looks beyond doctrines and philosophies to conduct as the test of belief. The result for those of us who have caught the vision will be a return to faith, to moral courage, to belief in inner guidance and the realities of inner experience. It will mean firmer faith in God and in the moral integrity of the universe. It will mean a new vision beyond death, and a greater nearness to our loved ones in the spiritual world.





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# On the Threshold of the Spiritual World



## I. Life Over There

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ON A certain day in early February, in the last year of the great war, I stood upon a hill-top north of Soissons overlooking the ruins and the trenches that lay between the hill and the ruined city. Near at hand were emplacements for guns, abandoned trenches, graves where soldiers lay buried, and many other evidences of German occupation. In the plain below there were long lines of barbed wire entanglements, the near ones German, the more distant ones French, and between the trench lines that interesting region known as No Man's Land. The obstructions and trenches extended to the very yards and doors of the famous city, in all parts of which were ruined houses, shops, churches, and innumerable indications that the enemy had tried to destroy the last barrack and the last dwelling. To the north and east a line of observation balloons indicated the territory at that time occupied by friend and enemy. Nearer at hand, scout planes were out on observation duty, and combats in the air occurred from time to time. The enemy had been dispossessed of the hills and trenches in the region where I stood, after more than three years of occupancy, and he could not at that time attack Soissons save by long-range gun or airplane. But the enemy was once again to command those heights, was to take and enter Soissons, and march as far as Chateau Thierry and the Marne before the tide of battle

should turn decisively in favor of the Allies. For the moment there was a lull in the greater operations of the war, and one could look before and after, reflecting on the situation then hanging in the balance and considering the prospects of victory during the year.

A new element had been brought into the armies, presently to try its prowess in battle. In the city below me there were troops from home, the first soldiers from New England to land in France and march toward the trenches. I had seen them coming by the trainload at night, shortly before the first regiments took their places in the front lines. Soissons was their headquarters for the time being. America had established a centre of reserves there where so many events of moment in French history had occurred. What was to be the fortune of that unit of human beings from across the sea, brought from the region in America where our forefathers fought so bravely for liberty, and now about to participate in the greatest of struggles for freedom? Could the new soldier fight successfully with the old? Would it really be possible for the allied forces so to work together as to conquer the remarkably unified armies of the Hun?

There was another question uppermost that day when our strength in battle was still untried. Some of us had already been in close touch with danger. Only the night before, when engaged in my duties in the city below, an officer had suddenly entered the room to order us all to places of safety because of an airplane attack already in process. As I closed the doors and made my way alone through a narrow street, taking refuge in a deserted cellar for a time, while the bombs were falling near by, I entered into the presence, not of death, but of that solemn fear which leads us to dwell upon the eternal mysteries. The long lights were flashing across the sky to illumine the bombarding planes and aid the marksmen, while the anti-aircraft guns were doing their part on the outskirts of the city. The whole action took place with great rapidity. At any moment a bomb might fall where I stood. No one knew that I was in that cellar alone, and it might be some time before I could betake me to a place of comparative safety in an "abri." Human thought

and human feelings seemed to have little power at such a time, when in perplexity one faced the terrible realities of the gods of war. But the danger of that night had passed, and now upon the hill-top one could turn to the other question, the unescapable question of death.

What would this war bring to the mother and father across the seas when, in the ensuing weeks, the youth of our home-land should fall thick and fast along the trench-lines? Had the terror which came so close the night before a message for me, and thence for the dear ones at home? What indeed could one say to the mother whose son was the first to fall on foreign soil? Was it possible so far to disengage oneself from the environment with its perils and its ruins as to gain light on the nature of death and the life beyond?

To give answer to the questions that came before me that day on the hilltop, I must turn back a few months farther still and tell why I came to be standing there, what views concerning war had led me to enlist with the American Expeditionary Force. For this war, unlike others in history, had found place for workers in new capacities and I as a non-combatant could in a measure stand apart from the soldier, while no less intimately one with the powers that were to "carry on" to success. I was to understand in some degree at least what it meant to be "over there" during the climax of the war. I was to know something of the reality and the hell which is war. Yet my part was also to live in thought both "over there" and over here, facing the common issues and the common sorrows, endeavoring to understand the war as a spiritual struggle.

We in America must all have felt the war as a great disturbance of the things of the spirit, as we awoke on that sad August day in 1914 to the realization that it had actually begun and on a scale likely to test the resources and the faith of the world to the full. Many of us felt too that we must participate in it in some active way, even if we could not bear arms. Others of us knew when the *Lusitania* was sunk that America's entrance into the struggle was only a question of time, that is, when the country should be sufficiently unified to make efficient participation possible. The period of waiting was a heavy



strain upon our patience and our faith. We could neither hasten the day of preparedness nor silence those whose devotion to abstract peace made them incapable of understanding the real nature of war.

Looked at as a contest of physical forces, no war ever seemed more external, more dreadfully real than this one. All the resources of modern science had been brought to bear to make it a war of things against things. It had been deliberately planned by the enemy as a process of destruction of whatever was best in the invaded lands. Human considerations no longer appeared to count. The enemy had sunk so low in barbaric cruelty that the Allies were compelled to surpass him even in the use of the most fiendish devices. The time for reasoning together had ceased, and no appeal to the right, to love or sympathy, could any longer be made. The enemy could not win by fair means, out in the open. He seemed to know this from the first. Therefore he began by setting human rights aside, and resorting to every secret instrument that could be employed in the dark, every stab in the back on land or sea.

Yet this most external and physically frightful of wars was merely the last attempt of the human being to subordinate the flesh to the spirit. Accompanying the generations of development and preparation, from the days of Frederick the Great and Bismarck to the time of the armistice, there had been a campaign of education to entrench the Prussian military system on an intellectual basis. An effort was made to win by every known means of persuasion, psychology, even religion. The external event was often secondary. The air-raids were meant to terrorize. Facts were distorted to prove a point. Sheer assertion came to take the place of fact. And the armistice finally came when the morale of the Hun was broken, when there were still armies and ships that had not suffered the last extremities of defeat. We can hardly understand the external war waged by Germany unless we take into account the entire system of which it was the culminating expression.

Looked at from within, the war on the part of the Central Powers was due to proud self-assertion, organized greed. The desire to rule, and by ruling to impose a certain type of government on the world, had gained supremacy. There was remarkable unity in the forces centered in Berlin. It had the advantage of modern efficiency and organization. That unity if triumphant was to hold the whole world in subjection to its type of supposed civilization. Such self-will could not be checked or suppressed. Its true character must be seen and recognized in the clear light of day. It was destined to express itself to the utmost, to threaten for the moment all that was dear and noble in Allied lands. And over against this organized self-assertion there was a gradual marshalling of moral forces called together to meet this threatening system. On our side we counted on justice and on God. We knew that somehow we must win, that we should win, and that everything would turn upon our dependence on righteousness, on working together with this quickening faith, while at the same time pressing through to victory by force of arms.

Some were thinking out victory while others made shells, built ships, or fired guns. We in America had been thinking out victory and adding to our moral reserves long before our government declared war. Germany began war upon the rights and customs we stood for the moment she invaded Belgium. We in turn began the war in the moral domain that first hour. When we were morally ready and our leaders were sufficiently educated, we took up the belated task of armed preparation. Very slowly indeed we awoke to the situation, an assemblage of free individuals in a peace-loving land learning to break away from our isolation. But when awake at last we moved with a swiftness and an efficiency never before witnessed in the history of the world. We had been told that money would win the war, that food would win it, and so on through a long list of propositions. We all helped at last in these several fields, whether or not we crossed the seas. But in retrospect we know that it was moral power that won the war. We know that every unit in our camps, upon the seas, in every branch of the service

even though not engaged in actual fighting, helped to win this moral victory. The Allies were greatly heartened by our coming, but also by the fact that there would be tens of thousands of men in addition to follow each week till the end. The enemy weakened under the realization that the more and the more would come without ceasing. Thus unwittingly the proud enemy succumbed in the presence of his moral victor. Right was carried forward in its moral triumph over might despite the fact that the German army was deemed invincible. The Allies were able to support their morale by the force of arms, and the actual battles may still be looked at as external, as purely physical. To declare that the greater victory was moral is not in any way to make light of the material success, but to realize how far-reaching and inclusive was the moral warfare.

Some of us had already concluded that the war would come to an end when German self-assertion had done its utmost and had been overwhelmed by the moral supremacy of the Allies, and among these I enlisted. I believed that the war was permitted in the divine providence because this organized self-assertion was to be displayed in the broad light of day, to be judged and dealt with by the world according to its kind. I enlisted to be a friend to the soldier, to be with him in his hours of preparation, work and repose, as one might serve one's fellowmen in times of peace. For war being a conflict between higher and lower spiritual powers is not unlike our social life in general but rather an exaggerated and specific instance. The war indeed took tens of thousands of us over seas and into a new social situation. But it merely tested out on a larger scale the motives to which we are well accustomed. By concentrating our efforts upon it, we strengthened the opposing motive and so learned the deeper lesson. By giving ourselves to it with a will to make it a war to end war, we also permitted it to be a greater disclosure of the everlasting realities.

Whatever the motives which led us to offer our services, however, we were all in essentially the same human relationships, we who sailed down New York Bay, that winter's day of our departure for the war-zone. Each

had dear ones and a home. Each went with similar emotions. What befell any of us would in a sense be the same for all. Hence the record of what one soul felt is the heart's inner story of the typical American. However clear our vision that the war was a struggle in the realm of the spirit, we were for the time being subject to material forces and outward circumstances.

Does it seem possible thus to submit to military regulations, permitting the whole of life to circulate about the events of the day in a danger-zone, and yet keep the faith? Can one who believes in the continuity of the spiritual life enter the region where men are falling on every side and keep that sense of life's inner continuity, looking at death as a secondary incident? May one who believes in the divine guidance, in direct answer to prayer, maintain the same communion with spiritual agencies while subject to a rule that takes no account of the things of the spirit? Can one be a friend to the soldier and respond as prompted to the guidances of the spirit, although deprived of the freedom of movement and the conditions of safety which seem essential? May one keep close in heart to the American mother and the American home, alive and warm in one's sympathies, under the hardening conditions of the most terrible of wars?

Some who voyaged forth that day were to answer by giving their lives in complete self-sacrifice at the front. Others of us were to return untouched by bullet, shell or gas-attack. We were all to come in contact with the great reality, at sea, in the air, on the battlefield, in the trenches, so as to see and feel it and to come to know it with open vision, open heart, eager mind; hence to possess each in his own way the whole story, nothing concealed, nothing censored or eliminated. The men were to be summoned by it to largeness of action. Ordinary trials were to be forgotten, petty sentiments were to be overcome, the emotions brought into fuller play, the passions constructively enlisted. Hesitancy and doubt were to be put aside, also cowardice and unbelief. Home, country, life, love, God and the future life were to be seen in a new light. To some this fullness of action was to mean the expression of baser sentiments. To others it was to bring a conviction, displacing all mere

belief, *that God really exists*, that Christ is a living present Lord, like a great figure clothed in white succoring men upon the battlefield. In a thousand different ways men were to be quickened, and a thousand men from "over there" would give as many different accounts of this fullness of life. But for all we may speak of it as life at flood-tide, as "energizing to the full," a setting free of half-hidden powers and the discovery of possibilities never dreamed of before. In such an experience obstacles no longer counted. It was what was to be achieved that signified. The occasion literally made the man by giving him a sufficient incentive, something big enough, far-reaching enough. Thus whether so recognized or not the war was a fundamental test of whatever was in the man.

The tests of those who sailed that winter's day began in earnest when, half way across the ocean, our ship was brought about and turned towards America, as if we were to steam back to the home port. Some said we had lost our rudder and were helpless in the raging sea. Others believed that the steering gear was being repaired. Still others discovered in imagination a nest of submarines lurking in our path toward the east. It was a time for intenser love for those at home, a time for prayer and meditation. To one at least among us, the experience brought renewed assurance that it was right to sail, that our voyage would end in safety despite any danger that might lurk in our way. Thus indeed our experience was typical for all who hold a spiritual faith. For outwardly there were very real dangers in a voyage to Liverpool at that time. Moreover, our ship, which proceeded after half a day's delay, went into port through the danger-zone unattended, for our convoy missed us, and we passed by a region where two ships had been torpedoed the day before. But, again, we possessed the faith based on something external to give it concreteness, for our transport was a well-armed merchant liner, with a capable gun-crew, and might have fought her way into port even under attack. Or, again, we may chronicle our voyage as one in that long series in the remarkable progress of the American army to the battle-land in which scarcely a mishap occurred. Whether convoyed or

not, our transports seemed to bear a charmed life. The assurance which some of us felt that we would arrive in safety was part of that moral conviction which was to carry our armies forward to the final hour of victory.

It is commonly admitted that a man must win the victory of faith afresh on each new occasion, that fear comes up repeatedly despite one's increasing courage and skill. So it was with us as, landing at Liverpool and journeying up to London, we arrived at our destination just after the sounding of an alarm for an approaching air-raid. Here we were in touch with the war at last, in contact with the great reality which was testing a whole nation, demanding that every able-bodied man should serve. How different from the terror lurking beneath the sea! Could anything surpass in its way the frightfulness of a night like that in a great city under bombardment from an unseen enemy? What assurance could one have that a journey by coach from the railway station to the hotel could be made in safety? Indeed, what assurance could one have in a shelter, for the bombs sometimes fell into these shelters in London and killed more people there than in the street. It is not strange that many become fatalists and regard the whole situation as subject to mechanical law: one will be struck or not according to one's presence or absence from the pathway of a projectile. Yet from another point of view there are many contingencies and opportunities, and one may pause for impressions or seek the inner guidance just as one might in peace times.

Each brings into this vivid experience of war's realities whatever faith or manhood, whatever degree of composure or strength of character he bears, and he begins to realize how tremendously influential is his attitude for better or worse. Tempted for the moment to give way to fear as a child might seek protection within its mother's arms, one is minded to turn from self to consideration of the thousands of suffering and sorrowing people round about who have borne and lived through so much in more than three years of war. The Zeppelins and airplanes have come to London many a time before. Every one has had to learn calmness midst trial. Great indeed

have been the hardships. Intense and widespread they are at this moment. One seems to feel the grewsome, pernicious thing called war stealing through the sky in the darkness of the night. It is far more terrible than one had thought. No words can ever tell how terrible it seems. Yet this is only London. Across the channel is the land where the thing is being fought to an issue. Those people who calmly wait till the terror passes have been sending forth their sons to fight and to die until scarcely a household remains that has not borne a part in the great sacrifice.

Thus touched at heart in the presence of the countless thousands who know from sheer misery and suffering what the war is, one traverses the no less dangerous Channel to France, there to meet the same terrible reality stealing through the sky at night above the broad acres where ruined villages lie, and where cemeteries without number tell their sad tale. Paris at that time seemed less dark and less sad than London, and the severest test of national faith was yet to come. But how changed had the world become! Like London, the great city was a mere base of supplies, of temporary waiting or repose for masses of men in arms. At every turn one was made aware that the war was the one fact. Soldiers from all over the world were there, greeting one another in the spirit of a common cause. The one thing to feel and the one thing to think was the war. War in fact was life and life was war. Every one must do his utmost and that right quickly to bring the dread catastrophe to its end.

Then it was that we began to realize the point of view "over there." For in France as in England the war had lasted long enough to test every resource, to quicken and call into action the idle and the rich as well as those who had no choice save to fight. Each of the Allied nations in fact had been compelled to face the gravest disasters and consider the possibility of yet greater calamities to come. The great struggles in Flanders and northern France had come and been endured, the heroic defense of Verdun had brought the soul of France to its greatest height, the Italian disasters had occurred but had not been atoned for. More than a million of Britain's sons had fallen, and

more than a million of the sons of France had gone too. There were millions maimed for life, and no one knew how many more millions must still be sacrificed. The war had come so near Paris at the first battle of the Marne that more than a million people left the city. Possibly the time would come again when the inhabitants would stream forth in hasty flight toward the Mediterranean. Thus any number of considerations made one realize how ominous was the ever-blackening cloud that hung over the war countries.

We Americans had come from the land of hopes and promises, the land of vast natural resources, vigorous young enthusiasm and power. There had been abundant idealism, sure confidence that the war would soon be won when our forces should be joined with the wearied armies in Flanders and France. Ours indeed was essentially the land of idealism. But we who had just arrived from that land met a very different attitude in the stricken countries. There was patriotism still, quiet trust and resolute persistence. But mere hopes no longer counted, promises did not avail at all. What signified was what actually had been done, what could be done by the Allies in view of the threatening situation, with the well-nigh exhausted resources and the tired men under arms. America must learn the brutal facts, the dangers to be faced, the enormous obstacles to be overcome. America must awaken still more actively, and be prepared to fight to the last extremity.

No situation could have been a severer test of one's idealism. One had to grow accustomed to the society of mourners without mourning, to witness sad sights without being weighed down, to face war's worst horrors yet keep the faith. It was imperative that one should see the war as it actually was, acknowledging the dangers, the devilry and subtlety of the enemy, for every one must be on the alert to do his part in organizing for victory. The saving element for all who were inclined to grieve was the fact that the people in the war-countries had suffered hardships and pains so much greater than any of us had endured or were likely to endure.

Thus the first inspiring aspect of life "over there" was its bigness, its far-reaching and profound reality. One became so accustomed to the roar



of the guns that all ordinary noises seemed of minor consequence. One lived for months where dangers were imminent at all times, and so danger became commonplace. On every hand there was sorrow and suffering, consequently one's spirit: was lifted above it by a desire to serve. On occasion there were sights pathetic in the extreme, for example, during June and July when thousands of the civilian population were evacuating the territory north of the Marne; and so every one acquired an attitude to meet the occasion. Some cared for the newly arrived refugees at the railway stations, others for their transportation to points south, still others for their food, and thus civilians, Red Cross workers and army truck drivers worked together toward a common end; while those who did not serve in such capacities continued their work as usual, taking almost as matter of course a calamity which they could not prevent. Thus all tears were dried, yet sympathy was truly alive. Again, there was an endless stream of worn and dusty soldiers in blue or khaki coming by railway from the front "on permission," and another stream returning toward the lines. Every one was accustomed to this ceaseless coming and going. If the stream stopped for a period, everybody knew what that meant: a more serious action at the front, demanding the presence of every available man. Thus to a remarkable degree life went on in its accustomed channels as if it existed for war. Yet behind this habitual acceptance and fidelity in doing one's part there was a deep thoughtfulness concerning the outcome of it all.

The world has witnessed few instances of co-operation and brotherhood equalling in love and power that of the intimate relationship of the Allied peoples during the great war. Just as sharply differing members of a family forget their disputes and private interests when a common trouble comes, and lay aside more and more that keeps their hearts apart as the trouble increases and becomes a supreme sorrow, so the nations drew close in spirit and lived together in sympathy to face the common need. The climax came when Britain accepted unity of command under the French, sustained by America's offer to have our forces brigaded with those of the Allies. What even

the Church with all its idealism had failed to achieve, war with its necessities accomplished. And deeply impressive in this fraternal relationship was the strengthening of the bonds of friendship between France and America. One felt that every Frenchman welcomed each American in a spirit that bespoke the nation as a whole. Then when our troops had proved their bravery and skill in fighting the enemy's picked troops, each Frenchman voiced his gratitude as if that of his country, enthusiastic over the comradeship and efficiency in arms of the soldier from across the seas and the blue-coated *poilu*.

To enter the war-country then was to feel how deeply human it was, to see life anew and to see it whole. We in America had not been seeing it whole, and only the farsighted ones knew that Germany's preparation meant a terrible war. Even our prophets who had urged preparedness upon us were unaware of the barbaric frightfulness which was in store. But the men at the front knew almost from the first what was to come. And now we who were in the war-country knew in sympathy at least what the world was facing. We began to view the whole of life, God, the soul, death and the world beyond in the light of this larger outlook. Thus to meet life was to enter into the present as we had never lived it before, following each event to see its place and meaning. To enter the trenches was to take up a new mode of warfare, with new instruments, surrounded by new dangers. The enemy to be faced was the most treacherous and fertile in devices that ever met an army. Every one must be keyed up to the limit, endlessly on the alert to outwit the enemy at his own game. Yet all must acquire an attitude that could be maintained, whatever the fluctuations in the tide of battle.

To all appearances, man becomes more and more a physical being under such circumstances, less and less a soul. The enemy is wholly heartless, cruel. The fight for freedom must become relentless and heartless too, indulging in reprisals and returning even more than blow for blow. Then too as the battle becomes more intense one must give oneself more completely to it, as a mere instrument in setting destructive forces free. Hardships increase and

one must meet them by becoming more hardened. Moreover, the soldier is under orders as a mere being of flesh and blood, and must either obey or be shot. There are no longer any human alternatives. Even those who pick up the wounded must become creatures of military habit and outward circumstance. The individual seems to count for less and less, the war as a mere thing counts for more and more. Remote indeed seems the view that war is a struggle between higher and lower spiritual forces.

Yet nothing is more surprising than war. The individual counts for so much that as a volunteer in the case of a daring exploit or the taking of prisoners he may be a whole company in himself. What he does is well known, even when he operates quickly and in the darkness of No Man's Land. He is not lost amid the crowd. He rises into prominence by what he accomplishes. He does not at any point cease to be a soul and become a mere body under command, at least not on the Allies' side. The British trooper, for example, preserves both his coolness and his humor in the moment of the battle's gravest peril. The soldiers of each nation have their special human points of excellence, and however much they may depend on material aids to sustain their courage and keep their coolness they are first of all human beings. They do not make war because they like it. They do not become slaves of fierce passion, mere beasts in helmet and mask. Beasts rise before them in the enemy's ranks, to be sure, and it is some satisfaction to run a Boche through or shoot down a deceiver who throws up his hands in surrender while making ready to operate a machine-gun with his feet. There is special satisfaction in compelling the proud Prussian officer to humiliate himself before the smart young captor from America. But our men are there from nobler motives, they are determined to put an end to the epoch of frightfulness, and they never forget this high incentive, the moral reason for the war.

War meanwhile is a terrible interruption. It interferes with most everything that is best in human life. The temptations are many, and one who is inclined may drop to a lower level of moral and mental life. War is indeed hell. It gives life in all its instincts and emotions its greatest chance at men. No one

can deny the darker side who has seen war-life whole. We must admit the unpainted reality of war's total environment. Yet the marvel is witnessed in the soul's great response, the soldier's reaction against the powers of hell. Each soldier carries his home and his country in his heart. He fights in realization of a common purpose. Just because the temptations and the dangers are greater, he may win the nobler moral victory, come forth the truer man. He gives no quarter to the enemy, but he fights him with a machine, not by subordinating his heart.

Not all who march forth to battle are conscious of their true power. Not every one returning from the front is a hero. It would be easy to idealize the one who has seen service in the front-line trenches, and neglect the sailor who is strapped into his position on the destroyer or the aviator who dashes into almost incredible danger, not to mention others who give themselves unstintedly. What is safe to say is that each in his place may manifest whatever is in his soul that avails, each has before him the opportunity to attain the fulness of life. Each is free in spirit if not in any other respect. He may be saddened, hardened or weakened for life. But at any rate he has met life's larger realities as war discloses them. It is marvellous how life's horizon is extended for those who possess vision, how one is lifted out of subjectivity and sensitiveness, out of self. The most external, outwardly real of all human experiences, war has the greatest meaning for the heart.

As I stood among our troops, then, while they debarked at midnight in Soissons from freight cars in which they had traveled for hours like so many cattle huddled together, I thought of them first as intensely human, as sons who had been rudely taken from their homes across the sea. The war had done its best to disguise them by dressing them alike, concealing their brows under helmets, making them one and all weary under the heavy loads they must carry in their march towards the front. Yet one could not judge by what was to be seen. It was the hour of decisive warfare yet to come which would disclose the men behind the guns, each according to his worth, yet each as one with his brother soldiers. Nor could I tell by any appearance

on the hill-top from which I looked down on the abandoned trenches that February day what fortunes the coming battles had in store. Organized hate and greed were entrenched yonder, guarded by keen-eyed observers in the balloons and guided by the scout-planes which were out spying our movements on the Allied side. The big guns were silent for the time being. There was an ominous lull. Everybody knew that the spring drive would come but none of us knew where the enemy would strike. Just as surely as the military preparation was in progress, there were other forces gathering to meet the offensive and turn the tide of battle when the enemy should reach his limit. Thus the central consideration was spiritual.

To begin to know life "over there" was not then merely to be present where war meant that men should fight to the last extremity if need be, with their backs to the wall. It was to be a participant with the soul of a people, to be one with the Allied host in spirit in that "melting-pot of the nations." The test of Allied faith was to come when, hard upon the disaster of March, other drives should follow, when Soissons should fall to the enemy and the foe should press forward over the Marne. As a spiritual participant one was to feel the utter seriousness of the situation. Yet as one with the Allied host we were also to feel the rising moral tide, the supreme effort of the national soul. To gain this other point of view, to see the war from within was almost to feel in the sense of physical touch, with the nearness of natural sight that spiritual reality which was to save the day.

## II. Gathering Reserves

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WE THINK of war as waged by professionals. So we judge the men by their instruments, notably the gun and the sword. But the great war was so tremendous and far-reaching that it called into service men from all walks of life, including musicians, poets, men of letters, spiritual leaders. Hence the Allied armies constituted a widely representative human society. The individual bore to the war within his uniform and under his helmet all the characteristics of his civil life, and added whatever disciplines were necessary to make his service effective. He was as varied in his interests as the instruments he wielded, and not by any means to be judged by these. To know him, one needed not only to follow him from the port of debarkation to the front-line trenches, but be with him in all phases of his new social life. The period of actual fighting was often very brief. Hence the greater part of the soldier's life was spent in camps, on the march, in trains, on leave, in reserve, in country or city, and one came to know him in a hundred different ways.

Traditionally speaking, the time to be a friend to the soldier is during his hours of suffering on a hospital cot or when he breathes his last message to mother or sweetheart. But the nurse or priest may not be so close to him in spirit as other friends. His last words are not always his best. Nor is the

wounded or dying soldier the only hero. The words we dwell on with such interest, with the hope that they may disclose new glimpses of the reality beyond the grave, are taken out of a context, and the whole story would prove deeply human if we could hear it. In this war the effort was made to provide companionship for the soldier at every juncture of his life from the camp at home to the trench abroad. Thus the whole life of the soldier was regarded as part of his preparation for battle.

The saying that "war is nine-tenths waiting" was particularly true in this greatest of wars. There was waiting in line, waiting in camps, waiting aboard ship and at the front; waiting for transfers to another branch of the service, waiting for orders, for the enemy to attack, for the Allies to take the offensive, and thus on indefinitely. War is indeed a waiting game. To wait is perhaps to become restless, impatient, with a surplus of pent-up force that must sometime find expression. Idleness is a factor too, and few men know how to spend their leisure properly. Or, it may be that to wait is to acquire moral power. That this might be the result, games, sports and other forms of recreation came to play a prominent part in this war. The moving picture and the entertainment company followed the armies everywhere. A "war of luxury" it seemed to some. The men were not only well fed but encouraged to eat sweetmeats and to smoke, sometimes to the neglect of the intellectual life. Then too the men were allowed to write and receive letters freely. By means of the airplane and the wireless, the automobile and the telephone, they were in intimate relation with the war as a whole. The soldiers of each nation established a bit of their native land wherever they went, and created a local atmosphere even in the trenches. Thus each man's days of waiting depended on his response to all these varied opportunities and kinds of recreation. Some of us saw the war in company with the same division, wherever it went, from seaport to No Man's Land; while others were stationed in reserve camps behind the lines to which varied units came from the front, and from which they went to take their places in the line of action.

War-life in its varied complexity, its commingling of the races, is in a sense more intimately disclosed in this intermediate zone where there is endless passing to and fro than anywhere else. What a man has been is indeed shown forth very freely when he is gathering reserves, what he is about to become and to do is seen in large part too. For he then relieves his system of tensions, sets free his emotions and ideas, sometimes by uttering adverse criticism or an oath, again in serious conversation on topics worth while. He also, unwittingly it may be, opens his entire nature to those resources which he is to draw upon in the hour of supreme need. These hours of relaxation assume a new import for us when we gain the inner point of view. They may be in every way as fruitful as the periods of military discipline. Thus the unit which is later to perform a heroic action "on the side of the angels" is already in touch with these heavenly influences in the time of preliminary repose. If we are to think of war-life as one whole, we may well give special thought to this intermediate region with its privileges.

Again, one who remains in the same cantonment for months, while the units come and go, has opportunity to know men from many lands by their atmosphere or presence. Thus one learns the spirit of the Anglo-Saxon from different quarters of the globe, the mental type of troops from Indo-China, Madagascar, Morocco, and the local characteristics of men from departments of France. Thus in turn one comes to know the individual soldier in his participation in "the soul of a people." Mingling with the men in khaki and blue, one feels in touch with the democracy of the whole world. The units fall into two castes, to be sure, and there is a decided gap between the military aristocrat and the common private. But the friend from over the seas has the human privileges of both these groups, he comes to know all as men, men in relaxation and in waiting. Sitting at meat with them, one with them in their varied pursuits, enjoying what they enjoy when the time comes for amusement, he knows them quite apart from the great interest which has brought them together in the war-country.



Here, for example, in our cantonment behind the Champagne front, with a typical little farming village near by and barracks set apart for Allied soldiers from every land, we are near enough to Chalôns to hear the bombs falling upon the unfortunate city every pleasant night, and near enough to the front-lines so that we hear the roar of the guns when an attack occurs. The men stay with us from half a day to a week or two, always subject to the moment's orders to march, sometimes so weary that they drop down on the ground to sleep till summoned, but again fresh and vigorous, en route to the trenches. They are like children when discipline permits, wonderfully accessible and friendly. Here they may throw off the war in part, like actors behind the scenes. The soldiers group according to affinity, while the officers also seek their particular comrades, not as warriors but rather as men.

Here, for instance, is a group of French officers in command of colonial troops renowned for their bravery. They have taken part in critical struggles near Verdun. They are to be called into no less serious engagements during the coming summer. Are they conversing like professionals, as if war were the central consideration in human life? Are they exchanging views on death and the life beyond, as if strengthening their spirits to meet the next great battle? No, superficially they appear to be pleasure-lovers, unmindful as they seem at the moment of what they have lived through and of what is before them. The conversation at table turns to art, literature, philosophy, civilization, history. These men are not engaged in settling the social issues which will remain unresolved after the war, for the war, they know, is a multiform process of changes and it has not yet shown precisely what its end is to be. They do not undertake to prophesy concerning the proposed league of nations, for the victorious armies will have something to say about that, and they have not yet won the war. They are living rather in the present, the eternal present of the great ideals. There is a remarkable sense of detachment from their military duties. If interruptions come in the shape of despatches calling for immediate reply, the command is given as if military affairs were forever subordinate to those of the social hour. These captains,

majors and colonels are men first and officers in part; they have been in arms long enough to permit character to occupy the central place in all their activities. Like their nation as a whole in the presence of the great crisis, they have acquired a spirit which will hold out whatever the emergency, however long the test.

Here is a captain who is the soul of calmness and efficiency. Quick as a flash in his thought, he indulges in brilliant sallies of wit and illuminating interpretations of life. He is not consciously preparing his mind for the battle, but his conversation on each topic is an expression of that incisiveness of character which would lead him to success in any undertaking. His temperament fits him no doubt for his profession as soldier, but he is surely a good soldier because of his power to throw military matters aside and yield his mind to the growth of pure thought. Here is another officer who is mainly silent, at times solemn, almost sullen. But he is a good listener. When the hour for action arrives he will gather in his forces and show that he too is all energy and directness. Here is another whose clear ringing voice seems far too pleasant for one who must give stern commands. But he is a lieutenant in command of a machine-gun section, and one knows that in action he will be splendidly effective. The senior officer is a host in every sense of the word, at once gracious and intellectually skilful as he leads the conversation through to a vantage-point, unmarred by side-issues breaking into its logic or its spirit.

The Frenchman by reputation is an artist. He is the modern representative of the ancient Greeks, who loved both beauty and pleasure, both dramatic expression and philosophy. The French officer has achieved the art which conceals art in his particular profession. Consequently in his hour of repose he assigns even the war with its direct possibilities to its proper sphere. When the news is grave and serious one feels that his faith is undergoing a test, and at intervals his conversation is entirely given over to the danger of the hour. He is never superficial in his optimism, and he reserves all enthusiasm for the day of actual triumph. Follow him out of the social room, when the

sudden word of command comes and the entire unit must be on the march within an hour, and you will find him retaining his essentially human, even his gracious attitude, while on every hand his subordinates fulfil their functions and take their places in line with a precision that makes of war itself a fine art. One notices this same evidence of inner calmness expressing itself in a quiet, courteous voice, even when a council of war is under consideration. This attitude is surely harmonious with spiritual receptivity and fidelity to the inner guidance.

Here in particular is an officer whose attitude toward life and the war is a triumphant expression of the supremacy of character over all circumstances. He is a representative of the old French aristocracy in type, a perfect gentleman, who has seen life in all its phases, travelled extensively, lived deeply and enjoyed all the advantages of an important social position. In religion he is a very ardent Catholic and faithfully attends all services, but he esteems his faith for its universality and is wholly free from sectarian narrowness or partisanship. In philosophy he is a devotee of Plato, a profound lover of beauty quickened by righteousness. In attitude toward his fellowmen the heart takes the lead, and when occasions for discipline occur among the soldiers he is particularly tender towards the auxiliaries behind the lines who have become incapacitated by their wounds. He has reached middle life and has seen much service as a cavalry officer and in other branches of the army. He has surely been a successful warrior, for he bears two crosses on his tunic. He has been severely wounded too, and at intervals his wounds trouble him greatly. Yet despite all the richness of his varied social life and the hardships and sorrows of war he has retained the spirit, kept the vision. He would be deemed an exceptional man in any country, in peace or war. One may not judge the army man in general by one so rare and noble. But here is one at least whose life in every sense of the word points the way beyond the hard conditions which war imposes to that higher realm of the inner vision and the life after death.

What this brave strong soul discloses during the long weeks of waiting before the tide shall turn, one finds in part or in lesser degree in the common soldier, the blue-coated *poilu*. It is a simple matter to enter into friendship with these sons of France, for they heartily welcome the American, they are outspoken and expressive, even affectionate, far removed indeed in spirit from the hatred and the passion supposed to dwell within the soldier's breast. Most of them are weary with a fatigue that has known few hours of rest or real change during the long, long years of the war. Most are old before their time, and some are saddened so that scarcely shall they ever smile again. Nearly every one has been wounded and has come to regard every part of the experience in being shot down, borne off the field, transported to the hospital and cared for there as matters of necessity or habit for all. Nearly every one, too, has lost comrades of lifelong standing or is in mourning for a brother, possibly two or three brothers. Others have been taken captive by the enemy and have escaped from prison camps, enduring great hardships while making their way through the lines to No Man's Land. All these affairs have become so familiar that they have fallen into their respective places and are seldom mentioned. The *poilu* is less analytical than the officer and one must learn to read deeply in his brief sentences. But in time one realizes the meaning of his muteness and solemnity. He is not dazed or a sufferer from shell-shock, as one might be in the first year of the war. He is mute from prolonged familiarity with the War in all its phases. He has met the great reality which has overwhelmed his country with ruined homes and desolated fields so steadily and intimately that a certain large-mindedness towards it all has grown up within him. He rests and waits till the next call to duty comes. He writes a letter or two each day, turns over the pages of illustrated magazines, plays a game of checkers or chess, or reads for a time in a book that does not require much thought.

Above all the *poilu* is human, and just because he cannot voice his thought in analytical interpretations of the war he puts his heart into his expressions of friendship, the brotherly hand-clasp, the arm laid upon the

shoulder of the comrade from America, or the gesture which manifests the soul's intimacy of feeling.

Here, for example, is a group standing about their American comrade and venturing remarks on questions concerning the outcome of the war, at a time when the end seems very remote and uncertain. "When do you think the war will end?" asks one whose hopes have met many a disappointment but who is ready to entertain the opinions of his new comrade. "Will it ever end?" asks another. "It never will," confidently declares a third. "It has acquired the habit. There is always give and take, the losing of territory and the recovery of it. The war will never be settled by force of arms." We then raise the question, What will settle it? for it must come to an end, the Allies must win. Mere hope is insufficient. The *poilus* do not say this because they have lost hope and have become confirmed pessimists, but because they realize the dreadful, persistent and far-reaching reality which they have encountered and must encounter. If the force of arms shall not avail, moral conviction must find another and higher way. Let us then abide in faith, trusting in the righteousness and supremacy of our cause. Let us await the turning of the tide.

One hears little adverse criticism from such a group. All seem to know that the Allies have done nearly as well as they could, despite serious mistakes, or the unwillingness of some to learn from others. The expression of convictions and sentiments is not varied. The meaner sentiments such as anger and revenge have been overcome through the passage of time. What remains is a quiet, earnest desire to bring the great contest to its rightful close. Some say frankly that they would gladly shake hands with the German soldiers and cease fighting, for they know well that it was not the soldier who desired the war, but the Prussian officer with his pointed pistol who compels the private to fight and sustain the governmental system. The *poilus* on the whole are stoical in attitude, with the stoicism of habit and a realization that the contest must go steadily on, however many the years. Many, too, know that death is awaiting them, perhaps death will come to their whole regiment, and they

almost seem to await the tolling of the hours which shall bring them to life's last charge over the top.

Underneath this stoical, wearied exterior there is a childlikeness of heart marvelous and impressive indeed in contrast with what is commonly believed concerning the soul of the fighter. These men young and old have been reared in a country accustomed to a huge standing army and always prepared for war. Hence they have come to regard it as matter of course, not subject to dispute. They are making war solely because they must, not through a vestige of fondness for it. If any of them expresses a desire to avenge those of his family who have been wronged by the Huns, it is in a quiet way bespeaking settled calmness of conviction. Scarcely a face looks anxious or strained, for these men long ago learned how to meet whatever must be faced so that the soul should faithfully persist to the end. Many are of the peasant class. They are moderate in all their ways, courteous to one another, unfailing in their expressions of gratitude for little favors.

To be sure, there is a sense in which the soldier is not truly himself till armed and helmeted, operating the machine-gun, wielding the bayonet or hurling the hand-grenade. Then he is all action, far different in appearance from this child of nature in friendly converse or absorbed in a game of chess. But under the moment's exacting orders he is necessarily a unit in a whole, obeying, pressing forward, exerting himself to the utmost as a being of flesh and blood. To judge him either in repose or as a fighter alone would be to fall short of knowing him as a human being. In any situation and despite all appearances he is a soul rather than a body, a being for whom there would be few barriers when called closer to the spiritual world or when touched by that power which is greater than guns or bayonets, that moral power by whose aid he triumphs in a battle that seems a deadlock. Warfare is indeed like a garment put on for the occasion in which one must act a part because commanded. What signifies is the response to duty made by the soul. The soul is not necessarily injured by the deeds which the hands find to do. Heaven has never been closed from infancy to the trenches for

these sterling souls. Death for them would be merely one more step in the progress of life towards full responsiveness to heavenly realities.

To place this emphasis on the spiritual side of the *poilu's* life is not by any means to be unmindful of the patriotism which is so strong in the French soldier. The love of a particular little plot of earth is very deep within his breast. Each is a man in the ordinary sense of the word, subject to war's temptations and war's lapses. But even patriotic sentiments may wane or become matters of habit with the rest. Calm persistence in meeting the duty of the hour takes the place of other feelings. Tenacity becomes the characteristic virtue. Even the hardships of life in the trenches are matters of habit, like the mental process of leaving one's comrades in arms for ten days' leave, the adjustment to the long and vexatious delays of the journey by railway, the welcome at home, and the return journey to the front when the ten days' "permission" has passed. Each element of the soldier's life assumes its proper place. He has little to say about the details. You must be with him, live with him, not inquisitive but ever a true friend, if you would come to know by inference and sympathy his inner life.

The *poilu* does not of course analyze his soul. The language he speaks is by common consent the most highly analytical in the world, and its clarity is still apparent even when the unlettered Frenchman speaks it. A single sentence may disclose an entire attitude. But one must learn to penetrate behind those marvelously compact utterances in which the genius of the French tongue is seen at its best, one must connect the swift-flashing sentiment with the moral constancy manifest in the hours of action and repose.

The same intimate relationship between war-friends becomes evident in varied forms when there come to our barracks from time to time units from Africa, negroes from America, Italians, our famous Marines, and many another group brought into sympathetic touch with the ever-present Frenchman. The war breaks down all social barriers, differences of language, and the other devices for concealing the human soul. By a few words and gestures, by sympathetic interchange over a game, the soldier from one

land becomes friendly with the soldier from another, the child in the one plays with the child in the breast of the other. The ordinary artisan or laborer whom one might neglect to converse with at home is somehow transfigured by his uniform and his presence here in the war-country. There is a tacit recognition that we all belong together for purposes of the war. This belonging together is not merely because all must fight side by side. It is because all seem more human, more tender and childlike. All have left their homes to entrain and to fight. So all have special emotions endearing them to their homes. All have suffered hardships and may be called on to meet death. For the moment all are enjoying themselves in unmarred freedom of spirit. All too are gathering resources for the tasks yet to be achieved. Beautiful indeed and impressive, beyond mere words is the community of spirit which stirs within their hearts. It is a privilege to be with them.

At times the barracks where the men gather for a social evening are so crowded that one can with difficulty make a way through the press to see that all are welcomed. But again all the regiments are summoned to the front, the cantonment is empty save for a few auxiliaries and permanent officers. Rural stillness reigns, save for the whirring of an occasional airplane overhead, till the big guns once more begin their terrible work. It is then that we realize in very truth that "they also serve who only stand and wait." For our part is to be on duty although there be nothing to do, morally ready, alert at all moments to receive orders but no less ready to wait and wait till the soldiers come again for another breathing spell. So indeed must every one wait in his appointed position along the whole front line and in each cantonment. All are the more intimately "members one of another" because of this mutual experience. All are participants in a great organism, giving themselves over in readiness to move as one whole. No one can be impatient or downhearted if he is made aware of the deep meaning of these hours and days spent "in reserve." In the long run the army depends upon its reserves. The enemy is cowed and ready to shout "Kamerad" when



he realizes how powerful is that organism in reserve whose outposts face him along the front lines.

There was a period when the whole war-country had to wait in one of the greatest tests of faith a nation was ever called upon to meet. The disaster to the English army had occurred, during the third week in March, when the Channel ports were threatened. In subsequent drives the enemy had also been successful. Soissons had fallen, and the Huns had crossed the Marne in their progress toward Paris. The long-range gun was trained upon the French capital, and the air-raids were becoming more numerous. The succession of disasters had led the Allies to take every precaution, it is true, and under the leadership of Marshal Foch there was unity of command. No one questioned the wisdom of giving the command to this great general. Yet on the face of things little was doing. In Paris there was tense anxiety. Every precaution was made to defend the city to the utmost. Tens of thousands of people had already left, in anticipation of a siege. Deserted streets told their tale of the nation's fate hanging in the balance. While the men in the camps and trenches served by watching and waiting, they of Paris served by their fidelity and composure, their faith in the general into whose masterful hands all the issues of the war had been placed, sustained too by "the first of *poilus*," Clemenceau. American assistance had been promised to the full, and the great tide of ships across the sea was reaching its flood. There were disciplined soldiers from our homeland already holding front lines and as willing as the sons of France, England, Belgium and Italy to fight to the last. But as yet the new unity within the armies had not shown its power. Everything waited and everybody had to wait. The enemy was undoubtedly making ready for another fierce drive, and a successful attack at a weaker point might put him in possession of so large a portion of France that years would be required to dispossess him.

It was then that one felt everywhere the triumphant presence of the nation's soul. That soul had already suffered beyond the supposed limits of human endurance. Its tribulations had not come in sudden and concentrated

form as in Belgium and other countries, but had been widely distributed. Tens of thousands of refugees were even then streaming south from the Marne country, and people were leaving their homes who had not stirred during the great battle of 1914. What more could be put upon the stricken land, what more could be endured? How was it possible any longer to possess the national soul in patience?

Yet those of us who visited Paris during the anxious weeks, or witnessed the thronging of refugees through Troyes and other cities, know in retrospect at least that the period of waiting was no less truly a time for the gathering of higher reserves. There was something magnificent in the faith felt throughout France and the Allied world in the general whose campaign was presently to become one of unprecedented triumph. The faith was centered where it could be greatest in its consequences. For the time being and before its power was proved it was greater in its constancy than any of us could know. It might have been summarized in a sentence like the famous "They shall not pass." But this time it was rather to become known in deeds, in the master-strokes that turned the tide on the fifteenth of July, in the placing of vigorous young fighters from America at the most dangerous point, over against the veteran "shock troops" from Prussia, in a dozen offensives in the weeks following, each expressing the supremacy of the human spirit over the powers of battle. Such a marshalling of forces assures us beyond all doubt that the triumph begins in the moral realm of invisible resources.

The soldier in repose or at play in the barracks behind the lines thus appears in a new light in our eyes, for he it is who above all others is making ready to sustain the campaign of his generals. He is even more truly alive to higher forces than when "on leave" at home or in the city. For life is simpler then, more spontaneous, with scarcely a distraction. To be with the soldier while he thus unwittingly prepares his spirit is indeed to know him as essentially human. We may well trust our impressions when, with regiment after regiment during the period of repose, we learn to detect the moral and spiritual differences by the presences we feel.

Here, for example, is a unit in our cantonment for four days' rest between a period of marching and a railway journey to another part of the lines. The men come in large groups to the barracks and we entertain them by the aid of the phonograph. An hour passes in this way, during which we have played popular music and national airs. Then a soldier comes forward to ask for the Ave Maria and while this record is on the machine a rare stillness pervades the barrack. The music somehow befits the occasion, the men's hearts are touched as by a beatific moment in the life of the soul, and we feel that it is a great moment in our mutual war-life. We are made aware of an unusual presence with these men, although there appears to be no outward sign to distinguish them from tens of thousands of men in blue, unless it be the fact that each one bears the highest decoration ever given to a regiment, the cord over the shoulder that stands for special acts of bravery.

During the days that follow we learn the reason for this unusual presence, as we make acquaintance with the men as distinct individuals and they begin to talk freely. These are the men who accomplished the most difficult and dangerous task before Verdun in that crucial hour when it was said of the Huns, "They shall not pass." These indeed are highly selected among all the millions in France. As the months pass and we look back in memory to that time of the Ave Maria, we realize that few soldiers from any land brought a presence into our barracks equal to these. The unit as a whole was decorated for its bravery when France was saved at Verdun, and each man received the special decoration too. By some good fortune the division to which this regiment belongs paused among us for the only days of repose prior to a journey to Flanders. Later we learn that this was the regiment which more than any other fought to save the day when the Channel ports were so seriously threatened. In our cantonment they were gathering the moral impetus which was to carry them forward to victory in an hour no less momentous than that before Verdun. There was a remarkable correspondence between the spirit we felt in their presence and their demeanor. They were particularly neat in appearance, and when they departed in the stillness of the midnight hour

they left our cantonment in better order than many another unit. They were the best disciplined too, and each day while they were with us we felt the precision of their movements under arms. It was not by chance that these were the men called from their usual positions to stem the almost fatal tide before the hill in Flanders. They were chosen because they were soldiers of the moral ideal and of the cross.

Here then is a chapter in the preparatory life of the soldier which admits us into the very heart of war-life. It might be paralleled by other and similar chapters in the lives of the English soldier, the Belgian, or the American. The gathering of moral reserves is, if you please, only an incident in the fighter's life. All other forces must be gathered and held in reserve too. There must be guns and bayonets, gas-attacks and an organized skill which shall baffle the subtlest wiles of the enemy. There must be stern discipline, hardship, privation. But the moral element remains central. To have these deeply impressive hours with the soldier "in repose" is to realize why he is more open at times than the ordinary man in civil life to the things of the spirit. The almost overwhelming danger in the world appears to awaken a receptivity equal to the occasion. There is already in process in the world of the spirit a massing of forces presently to be made visible through the external unifying of the armies. It is a case of cause and effect, far-reaching within and without. What is true of the selected regiment called to face the enemy in the direst hour is true in a measure of all, as each unit finds its place in the line.

While the officers gather for their social hour around the dinner-table and the men assemble to play games, write, read, and listen to inspiring music, the general in command of the sector "walks alone" to consider his plans or confers with his colleagues to gain all the light possible, and the commander-in-chief kneels in silent prayer in a little country church on his way to the front, there to become open anew to those powers which are to aid in his more than human task. The younger soldier or officer may not be aware of the value of these days of waiting and good fellowship in repose. The newcomer is all for war and apt to scorn any subject or experience

which does not obviously point to the task at hand. But the veteran has already tried every known physical means and has found its shortcomings. The colonel may be as ready as the questioning *poilu* to assure you that the war will never be settled by force of arms. The commanding general is impressive just because he has seen the futility of mere arms and has acquired that depth of conviction which banishes all anxiety even in the most critical hour. There is deep significance in the fact that the commander of all the Allied armies is one who walks in solitude for a period or bows his head in prayer. These great souls upon whom so much depends show us by their conduct that they feel little power in and of themselves, while at the same time they are agents of the most effective power ever wielded by man. Each one has been trained in military science. Each has the well-thought-out plan of action before him which is to guide all his operations. But each has that something more which distinguishes him from a mere agent in a great military system. It is that "something more" which constitutes his true power, which puts him in possession of moral reserves and enables him to set the example to all. Thus the general can say confidently, "They shall not pass," "We will have them," and when Marshal Foch is interviewed with reference to a recent victory he need only respond, "We shall continue." A whole philosophy is compacted into such an utterance.

### III. The Turning of the Tide

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**T**O REALIZE the significance of those decisive days when the Allied armies drove the foe back across the Marne, saved Paris, and prepared the way for the offensives which continued without a break until the armistice was signed, we need to look back to the weeks of preparation prior to July 14. It is well, in fact, to regard those days as mere war-days in the world of guns and bayonets before we consider their place in the inner life. Otherwise we are likely to neglect the great reality which the men knew who lived within the scene of action.

We ordinarily judge a war by its detached events, the daring exploit performed by one of "our boys," the prompt action of an officer the heroic achievement of the regiment that "saved the day." The news which passes the censor, the description which the war-correspondent gives, and the interpretations made by the historian are doubtless true. But the spectacular event is only one in a series, like a link in a chain equally strong throughout. The decisive action is indeed a culmination. It becomes truly decisive in case it be followed up by other deeds no less hardy. Thus a battle is in part won by the reserves, ready to support the men who have broken the enemy's lines. The strength of the enemy is reckoned in terms of his reserves, not his shock troops alone. The enemy is estimated not merely by his victorious

offensives but by every movement in the lulls between. The Allied army which is presently to be successful on one part of the front may be wholly dependent on the prior successes of other armies which have merely "held the line." The "quiet sector," as newspapers term it, may be far from quiet in actuality. The reader of the press at home may never hear of these other achievements not ordinarily celebrated, and so may always be in danger of judging by the spectacular engagement or detached event.

The war in the zone of operations is one whole. Weeks before the decisive event, the soldier as well as the general knows that it is in process. He knows too that the enemy is making ready and may at any time forestall the cherished plan. He does not personally observe a large section of the front, but near at hand are men in close touch with the whole. Thus he comes in a measure to know the campaign as a unity even before the world beyond the war-zone is aware that the offensive has begun.

Thus it was that in our cantonment during the decisive weeks before the fourteenth of July we knew of the preparations which were to turn the tide on the Champagne front, so that the days of Chateau-Thierry might follow. This was the period when the nation was undergoing its supreme test of faith, the interval of apparent idleness and mere waiting. The Huns meanwhile were stealthily making ready for the drive which was to be the climax, the "peace offensive" which was to settle the war. Their preparations were on the same thorough basis that had made possible the disastrous drives of the early spring. They were collecting supplies, gathering resources, concentrating their shock troops, preparing for gas-attacks and for an invincible drive with their tanks. Had their plans succeeded, the Huns would have advanced fifteen kilometers the first day, they would presently have taken the very important city of Chalons, they would have isolated Verdun, and made ready for the final onslaught on Paris. In the meantime the long-range gun was giving a dramatic announcement of what was to follow, and on every pleasant night the bombardment planes were doing their part toward the

destruction of towns and cities which the enemy hoped to take later by assault.

What was occurring behind the scenes where the French and American armies were awaiting the momentous day? A no less skilful massing of forces of every kind was under way, but with such secrecy that the enemy did not know what was in store. With uncommon alertness and vigilance the Allied general kept the enemy from stealing across No Man's Land at night to take prisoners and learn his plans. But the same vigilance was not exercised by the Hun and our general had accurate acquaintance with the enemy's operations. The French scout-planes accomplished their mission by flying over the German lines, but not an enemy scout was permitted to spy out the doings of the Allies. Night after night the reserves passed through our region to find places of concealment in the pine woods till the appointed day should come. Night after night the heavy pieces were hauled through to their positions behind the lines where they were to support the cannon already in place. As the time for the great battle drew near, whole divisions were moved with great rapidity by auto-trucks capable of holding not only the men with all their equipment, their ammunition and field kitchens, but even their horses and smaller cannon. Some of these went to our front. Others, coming from Verdun, went further along the line towards Chateau-Thierry. Apparently unending streams of these camions passed our way. We would hear them rolling along "The Route National" for hours and hours at night. Meanwhile the civilian population had been moved further back, barracks and canteens in exposed regions were evacuated. A great stretch of territory was made ready for any event that might occur. Our cantonment was where no retirement would be necessary if the enemy should make no headway. But camions were in waiting for us, and every one awaited the word of command.

A French official account of the campaign confirms the above in a statement that while the enemy was ignorant of the movements of troops on the Allied side, "the French commander, informed in precise detail, had



taken every possible precaution to reduce the German hopes to nought. He knew the disposition of the armies which were to make the attack, even the day when the general assault was to be launched. He knew in the morning of the fourteenth day of July that the armies of Von Below and Von Einem had made ready their food-supplies, and that in consequence the attack would take place within twenty-four hours or at most within forty-eight hours." We shall see in a moment that the contact was even more closely timed than that.

It is with special interest that we note what is said of General Gouraud, in command at this point where the attack was to begin. He is one who, in the words of a military authority, "exercises over his officers and soldiers a sort of religious ascendancy. From the moment he appears a silence like that of the church reigns around him." From the outset of the war he had fought without any other respite than that which his wounds gave him. Twice when leading a division he had been severely wounded, in the Boulant Wood and in the Dardanelles. Now he was entrusted with one of the greatest operations of the war, in command of the fourth French army and the American forces brigaded with the French. If he should succeed, the long series of offensives would begin. To succeed would be to hold the lines unflinchingly, whatever the strength of the enemy's onslaught. For the work of dispossessing the enemy from the front so long held and so thoroughly entrenched, equipped and supported by barbed-wire entanglements, was to be more gradual and was to begin at a later time.

The men knew well that their general had taken every precaution. They felt the power of his utterance to sustain the morale of an entire army when, in those telling words addressed to both the French and Americans along the Champagne front, he said, "We may be attacked from one moment to another. No one will look back, no one will retreat a step." To realize the full force of this utterance is to bear in mind the whole critical situation as outlined above, remembering the enemy's successful drives and the dangers that threatened Paris. The German armies had been assured that this should be the final offensive. The men were encouraged by their previous successes.

They had not then learned the truth concerning the power or the number of Americans in France. They had been heartened by false reports concerning the submarine warfare and the Austrian offensive in Italy. They knew that the prospect was dark for the Allies. Therefore they had every reason to enlist their energies to the full. On the other hand, it was given to General Gouraud on the side of the Allies to encourage his men to master one of the most seriously threatening situations of the year. The enemy had reason for his assurance. The Allied commander must show a stronger reason, creating a victory where disaster seemed imminent. If his forces should hold with the tenacity of the famous "They shall not pass," it would then be possible to do more than merely hold the lines, the foe could be hurled across the Marne and once more driven back to the Aisne. If his forces should yield, the terrific assault would drive everything before it towards Chalons, and disaster would follow disaster. Well may we say that a higher balance of power was sustained by the great Allied leader, for apparently the opposing armies were equally matched, possibly the enemy could not be stayed by physical might alone.

All day during the fourteenth the men and officers of a division in reserve came and went in our barracks, not to celebrate the national holiday, for celebrations were not yet in order, but to rest for a brief period before the culminating hour. The atmosphere was not tense or strained that day. There were no anxious faces. The superior officers spoke with their usual calmness and courtesy. The general in command of the division came to the barrack for a cup of hot chocolate, with the *poilus*. We still counted as souls, not as units to be commanded. Yet each bore a consciousness that momentous issues were in the balance, and no one knew precisely when the onslaught would begin.

When the evening came on with its quietude, and night with its greater stillness, unbroken as on so many other nights by the despicable whirr of enemy planes, it seemed possible that the holiday might pass without the attack. But the Allies had learned meanwhile that the offensive was scheduled

to begin at ten minutes before midnight. Accordingly, and doubtless to the utter amazement of the enemy, the Allies began a forestalling barrage of enormous extent five minutes before the enemy was to begin. The answering gun-fire came from the Huns, and the battle raged for hours, not with the success on either side that wins territory, although the Allies were compelled to give way to some extent; but with the struggle of a mighty deadlock, force staying force and holding its ground.

Words can give little idea of the vastness or the terror of that huge volume of sound, beginning in its fulness all along the line to the right towards Perthes and Massiges, in front of us near Suippes, and far off by Rheims in the direction of the Marne. A great wall of flamings and flashings from the discharging cannon and bursting shells extended along the horizon. The roar was comparable to that of the loudest thunder, but from the moment of its beginning there was no lull, all intervals were lost. Hence one could not distinguish the usual sounds, the discharge of the guns, the whizzing of the shells or their subsequent explosion. There were no pauses and no rhythms, simply one roaring volume of such magnitude that the observer wondered that any human being could live in close proximity to the cannon. This unbroken roar continued without cessation for nine long hours. Then the battle slackened in part, and after twelve hours one could distinguish intervals and varied sounds.

What did it mean to observe this threatening wall of fire along the horizon, to listen to this overwhelming sound, and feel the tremblings as if from some far-reaching earthquake? One could in imagination supply whatever could not be seen or felt. One knew that on the enemy's side a concourse of tanks would press their way toward us, and one could picture those strange machines making their way out of their lairs just before dawn. One could see the flame-throwers and the assembling air-planes, everything, in fact, that makes an attack so terrible. If the enemy should succeed it would be only a few hours before his shells would be bursting near by, and we would be compelled to retreat from our vantage-point. But if one may trust the

imagination to construct what one cannot see, why may not one also take account of the moral powers united on our side to return even more than blow for blow?

However this may seem, the actual experience of the observer was not one of anxiety or fear, although abounding in awe and wonderment over the vast forces concentrated and set free by man. It was a time for yet greater faith in the Allied plan of attack, in the commander-in-chief and the general to whose skill this initial engagement was entrusted. One somehow realized that the spiritual tide had turned, that it was now decreed, "Thus far and no farther." Granted the spiritual interpretation of war, that war is permitted in the divine providence to the point where the motives and schemes of the enemy shall be exposed to the full, that these may be condemned, one might well expect to feel such a conviction and be aware of the turning of the tide. If one can keep the faith while standing on a threatened hill-top in the darkness of the night, with that great flaming and roaring to contemplate, then indeed more and more evidences will be added that the spiritual interpretation is true.

Certain it is that the great battle brought to the onlooker an exceptional sense of security, despite all that was so threatening and so terrible. Was it mere reliance on the Allied armies, because of what one knew concerning the thoroughness of their preparation, and on account of the new support being given by sterling young fighters from America? Some might say so. Thus in the actual zone of attack each man might stimulate his courage. Or was it knowledge of the Allied morale, and the affirmation that righteousness must triumph? The soldier would sustain his faith in that way too. Our faith appears to be a commingling. We construct it in part on what we know. We gather impetus from what our comrades say. We are inspired by the authoritative utterance of the commander who has no place in his vocabulary for such a word as "fail." But we also have our intuitions and premonitions. Victory must come, we say. Victory is here, we affirm. And we feel ourselves

participants in that unifying of forces which is accompanied by a vision of actual victory even before the outward event occurs.

However much emphasis we may place upon the intuition that the tide is turning, it is matter of history that General Gouraud's armies won the kind of victory demanded at that time. Seven furious attacks of the sort that had swept the Huns towards the Channel ports in March, and on towards the Marne and Paris in the later drive, were hurled at the Allied armies, and those armies held like a wall. The fifteen divisions that led the enemy's attacks, supported by the ten that were behind them ready to complete the planned-for victory, were driven forward in vain. Only a narrow strip of territory was surrendered, and this was a minor matter. The battle had been won. The tide of fighting had turned. There was to be no "peace offensive." The Allies had outwitted the enemy and taken the initiative.

What followed on the sixteenth and seventeenth is better known. The peace-offensive of the enemy having failed, it was possible to begin at another point before the enemy should gather breath, drive the Hun across the Marne, retake Chateau-Thierry, add one victory to another till the series should include the vast offensives of the British army and give opportunity once more for the noble army of the Belgians to play a part in driving the Germans from the land. Every sector of the Allied line was exceedingly strong, every army was ready to take the offensive. The whole campaign was executed in conformity to plan, was a unity according to the military principle of which Marshal Foch is master. German strategy had accomplished its utmost and its final plan had failed. German morale was on the wane. Allied strategy and Allied morale were in the ascendant. The Huns were also beginning to learn the truth concerning the young warriors from America, and the enormous stream of reserves sweeping across the sea. Truth is a power as well as guns. The turning of the tide affected every element in the enemy's armies, his morale, his belief, his attitude as a fighter, his power to wage the war.

Hard upon the series of victories which began July 15 and swept northward to Belgium and the sea, there followed another offensive on our front. We heard the first guns at half-past two on the morning of September 26. The task this time was not to keep the enemy from making an advance, but to break through his front line, drive him back over his trenches, and clear the way by aid of the little tanks where miles of barbed-wire entanglements had been prepared during the years of Hunnish occupation. This, too, was unlike a spectacular victory. It was not possible to report a sweeping advance in a single day, as in the case of offensives won by the British farther north. It was a question of steady advance day after day, the taking of positions deemed impregnable and the overcoming of obstructions steadily brought together since 1914. During the first week, the great guns seemed almost as near us as at the beginning of the attack. Week by week their roaring became more distant. Fainter and fainter became the answering gun-fire of the enemy. After a time our barracks no longer trembled with the vibrations, and intervals of silence came. Then on a morning never to be forgotten in all history we heard the very distant gun-fire of the last American attack, an attack that swept the Huns back even up to the eleventh hour, when hostilities officially came to an end.

Varied opinions have been circulated concerning the wisdom of the Allies in granting the armistice. Many in America hold that the army should have been carried into Germany without respite, that German towns and cities ought to have been destroyed as the Huns had laid Belgium and northern France in ruins. Our soldiers had crossed the seas to march into Berlin and they wanted to attain their goal. Moreover, the Germans did not appear humiliated, they were unwilling to acknowledge defeat. In fact, returning troops were welcomed in Berlin as victors, as men who had suffered a reverse through some mistake, not as fighters who had been overcome by superior forces. "The war should have been pursued with relentless fury till the enemy could no longer raise his head," so some assured us. Not even the humiliating surrender of the German fleet was deemed a real surrender,

nor the handing over of war-material, locomotives, airplanes, motor-trucks, cannon, submarines and other engines of war.

To entertain such views is to forget, however, that the war was not a mere wielding of material weapons, not an occasion for the offering of men as cannon-fodder without limit. The Allied countries had already given so much and suffered so much that it was necessary for the war to end the first day it could end in security. Then, too, there were reasons why the Germans were willing to accept even the severest of conditions and bring hostilities to a close. They were keenly enough aware that if the war continued longer their armies would be annihilated and their cities destroyed. They were already defeated and they knew that matters would immediately become worse and worse. Marshal Foch has since stated that on November 14 an attack of far greater magnitude was to have been launched, one which would have utterly destroyed German military power within a month. The German towns and cities were to be bombed by hundreds of planes at a time, and the destruction wrought would have been terrible. Thousands more in the Allied armies would have fallen, for no offensive can be carried on without great sacrifices.

Thus to have pushed the war at that time would have meant sheer persistence in the most horrible of its phases. It would have meant the slaying of the enemy without mercy after he was beaten. For beaten he was from every point of view, despite his unwillingness to acknowledge it. The Allies excelled in fighting units actually in action on the front, and great numbers of men were coming from the ports of debarkation, and across the seas every month. They excelled in ammunition, and France alone is said to have had enough shells in reserve for another great war. They excelled in cannon, and America was ready to begin a greater part in maintaining the supply. They excelled, too, in attacks of every kind, including those in which the enemy had victoriously taken the lead. The war over the submarines had been won by the British and American fleets, and Germany did not dare to venture out with her battleships. The aviators of England alone were

able to maintain the supremacy of the air, the French were close seconds, and our men were preparing to participate in greater numbers when their long-delayed machines should at last arrive. Finally, the great leader whose campaign had been waged without a single reverse since July 14 knew the moment when he should grant the armistice if humanitarian considerations were to count at all.

To insist that the war should have continued would also be to neglect the spiritual principles involved. Plainly, the divine providence does not check even the greatest and most terrible of wars, with all the horrors they involve, while the evils to be brought to light and condemned are still unseen. The spiritual tide is not turned while the enemy is still in vigorous self-assertion and apparently successful, but only at the close when the power of the enemy is so reduced that he is in danger of annihilation. War does not exist in the wisdom of things for the sake of mere annihilation or slaughter. If the victorious army were allowed to slay the enemy after he is down, exacting vengeance as if the august power of the moral law were solely in human hands, then there would be violent reaction upon the victor's head. War as waged by lovers of justice does not exist for the mere purpose of destruction, but to disclose on the broad theater of its activities whatever motives have been concealed, whatever devilry must be brought to light. The war is ended when the enemy's self-assertion has spent itself in strategy and the conqueror has gained moral and military supremacy. The great war was not waged primarily against a people, as barbarous as those people were, but against a system imposing itself with iron hand even upon its own people and on all subject peoples. It was confessedly a war for the procuring of justice. It must then commit no injustice. It must not press its advantages, beyond the moral victory.

It is also important to note that even if the war had been pressed through to Berlin that would not have meant the complete intellectual surrender of the people. As one of the French generals has since remarked, "it was impossible to change the beliefs and habits of thought of seventy millions



of people over night. No one would think that the teachings of generations would change just because the Kaiser had gone to Holland." The advisers of the newly formed German government were for the most part those who had guided the war. They were largely unrepentant, and their repentance could not have been forced. Hence the great social and moral issues were left over, just as in Russia there was a menacing struggle between the classes which the war had intensified, not settled.

The turning of the tide and the coming of the armistice therefore meant the cessation of external hostilities, the shifting of the scene of action from a combat with arms to the arena of a league of nations called into being for the execution of justice. The change showed the world convincingly that far more was involved in the war than any of us know, and that the external warfare was needed to arouse us from the sleep of materialism, luxury, and allegiance to mere theory. It showed that the real war was between two groups of forces, the one destructive, the other constructive. It made plain how powerful had become the mere love of material wealth, the desire to rule on the part of the nation wielding the destructive forces. We had supposed that the burning of the factories, the pilfering of machine-shops, the ruining of industries and the filling up of coal mines was only a part of the campaign of military frightfulness. We thought, too, that the bombardment of cathedrals was merely out of spite, in sheer exasperation. But the destruction wrought by the retreating enemy after the tide began decisively to turn showed us that this, too, was deliberately part of a war against the industries and the arts of Belgium and France, that those countries might be so crippled as to be unable to regain the ascendancy. It was literally a war of "Kultur," therefore, no mere war of a military system. It was meant to be destructive down to the foundation. It was an expression of the worst destructive agencies of human nature.

What took place then on that national holiday, as dear to the Frenchman as our own Fourth of July to us, when the Germans met the turning tide, was the launching of a very different kind of offensive. It was necessary for that

attack in behalf of the constructive forces of the world to begin with cannon, with arms and tanks, and to sweep forward to victory by sheer physical might. But the ascendancy once overwhelmingly gained, the external hostilities ceased and left us with a vision of power meeting power. We could then give our attention to the motives actuating the Allies. We were able to look back into our past to see what forces had been gathering to offset those put in motion by the enemy.

The war did not then cease with the turning of the tide. The armistice was a process of simplification. We could not think to advantage and we could not understand while the battles were being waged. It was as nearly overwhelming in its greatness as the vast volume of sound in which all intervals were lost heard by those of us who were in the war-zone on that fateful night. Had that external warfare been the real conflict we might indeed have given up in despair, convinced at last that this is a mechanical universe. Now we know for a truth that it is moral. We see beyond all doubt that there is a balance in things, a center that cannot be disturbed. The right began to triumph with that victory as never before.

We see too why some of our fighters have exclaimed with such confidence that God really exists. Not many had the vision amidst the actual battle at its worst. They were too dazed by the mere shock and strain and roar. But time has brought its enlightening contrasts. We have at last caught glimpses of the inner point of view. If we enter deeply into it there need be no more wars. For we shall think down to causes. We shall begin to reckon with that hidden warfare going on within the lives of men. There will be another turning of the tide. There will be quickenings of the heart. More of us will have the new vision of death. More will begin to think of the spiritual world and to draw upon its resources. More will realize that the war has ushered in a new age.



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## IV. The Moral Victory

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**T**HE WAR came upon us unexpectedly and so we are apt to think of it as a mere war of aggression waged by the Central Powers. Looking back into Germany's history we find that there had been a gathering of forces in preparation ever since the days of Bismarck, in fact that Prussian militarism was far older than that and had been long in process of evolution. We find reasons in support of Germany's theory of "Kultur" in the ideas advocated by the philosophers as far back as Kant. For the first time we have come to understand the German governmental system, to see how and why it has so long subordinated the individual to the state, regulated education, and shaped every activity, even the religious life, towards a single end. We are now aware also of the real significance of German efficiency, we see with what success every agency, including all the resources of the state had been brought into play. Most of all we see how great was Germany's advantage in the war from the start through her possession of a highly organized system centralized in Berlin, a unity of operations which had nothing to compare with it among the Allied nations until 1918.

In retrospect we now see that precisely because of this long preparation for a war against civilization there was another assembling of forces making ready to meet it. There were neglected prophets both in England and the

United States, notably Lord Roberts and Theodore Roosevelt, who foresaw the conflict as inevitable and did their utmost to arouse their fellowmen. We now say with confidence that had we listened to our prophets, had we been prepared there never would have been a world-war; for we realize at last the moral value of thorough preparedness. We also see the power of our democratic ideals, the strength in reserve of our governmental system. Our safety while we were in process of waking up was due to the preparedness of the British fleet. Slowly the threatening dangers of the underseas warfare brought us to our senses. We understood at last that our turn would come next. We saw that our strength would lie in union with the nations that were friendly. Thus, too, the impending disaster after the German offensive of March 21, 1918, brought England to the acceptance of unified military command under the French. We now know that the remarkable unity which brought us all to success in the autumn had been very long in process of evolution.

In England, France and the United States, for example, three great men of the hour rose into commanding supremacy, agreeing to the unity of military leadership under Marshal Foch. To realize the force of this moral unity we need to look back into the biographies of these statesmen and this general, seeing how each in a way came to represent his nation. Military preparedness had indeed lagged behind. Nothing short of the impending disaster awoke the nations into fulness of activity. We in America awoke almost at the eleventh hour. Even then we neglected some of our ablest leaders and waited to educate new ones. But the significant consideration is that our remarkable efficiency and despatch at the last was an expression of our moral preparedness. The unity to which we were contributing was of a different type from that of Germany. It did not begin with the idea of a great standing army as advocated by Frederick the Great, or a dream of empire wrought into being by the iron hand of a Bismarck. It started within and worked out. Its moral evolution long antedated the military supremacy in

1918. The military unity of our enemy found us indeed unprepared in guns and ships, but not in men, not in moral and spiritual potentialities.

For consider the response in each case to the aggressiveness of the Hun. In nearly every branch of the warfare the enemy took the lead, with a force that seemed invincible. The enemy's armies were made up of trained veterans, while the Allies had to wait for "Kitchener's first hundred thousand," then for Britain's million and for the full tide of reinforcements from America. The enemy's submarines came dangerously near winning the war at sea, but were finally overcome by skill acquired for the emergency and by inventions unknown before. The enemy took the lead in new and more terrible means of attack upon the battlefield, with liquid fire and gas-attack. Accordingly, it was necessary for the Allies to produce their gas-masks and learn to employ the gas-attack with more deadly effect than the Huns. When the armistice was signed we were making ready to annihilate the enemy, if need be, by the gas-attack alone. The enemy brought forward his Zeppelins, increased the size and speed of his airplanes, and used all these in increasingly terrible attacks, even upon civilians and the great cities, as if daring his opponents to indulge in reprisals. But we even adopted the policy of reprisals and made ready to exact the utmost price from Germany, should it be necessary to destroy her cities. At the time the armistice was signed Germany was wholly unable to keep up with the airplane production on the part of her opponents. Germany possessed the most elaborate, far-reaching and subtle spy system in the world. But her agents were run to earth and the whole scheme exposed. England took the initiative, to be sure, in the invention and use of those engines of war known as "tanks." But when Germany adopted the new cars her tanks were beaten at their own tactics. Thus in every field the genius of the Allies was called into activity to meet the evil genius of the enemy and surpass it. All this productivity expressed the moral reserve-powers on our side; for we used these means of making war in accordance with our motives, and refrained as long as possible from reprisals. The enemy challenged us with unity of organization centered in Berlin. We met

the challenge by attaining unity of Allied command. This brought the moral power to the climax, and the war to a point where it could be stopped as an external struggle. The Central Powers possessed unity of command through the use of destructive forces. The Allies attained unity through military and moral supremacy combined.

Well may we consider what the Allies had in reserve, what a height they had attained when sheer necessity called them into the fulness of life. The termination of the war may be regarded as in every respect a proof of the nobler motives with which the Allied nations entered into it. To be sure, each nation had selfish interests. It may be said, for instance, that America joined the Allies at last because we were threatened, because our turn would have come next had Germany won the war. But whatever our personal interests, we also entered the war without any desire to gain territory, we entered it for right's sake, in behalf of the democracy of the world. The armistice found us ready to take the lead in organizing a league of nations on the basis of justice. England entered the war not merely in self-protection but to save Belgium and fight for France, and England made the greatest sacrifice to achieve these high ends. At the serious moment in the spring of 1918 we offered our forces for brigading with the Allied armies, and thereby proved our willingness to learn. England accepted unity of command under Marshal Foch, and the Allied armies gave the best exemplification in history of the power of co-operation.

There was a sufficient reason, then, for the turning of the tide and the transfer of the warfare out of the external world. It is important to note the more impressive facts regarding the war at sea, in the air, and on land, before we consider the moral victory by itself. Thus we remind ourselves once more of the remarkable work achieved by the British fleet, later by the British and American fleets in convoying transports despite all dangers, in trapping or destroying submarines, and in ceaseless vigilance lest the German fleet escape. We note again the climax attained in aviation in the autumn of the armistice. Looking at the question of unified military command in detail,

we realize that it was far more than a match for the strategy of the Central Powers. Marshal Foch brought to his task, the greatest opportunity ever offered a general in the history of the world, the ripened wisdom of a long military career, with a plan for taking the offensive which had withstood the test of time. It was he in part, perhaps in large part, who won the first battle of the Marne, in that threatening hour when, menaced on two sides and apparently unsuccessful, he sent back the famous report to Marshal Joffre ending with the words, "But I am attacking." There was no question of his eligibility. Well might one say that he was being prepared through his long career for the unsurpassed opportunities of 1918. The same might be said in lesser degree of the English, French, American and Italian generals, each of whom fulfilled his part in the triumphing whole. It was indeed a chain of victories with each link equally strong. And when hostilities ended there were advantages enough to make possible the far more extensive attack planned for November 14.

Looking still more closely at the inner environment of that unity of command, we find peculiar fitness in the fact that the leadership was in the hands of the French. That leadership needed all the support it received, notably the supremacy of the Anglo-Saxons on the seas and in the air, the splendidly confident troops from America, the right ones to use at the right moment when Paris was in greatest danger. The Allied soldiers were weary. They needed the vigorous young element brought in from across the seas. But in a special sense it may be said that the French were spiritually most open to those constructive forces which were to say to the Huns, "Thus far and no farther." It would perhaps be difficult to demonstrate this statement. But we are never wholly able to assign all the reasons when it is a question of spiritual considerations. We can do no better, it may be, than to let the statement stand as an intuition. Later we may discover good reasons why the statement is true.

It is interesting to note that in France the first battle of the Marne is still referred to as a "miracle." Despite the serious blunder of the German



general, Von Kluck; despite the genius of Marshal Joffre and the victory won by Marshal Foch, this is still said. It seems almost a miracle to some that we entered the war. But the most significant utterance is that of the French leader of thought who expressed the opinion during the summer of 1918 that probably the war would end as suddenly and unexpectedly as did the first battle of the Marne. To make this statement was tacitly to realize that the war would not be settled by force of arms alone, that it would involve far more than the visible combat with guns and bayonets. Thus to speak was to voice the spiritual consciousness of France, the soul of the people to whom was given the power to set into operation the agencies which were to turn the tide.

In our interest to show that the war was in the truer sense a spiritual struggle we may well avoid, however, the assumption that spiritual power accomplished anything apart from the forms in which it was organized. To attribute the victory to spiritual power functioning as it were "in the air," intervening or performing a miracle out of order, supernaturally, would be to miss the whole lesson taught the world by Allied unity of command and fraternal co-operation. Such an idea belongs to the older type of thinking before the days of modern science with its sure knowledge of natural fact, the conservation of energy, the uniformity of nature, and the reign of law.

Of unorganized idealism we had a sufficiency before the war, and we now realize in retrospect that it was essentially unproductive. We had Christianity enough, too, that is, in theory, in divisive sects, in theological controversy, in name and form, in symbol and ritual. We also possessed programs for the world's peace, and we supposed there was power enough in an idea or in a mere treaty to withstand the cunning of diplomats plotting behind the scenes. What we lacked was moral preparedness grounded in the concrete, supported by efficiency, training, leadership. We lacked an army and navy sufficient to guarantee peace without fighting. What we gained by entering the war was a shuffling off of all theories that could not be adapted to the actual state of the world. The Allies turned the tide at last when they were

able to carry their idealism into the most definite practice. Their victory proved once more that "all power is in ultimates," that is, in the concrete, in the harnessed energies of the natural world.

In other words, the commander-in-chief possessed a decisive plan and he also had the armies capable of winning where the enemy was strongest. His soldiers of whatever nation had the moral quality, *but they also had the guns*. They energized to the full, and they possessed the instruments to make their moral reserves effective. There was indeed a remarkable correspondence between moral and military efficiency. Thus the British aviators, for example, had both the daring which made them dash across the lines in pursuit of the enemy squadrons, and also the swift, amazingly pliable machines wherewith to bring down the enemy's planes. The Americans came with the invincibility of eager zeal to end the war, but they were also able to beat the highly selected Prussian veterans at their own game, and could direct a gas-attack with the deadly certainty of the criminals who devised it. We cannot in our study of the forces which won the day neglect any of these factors.

There is indeed an intimate relation between success as exemplified on a large scale by the Allied armies and success as seen in the individual. The world is not far wrong when it insists that the value of an enterprise is found in the financial results it brings, for the monetary return is the sign of a man's power to put his ideas into practice. Accordingly, the man who makes a success in the world begins in an affirmative attitude. He starts out determined to win, and seeks the conditions which express his determination. He does not stop with mere affirmation. His ideas are effectual only so far as organized. Organization in turn means training of his own powers and the utilization of the instruments or forces at command with skill or efficiency. His enterprise takes being in the concrete and meets the world where it is. The higher his motive the more truly this is seen. When his work becomes spiritual we may well know that its value is known by "its fruits."

Again, the principles of success are seen when we note that in the man of character there is a union between the understanding and the will. Until

that unity is attained man is more or less a "divided self," a mass of conflicting motives, some destructive, some constructive. Thus far "man's worst enemy is himself." He is not by any means ready to participate in the warfare around him until he has met the deeper warfare within, the war over impulses and emotions, over fear, doubt, anger, jealousy, envy, malice, bitterness, and thus on through the long list which we ordinarily group under the head of selfishness. But when his ideal is in some measure grounded in the concrete powers of his selfhood, when he is consistent, constant, at unity, then is he indeed able to take the lead among his fellows. Granted a whole society of men aware that their true power is in the concrete, it is possible to cooperate on a large scale, to attain that wonderful thing, "a social organism," in which each member contributes his share to the common good.

In still other language we may say that the union between idealism and the concrete, this grounding of moral power in efficient control of natural forces, is the equivalent of true service, "living the life." Some of us joined the war precisely because we wished to break connection with the theorists of whatever school, even in the Church, and identify ourselves with those who were directly working to make the world better by meeting the greatest danger by which it was threatened. We wished to be distinguished from devotees of religion, peace, or any other interest, even brotherhood, which stopped in the intellectual realm, with discussion, with agitation, disputes. We knew not how or where we could serve. We had little idea of the dangers or realities we were going into. But we wanted to go. What the war brought us was this intimate relation between the ideal and the real, this "transfigured realism" which won the great victory. We have met men who could slay human beings yet keep the vision. We have seen men who could pass through all the horrors, terrors and shocks of battle yet remain loyal, true, constant, upright. We have seen supposed cowards and other weaklings, even supposed criminals, change into beings of constructive power. In short, we have witnessed the contagious example of men energizing to the full.

We know what men can do when they seemingly meet their masters, when every element of their nature is called into play.

There was indeed an intellectual system well grounded in the concrete when the war began. The Prussian plan of government with its subordination of the individual to the state was workable and efficient. But the human beings who constituted its power were mere units in the system held in position by the iron hand. When the mailed fist was removed the Kaiser fled, the units fell rapidly into discord, in social revolution, as in Russia when autocratic rule was overthrown. The system centralized in Berlin was a unity in military form only, a destructive unity, denying moral power, defying God and man.

The American fathers and mothers did not send their sons across the sea to be mere units. Our democratic system is not hard and fast, or mechanical. We have found difficulty in achieving unity enough to accomplish great national purposes. We ordinarily have too many parties and sects. We are inclined to overestimate mere liberty of expression, mere freedom of opinion. Yet we are resolutely set against kaiserism. We adapt ourselves to the need of the hour when a great war comes. We fight as human beings serving a cause, for a purpose. In this war we proved that such a unity as that called into being by the Allies can conquer autocratic militarism on its own ground. We could indeed have annihilated the German fighting machine, destroyed every city en route and taken Berlin in any one of three ways. When we stopped we had all this easily in our power. But we stopped fighting because we were in deepest truth human and had no desire to remain an armed unity, as mere destructive agents. We brought forward a higher system to take the place of the unity we had dispossessed.

With the turning of the tide we possessed the power to continue or abstain. That was the triumph of the affirmative attitude. In other words, the real war was indeed interior and invisible. Our spirits could not be taken by the assaults of Prussian propagandism. We were not intimidated by Zeppelins over England. We did not lose heart when the submarine war was

a terrible menace. In the end we understood every suggestion offered by the Teutonic mind, also the subtle continuation of the propaganda after the armistice was signed. That mind paid an enormous price for its lust of power, its ambition to occupy an exclusive "place in the sun." We were not even tempted to put our own self-interests first. Thus more than in any war in all history spiritual interests entered in. Never were so many human beings brought together for the simple purpose of serving their fellowmen. The true glory of it all was not the success in arms but in the triumphant moral power which conquered the forces of the Central Powers at every point, from the gas-attack to the psychological air-raid, with a remarkable balance of power in reserve.

We can hardly claim that our boys have come home from across the seas with this explicitness of moral consciousness, or that the Allied nations were in all respects up to the level of their attainments in the hour of victory. But the form or law of moral success was at least implied in the triumph which brought the armies to November 11, 1918. Finding the clue, we may look back within the histories of the nations and the individuals to find the elements thus brought into victorious play. Viewing the war on its upper side as a spiritual struggle, we may inquire into the resources on which the soldiers and their officers draw when they are in repose behind the lines, when their souls are open for guidance, in prayer, in consultation, in brotherly co-operation to achieve the common goal. We will then find elements of this moral success not merely in the fact that the men were chosen with uncommon care, but we will look more deeply into the human spirit in all its relationships.

In possession of the direct clue, we are able to look back over human history and note the stages through which men progress towards this unity through co-operation which the Allies attained. In the lower stage of development, the decisive power of the world is said to be in material forms. Hence external conditions are deemed fundamental. Mental life is regarded as an effect of brain-processes. "Might is right." This is the epoch

of the mailed fist. In a later stage of social evolution, the decisive power is said to be in mental forms, in thought, in ideals, motives, plans, treaties or other agreements. The mental world is now regarded as the realm of causes. Right belief is the test of virtue. "Right makes might" Pacifism is supposedly superior to preparedness. This might have been true if man were chiefly intellectual, if the world had reached the age of reason before 1914.

Later still in the logical order of development, we come to a period of dualism. Material and mental forms are held side by side. "Trust in God, but keep your powder dry," we say. We try to add moral supremacy to military supremacy. We might make great headway in this period if it were not for the division of power, the separation into parties. The peace of the world is maintained in a fashion, but only through "balance of power."

At last we come to the period of genuine moral co-operation in contrast with mere competition in which the parties to the "balance of power" eye one another jealously. Moral supremacy now uses military supremacy as its instrument. The world witnesses the greatest illustration in history of the saying that "in union there is strength." We still have our ideals. We still believe in the superior power of the spirit, and regard the body as the instrument of the soul. We look forward to the age of reason when brotherly conferences to settle difficulties shall take the place of war. But our confidence is founded in the union we have attained between the ideal and the concrete. We have only so much effective power in the world as we have been able to organize, as the Allied armies organized their forces to achieve a common end.

What is true of a nation organized to defeat an enemy may be true of every individual man. The efficient power of the individual, one in whom the inner warfare has been conquered, is in the union of head and hand brought into being by an interior union of head and heart. The affirmative attitude is made effective through training. Thus each individual passes beyond the level of mere theory to the level of actual accomplishment. Thus he is already in some measure at least "living the life." Although he is outwardly no more than an efficient *poilu*, an American Marine running his bayonet

through a Hun, an English Tommy setting the standard for his fellows in arms, or an Italian soldier avenging his mates who were treacherously misled in the disaster of 1917, by thus energizing to the full in the external, he is already achieving in form that "fullness of life" which is the Christian ideal.

In other words, the turning of the tide which brought Germany to accept the armistice was much more than a demonstration of efficiency over against efficiency. We threw off many more articles "made in Germany" than we yet realize. We had imported not only various kinds of goods, but our barren materialistic psychology, the psychology of mere measurements, quantitative analysis, ruthless neglect of the soul. We had also imported the critical philosophy of Immanuel Kant. Worse still, we had imported with what was good in modern biblical criticism all that was bad, and we were allowing it to undermine our faith in the Bible with as much nonchalance as we displayed under the menace of Prussian militarism. Indeed it was astonishing that we had been so won over by the Teutonic intellect. It will require another generation to show the extent of our servitude.

The turning of the tide was the return of faith. From the commonest soldier in the ranks up to the general, we are now privileged to believe in the things of the spirit, whether or not they square with the self-assertiveness of Protestantism. What the soldiers in the ranks have achieved, as they fought for the right, stood for what is universal in Christian faith, whether Protestants or Roman Catholics, as brothers, as men, as souls believing in God, in Christ, in heaven; we as civilians can attain, despite all the sectarian differences which have held us apart. Those differences were in our creeds, in the intellect, the head; not in the heart. We have over-emphasized the intellect. We have permitted criticism to drive us apart. We have been devotees of the letter which "killeth."

By throwing off the differences which separated us in civilian life we attained unity through brotherhood in a common cause. By throwing off theologies we found religion. By being willing to learn from one another in an hour of common peril we became soldiers of the cross. It required a great

world-war to do this for us because we were asleep in the self-contentment of the differences which separated us from one another. Having had the vision, it rests with us to profit by the wisdom which it implies.

Hitherto the best instances of organization had been seen in the struggle for material possessions, in the militarism of Prussia and the great trusts of our own land. Necessity called into being a great moral organization in which each man was assigned to his place according to his fitness as a soldier rather than his fitness in the arts of civil life. War was for the moment the greatest triumph of human genius. What reason could not accomplish was achieved at a stroke.

It can hardly be said that this stern necessity brought democracy into being to any considerable degree. For military rule is according to the caste system and if the war had lasted several years we might have had a military autocracy thrust upon us. We had to see our boys subjected to a hundred conditions against which our hearts rebelled. We had to accept our war and navy departments, as did the citizens of all the other nations, with as good grace as possible. We put up with a thousand annoyances as we put up with the unpleasant necessity of the censorship. Faulty indeed were any number of arrangements into which we entered in haste, as men always do when catastrophes are impending. To praise the unity of the Allies is not therefore to eulogize the machinery employed. To learn the lessons which war teaches is not necessarily to be in favor of war.

What is clear, however, is that fellowship in misery taught us what comradeship in other matters had never taught. We had democracy in our hearts and in our conduct towards our fellow soldiers even if we had little of it anywhere else. Possibly we are in a position, some of us, to know what democracy is, after all the world's experiments with it. We can at least say what it is not. The turning of the tide was a change in our thinking as well as in the fortunes of war.

We may say in brief that the moral victory was the triumph of an organism over mechanical organization. In the latter, a human being may count for



no more than a cog-wheel. We rebel against the Prussian slave-driver with his pistol pointed at the unwilling private as stoutly as we rebel against the head of a trust who enslaves his employees. The war was against autocracy in all its forms. In the former, in an organism, the parts are not mechanical units, they are living beings. Each counts as a soul. Each has a part to play which is contributory. "All are needed by each one." All are "members one of another."

In some degree at least we attained in this moral victory the assignment of each man to his proper place according to his ability. This we saw, for example, in the case of the bold young British aviator, the French or American "ace." We saw it in the leadership over all parties, with politics conquered at last, in the case of Lloyd George and of Clemenceau; and we look forward to a time when, in the true democracy fitness shall always count above politics. We saw it in the military leadership of Marshal Foch, and to a considerable extent in the generalship of all the armies and divisions. Oftentimes we saw it at close range in the case of a private or officer who had come into his proper place. We know that if the war had continued long enough and had been as serious for Americans as for the European peoples we would have been ready to sacrifice politics and pride right and left for the sake of finding the most efficient men. Having had the vision we at least possess the ideal.

Was the moral victory more than a mere turning of the tide, a tide which might flow back over its courses? That will depend upon our ability to enter into the spirit of brotherhood attained for purposes of military unity. It will depend on our understanding of the implied principle, the union of head and heart in man, and of the ideal with the concrete in our external efficiency. We have beheld the form of perfect cooperation. We have been touched at heart by true brotherhood. But we need a philosophy founded on this principle of union of living members in an organism. We need "to see life whole" and see it truly.

None of us who have caught the vision in the trenches can ever again be unmindful of the nether side. We cannot forget the hardships and miseries. We will always know that "war is hell." There is no road back to mere idealism, to the creeds of the churches, to the politics or the economics of the caste system, or the neglect of any of the greater issues of life. We want a faith that can bear all tests. We wish everybody at home might know the real uncensored story. We wish all might at least have seen the ruins left behind by the Hun, "lest we forget." To our surprise when we came home we found many who apparently had not been touched by the war at all, who were returning to their luxury or their idleness, or their devotion to a scheme for a warfare of one class against another. We found some, too, who were still devoted to the outworn intellectualism which the war came in part to destroy.

The war was won by suffering Belgium, bleeding France, and amid the sufferings and bleedings of all the other Allied peoples. It was a moral victory amidst hardships enough to defeat any save the bravest of earth's men and women. It was a spiritual victory won amidst a new vision of death and the eternal realities beyond. If we would know what "our boys" passed through "over there" and be ready to work with them in the period of reconstruction, let us above all else endeavor to catch the vision, try to draw nearer the spiritual world, try to see the relationship of the spiritual to the natural. For this union of the ideal and the concrete is nothing less than a disclosure of the law of union between the divine and the human, "the Word made flesh" in the race to which we belong.



## V. The Inner Guidance

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ON A fair evening some weeks after the tide had begun to turn in favor of the Allies I walked out over the fields near our cantonment to enjoy the sunset. A soft light broke through the clouds above the western horizon and fell upon the gently undulating country, brown after the harvest but covered here and there by patches of green where the pine trees had been spared. A group of friendly airplanes swept slowly across the sky and circled down to an aviation camp towards the south. A solitary scout-plane as slowly rose from its lair and winged westward to take its place among others doing duty above the German lines. No other sound save the whirring of these guardians of our safety touched the quietude of the rural environment. The war seemed remote indeed for the moment. Beauty was paramount, and one might almost imagine oneself far from the war-zone and back in times of peace.

It was interesting, however, to consider one's real situation, there in the middle zone, and to endeavor to "see life whole" once more. Just beyond the near-by range of hills were the great guns that had boomed out the hour when the tide began to turn. Then there were the trenches still peopled with thousands of patiently waiting men, alert to detect every move on the part of the enemy. Beyond the Allied lines were the no less active Huns,

awaiting the command to advance or retreat; and miles upon miles of desolated country, ruined farms and villages, stretching to the borders of Luxembourg and off through northern France into Belgium and to the sea. At any moment the combat between the waiting armies might begin again. At any moment the enemy's planes might press across the lines and come our way. We were just outside the fighting zone, but all the more subject to air-raids. One could not leave the region around the cantonment without orders. One must keep his lamp trimmed and burning whether or not an emergency should arise. We were not only subject to the regulations of the army but in a way subject to the enemy, for was it not by the enemy's will that the war began and we were summoned across the sea?

There is in fact a most instructive and interesting mixture of certainty and uncertainty, military rule and freedom, in the war-zone. The conditions are not unlike those of the spiritual life in general. "The spirit bloweth where it listeth" in that life, and no man knows the precise hour of its comings and goings. We hedge ourselves about with conditions which we try to control, yet everything is subject to contingency and the unexpected. The spiritual life is the soul and its environment, whatever the environment may yield.

Thus as one walks out over the hills to enjoy the beauties of nature for a time, one looks forth over the land to see what is in process, where it is safe to go. One scans the horizon to see if the enemy's planes have crossed the lines. A portion of one's consciousness is set apart to listen, that one may catch that peculiar whirring which denotes the enemy's plane in contrast with the hum of a friendly scout. Directly overhead, if one chances to look there, one may see a small object, several thousand feet above, which is doubtless an enemy scouting machine. By that sign one knows that there will be trouble during the night, for the observer has probably detected evidences of troops in our camp and he will forthwith give warning. Meanwhile, however, we may seek our cots and sleep in relative peace and security as usual. For the enemy is a very methodical creature. When his bombardment planes fly overhead to accomplish their fiendish purpose, mayhap the dropping of

bombs upon poor, stricken Chalôns, we always hear the contemptible whirr about half past eleven or just before midnight. Then those strange whirrings and buzzings give place to the dull thud which tells us that a bomb has fallen, mayhap upon some hospital where men are patiently waiting to regain their strength and take up their positions in the lines once more.

On such a night as that, it is not so much a question of the real danger as of the uncertainty. Is our turn to come tonight? Will the bombers drop a few missives upon us as they go flying over? We well know that half a dozen of these would destroy our camp in brief order. There are shelters not far away, but not enough to hold us all. Shall we run for one of these? That might be to invite destruction on the way. Shall we remain in bed? That might be more dangerous. Would it be wiser to betake ourselves to the fields? Well, the bombs sometimes fall at random and explode in the fields. Then, too, the big guns may start up and begin to hurl their shells near by, to contribute their share to the night's excitement. When after nights of uncertainty our turn comes at last, and shells whizz above the trees near by, while the bombs fall in quick succession, the whole affair takes place so quickly that we hardly have time to decide or to do more than run out to see what is in process. We breathe a secret and sudden prayer that the bombs and shells may not fall upon the barracks where the soldiers are. The result of the night's raid seems almost like a direct answer to our prayer, for luckily bombs and shells alike fall in the fields, no one is hurt, and no barracks are destroyed.

In the front lines the margin of safety is narrowed down more closely. For there the guns are aimed at definite positions, and there are deep shelters in which one may take refuge. Contrary to expectations, life under such conditions is more favorable to the coming of inner impressions than might be supposed. Just as in our peaceful land in summer one might be prompted to drop work in one part of the house and go into another room, shortly before the house is struck by lightning in the room where one was at work, so one may be led to step aside to avoid a bullet, bend low to escape a shell whizzing by, or be impressed that it is better to remain abed in one's

barrack than rush out to the bomb-proof shelter. There are too many close escapes to make it reasonable to dismiss them all as coincidences. Some men hold that by believing in them as real guidances or protective impressions a person may become more subject to them and escape all danger.

Here, for instance, is an officer hidden in a shell-hole for safety. Apparently there is no reason why he should come up out of his particular place of refuge and go down into another. He could assign no plausible reason for the change. But not knowing why he made the move, he comes out of the crater and takes his place elsewhere. Shortly after he makes the change a shell bursts in the hole he has left. He well knows now what would have happened had he remained. Or, here is an ambulance driver who obeys an impulse to run his car a few feet further, after he has arrived at a point where a fresh load of wounded men are to be taken aboard. Presently a shell falls and explodes on the spot where he was standing by the car. Again, a driver is about to crank his car when a shell bursts in the rear and damages it seriously, while he is protected from the flying fragments of shrapnel by the car. He now goes to the rear to ascertain what damages have been wrought. Another shell falls and blows off the front of the car. Such incidents are commonplaces at the front. They may be neglected as purely incidental, or we may cherish them to see if somehow they belong together, and if they imply the presence of a guiding wisdom making itself known when there is need, through impressions or guardian angels.

We have all read about "the angel of Mons" and have wondered what truth might be in a vision shared, if we may believe the reports, by many of the British soldiers. We have heard, too, about "the being in white" seen upon the battlefield succoring the wounded. It has even been said that German soldiers somehow felt their feet stayed at the battle of the Marne, as if there were great hosts fighting with the Allies. It is interesting to note that the accounts have differed according to the religion, that is, the names assigned to the angelic personage by those who beheld in him a saint of their own faith. What we may confidently say is that beneath the symbolism

or the vision there was undoubtedly a core of spiritual reality. Others of us will frankly say that angels were present and were seen. Angels will cease to be regarded as mere "good thoughts," as the skeptics have called them. They will become real beings once more, not fantastic beings with wings; not supernatural beings who have never lived on earth; but highly developed spirits, that is, men and women who have passed to the "great beyond" and are present in the hour of supreme need.

Belief in the presence of angels as guardians of our safety, who nevertheless grant us all the privileges of learning from experience and intervene only when need arises, is surely compatible with all that we know about life at the front. We would expect such presences to sustain us in our distress or danger, not to aid us in our efforts to kill. The same would be true of impressions or intuitions not attributed to angelic beings. We might wonder why, if there is such care over us, all soldiers are not rescued from danger. But the same wonder arises in civil life, when we see people suffering and dying round about us, killed by accident or otherwise injured, while the few apparently escape by what we uncritically call a miracle or coincidence. The conditions are much the same everywhere, and everywhere there are factors which we know little about. The significant consideration is that an experience which arouses us to the fulness of life or one that involves the greatest danger may open our souls to that guiding, sustaining presence which each of us calls by the name of his faith, which to some is the presence of Christ, to others that of the Father, to some an angel or saint and to others simply an intuition or impression, a deliverance of our subconsciousness.

We find a clue to the interpretation of this side of our nature when we look back into civil life and realize that we have long had the habit of listening for an inner voice, awaiting a decisive word, or otherwise have sought to know what was right. Thus prayer is a request for guidance, and the prayer may lead to a distinct impression concerning what we ought to do. Thus we separate ourselves from our fellows for a time to weigh matters in the light of conscience, to determine what prompting is a guidance, what ones are



mere inclinations, or lead us to break away from temptation. An impression or guidance might not come to us to go forth and shoot down the enemy. But we might be led to offer our services wherever they might be needed, whatever the duty, the motive being, not murder, not revenge, but service in "the war to make democracy safe for the world." Or we might be led to enlist in the aviation corps, in the navy, and the subsequent guidances might lead us to do our part in the chosen work, might include impressions making for safety as well as promptings enabling us to perform our tasks with directness and skill.

The experience at the front, we have noted, is a great whole or reality tending to enlist our energies to the full. Externally this means alertness and power to do the work at hand. Interiorly it means the opening of the soul, the discovery of higher motives, or the setting free of tensions and unbelief. The soul's response differs indeed according to the individual and is as varied as the total wealth of human nature in the normal individual. For some the quickening means new courage to believe in all seriousness whatever the heart holds dear, despite all the learning of the critics back yonder in places of safety across the sea. While this quickening lifted some out of self, helped them to be less sensitive, it brought others to deeper knowledge of themselves, a rediscovery of the immortal reality of the soul. For all it was a test of faith, hence it naturally brought into the foreground whatever served to guarantee that faith, whether the thought of God as over-ruling providence, or Christ as master over death, or simply a sense of justice as the supreme law. Well may we follow with reverence any confession of faith inspired by this largeness of vision, even if it seems to indicate a mere reversion to the age of myth and superstition. The recurrence of belief in the inner guidance may be regarded as one of the most illuminating evidences of this large consciousness.

By the "inner guidance" one here means the more intuitive deliverances of our nature, those that might have held prominence all along the way of life had we not been educated on the assumption that man is chiefly

intellectual. Doubtless we all remain more impressionable than we realize. Despite the perversities of our educational system we grow into belief in spiritual powers, and on the whole we come by our beliefs rather through experience than through logic. We are guided and sustained more or less, otherwise we could not survive. But to a large extent we are under constraint, checked by conventionality, timid, hesitant, if not unbelieving and skeptical. Occasionally the deeper phase of our nature is touched, to be sure, for example, by great hardship or sorrow, or it is made active by severe illness. Man-making contact with the war accomplished for some at a bound the change which in the majority of us is slow indeed; it brought them to the point of conscious recognition of the mind's interior operations. For war appeals to and arouses the impulsive, volitional, emotional side of our nature, and this is by far the larger side. Thus while it makes creatures of passion of some, it may disclose to others the real inward source of wisdom.

Many of the men merely smoked their larger moments away. Unluckily for them, perhaps, it was customary in this war for friends of the soldiers to follow them about and keep them supplied with "smokes," keep them entertained, make it a "war of luxury" in very truth, and otherwise to gratify the self. Possibly some of us have expected the men to talk too soon, unmindful of the fact that after all the shock and strain of the war the men must be permitted a time of silence before they can tell what the war means to them. Yet despite all these tendencies to defeat the moral reaction, the inner response has taken place. The moral victory was no doubt the greater in the case of those who refused to have their higher moments broken into. Many gave evidence even in the thick of battle that they possessed a saving grace. For example, the British soldier with his keen sense of humor in life's most direful hour, as he lights his cigarette, cracks his little joke, and so keeps his mind fit to carry the terrible business through to its bloodiest execution.

It is noticeable that men of varied types and different nationalities have manifold ways of drawing upon their higher reserves. Whatever is stored away may be utilized, even the boastfulness of the younger soldiers from

across the seas. The stoic quietude of the French soldier is a kind of reserve-power. So is the superstition of the uneducated, if that superstition implies the preservation of childhood's unspoiled heart. There are resources even in fatalism, too, and of the Mohammedan type. It makes comparatively little difference in the war-zone what a man's religion is if it be accompanied by a certain largeness of spirit. The soldier is in rude contact with reality. He is in the narrowest, tightest place in the world. He cannot run, cannot fly, he must obey orders and must fight. *And when we must we can.* We make the supreme effort all of us are capable of but which we avoid making if we can, because we are luxurious, self-centered, lazy, or otherwise evasive, theoretical, indifferent, or crystallized.

We know from the results which war discloses that the newer views of the human spirit are true, namely, that man possesses a deeper or subconscious nature, an unconscious region below the threshold enlarging into the infinite and transcending all ordinary barriers. There are two strong reasons for accepting this larger view of our nature. It affords an explanation of our greater moments, and it gives us a working theory with regard to our spiritual powers. The war at the front, for example, was for many the opportunity for making concrete and effective all the ideas, aspirations, and moral sentiments which they had been preparing from the day they decided to participate in the fight or found themselves drafted, just as the efficiency of our nation as a whole gave expression to the moral warfare we had been waging in our spirits from the day Belgium was invaded. By persuasion and intuitively we were already on the side which was going to win the war, we knew this fact and we held to it with commendable constancy. We were determined to know no such word as "fail." The war outwardly expressed this strong spirit. The men at the front had the privilege of carrying this constancy into effective realization. For the most part they were highly selected men, the most vigorous, affirmative youth we had. These set free for us our half-conscious life. Thereby we have learned anew that man has

spiritual powers or senses corresponding to his physical senses, and that these open the soul to realms beyond the flesh.

Fatalism may be understood as a half-way approach to this spiritual freedom. War breeds fatalism, we know, while the Mohammedan brings a fearlessness born of a fatalism which is temperamental or habitual. We have often heard this fact stated but we have not sought the reason. The explanation readily comes when we are reminded of this deeper or intuitive side of man's nature. Through this openness of spirit man comes into more intimate relation with the great realities of the war. He comes to see that there is a law in things. He feels the unity of all things, senses their power as a great whole. This whole is so real and so impressive that human initiative no longer appears to possess any power. Everything within and without seems not only to be determined by what has gone before but appears to be fate-driven. Thus he comes to believe that his name is "written down in the books." His turn will come or it will not. He himself as an individual appears to count for naught save as he is used by the great whole that sweeps us all forward to our destiny.

From another point of view the great reality is far from being the simple whole it seems to be to the fatalist. Fatalism is a result of imperfect analysis. There is indeed a great reality which we feel. There is surely a law in things. God really exists. But the universe is rich in alternatives and man is free. Fatalism is effective in so far only as it helps a man to overcome fear. The Mohammedan soldiers were available in making an attack. They slashed the enemy with their knives and created havoc in the ranks of the Hun. But they were unable to push through to the end with the constancy of Anglo-Saxon belief in freedom. We are too apt to think of a campaign as a carefully thought-out plan which our generals carry into execution. Plans there are in abundance. The enemy began generations ago to lay his plans. The campaign which brought the Allies to the granting of the armistice was pursued according to well-laid plans. But in actual execution a military campaign is very far from a scheme written down "in the books," as if only

one result could happen. The actual military situation at the front is so rich in possibilities and contingencies that from commander-in-chief to private there is need of all the guidance that can be brought to bear to meet it, including those swift intuitions and impressions which enable a man to save the day.

The enemy's well-laid plans of years' standing were balked the day he entered Belgium. From that day till he found that the request for an armistice was the only alternative to save himself from annihilation, his plans were persistently blocked. Marshal Joffre began the war with a plan to regain Alsace and Lorraine, but forthwith altered it to meet the oncoming tide which swept all the armies into the first battle of the Marne. That battle was so great in scope that it still remains in part a miracle save to those who view the war in the light of spiritual forces working with natural. The war assumed a new aspect because of that battle. At a crucial moment during the battle Marshal Foch turned an almost overwhelming, threatening tide into victory. In the great battle as in the diminutive engagement, war is a process of ceaseless adaptation to the contingencies of the moment. Even when according to the papers "everything is quiet at the front," this is so. Every contingency gives rise to alternatives and must be met by successive acts of will leading to a decision. Every decision is an act of faith. War indeed is like life itself on a very intensive scale, and life, we know, is to a considerable degree a stream of mystery carrying us forward upon its broad surfaces, sweeping us on towards unknown shores. A successful campaign is one in which the commander-in-chief, watching the ever-changing stream, adapts himself in swift decisions to the developments of the hour. A plan of action will go forward with success if every man does his part and if events go as desired. But the commander must keep in touch with every part of the front and alter his plan to meet the thrusts of the enemy. It is not a mere question of superior numbers, for the side with the smaller army frequently wins. It is not a question of any single factor in the vast assemblage of forces but of their varying combination as occasion may demand. If the enemy excel in

the swift attack carried out on a wide scale something must be thought of to forestall him, just as the genius of the inventors among the Allies has been taxed to the utmost to offset the new war-devices brought into action by the Huns.

When the British front was broken near Saint-Quentin, March 21, and the Germans were advancing too rapidly to make it possible for the French army which was coming to the rescue to reach the British in time, General Pétain made one of those sudden master-strokes which save the day. With the same flash of genius by which he once saved Verdun when he quickly set in motion an endless chain of auto-trucks between Verdun and Bar-le-Duc, General Pétain ordered every airplane within striking distance to proceed at once to Ham and bombard the German forces there. The sudden order was telephoned along the whole front, and as quickly dozens of airplane squadrons were on their way to Ham. Throughout the night these bombardment planes came and went, spreading confusion among the German troops gathered for the advance. Later it was learned from prisoners that enormous losses were inflicted on the enemy that night. Practically two divisions were put out of commission, and the enemy's advance was so far delayed that when the advance actually began the Allied reinforcements were on hand to stem the tide.

On a small scale the situation which the soldier faces is like that to which the general must give a sudden turn. The soldier is each moment under regulations according to a plan. But his ears are on the alert to catch the nearby or the remote sound, his eyes sweep the sky to learn what is in process, and on occasion he is quick as a flash in adapting his movements to the oncoming event. His reaction in the presence of his environment is indeed multiform and varied, as he now obeys orders or again turns his gaze aloft to enjoy the beauties of the setting sun. In response to a call for volunteers, he may stealthily work his way across No Man's Land at night, where any motion he makes may reveal his presence to the enemy. Or, again, the eyes of a sniper may be fixed upon him, and he may at any instant invite disaster

by his boldness. To know his life in anything like its wholeness we must follow him in imagination in a thousand different situations, always subject to danger, at any moment likely to contribute his part to the engagement in progress, yet no less truly living an inner life all his own. He forgets how varied and multiform his life is, in how many spheres of activity he lives at once.

The German soldier is subject to a relentless stream of forces in which he appears to be as helpless as a block of wood swept down by the current. But those are the destructive forces, springing from lustful self-interest and greed, making war with intent not merely to kill but to destroy the industries, the coal mines, the farms, everything that lies in the path. On our side there is another great stream of forces working against the destructive ones. The war seen on a vast scale in all its hugeness is a struggle of enormous extent between the destructive and the constructive. The soldier is a relatively diminutive mortal participating somewhere between. It is natural that he should feel his powerlessness. It is natural that some should become fatalists. It seems amazing indeed that the soldier is able to keep his coolness and courage. But wonderful to relate he does more than that when, for example, he lights a cigarette or gives another turn to the whole affair by cracking a joke, thereby helping a dozen men as well as himself. He is in deepest truth a free spirit even when most bound by circumstance and most subject to the danger of the instant.

It might indeed be said that man is freest when acting under pressure, the pressure which calls him into action to the full. The emergency makes the man. Moreover, the emergency is rich in alternatives, and uncertainties. It is very far from the simple thing which war would be if fatalism were true. Since war differs not one whit from life in general in these respects, there is no additional reason for denying our freedom. The fatalist is usually a good soldier, but his fatalism is merely his practical way of rising above circumstance, just as Tommy Atkins wins by turning a calamity into a joke. Were the fatalist really what he pretends to be he would make no effort

either to save himself or to fight more strenuously. The soldier, with ready wit, spots the companion who is inactive or is a temperamental coward. Every one must do his best and must fight. Then if ever a man is able to conquer fear.

By the soldier's calmness, however secured, he keeps himself open to higher sources of power and is in a state of mind to make the best use of his moral reserves, gathered during his days of repose and training. If conscious of guiding impressions, if he has the habit of prayer, or walks alone to find his deeper self, he may greatly enlarge the sphere of his spiritual activity. Noticing the conditions under which the guidances come, he may on occasion voluntarily put himself into those conditions, sending out his spirit as it were to learn if possible what is in process, what he ought to be prepared for, just as in a very different way he uses his eyes and ears to learn of the possible presence of enemy airplanes. He may even go further, he may seek impressions concerning a proposed journey when the time comes to go "on leave," that he may find whether he is likely to journey in safety. The implication is that one's deeper self is always larger than the consciousness of any given moment, has a wider range of relations and so may gather intuitively both information and wisdom concerning the events in process.

Thus, for example, it came to one of us contemplating a journey to Paris with the positiveness of a conviction that the Germans would take Soissons, march swiftly towards the Marne, and even threaten Paris. The impression that it was best not to travel at that time was later confirmed when the Germans indeed reached the Marne and cut the railroad to Paris on which the journey would have been made. The same man received a favorable impression concerning a proposed journey at a later time, despite the fact that the long-range gun was then bombarding Paris every day, while the air-raids were coming nearly every night. Trusting to the guidance, he made the trip in safety and arrived in Paris the first rainy night in two weeks, that is, under conditions which had temporarily become unfavorable for air-raids.



The long-range gun may have been active during the three days he spent in the city, but at any rate not in those sections of the city which he visited, always under guidance, that is, on the alert for favorable or unfavorable impressions.

Granting that the moral or spiritual tide turned with the change in the war that began at fifteen minutes before midnight July 14, it must surely have been possible for minds open to it to feel this invisible change and thus to have reassuring impressions even in the face of danger. It would be impossible, no doubt, for any of us to draw the line between what we know and have reasoned out because of our acquaintance with military preparations, and what comes to us by way of direct impression or intuition. But it is not necessary to make this attempt. Our guidances or intuitions belong to the level of "over-beliefs" added to more familiar mental processes. They may come into our minds together with all the rest as naturally as the religious uplift or conviction experienced by the general who, knowing what is before him and with plans for meeting it, nevertheless pauses by the wayside for a few moments of quiet prayer in the lonely church behind "the zone of advance." The military skill and intellectual alertness of the general do not prevent him from being at the same time highly intuitive or genuinely religious. Indeed, he may feel unwilling to make the fateful move until he has thus paused to lift his thoughts to that eternal realm from which true guidances come, the realm above effects in which spiritual causes operate.

The experiences of men in the war-zone, whether those of the uneducated private or those of the most keenly efficient general, grant us the privilege of taking seriously the whole realm of our larger or intuitive nature. We may believe in and test premonitions if we wish. We may open our souls for guidance, asking for strength, courage, wisdom. We may seek that inner peace which neither blast of cannon nor explosion of shell can take away. We may believe in the guiding presence of a guardian angel. Or we may seek the world of higher resources in whatever way we will. Fortunate indeed is

he who has faith even as a grain of mustard in the presence and power of that world of our over-beliefs.

A young soldier once told me of the vision which for him was the awakening of consciousness of that over-world. It was at the battle of the Somme in 1917. His company was hard-pressed and seemed in danger of being cut off. The shells were bursting thick and fast around him, and his comrades were falling on every side. It was the most terrible moment of his life. There seemed no possibility of escape, no resource to draw upon. But even amidst those pressing circumstances he had his vision. He appeared to see in the sky before him an enormous clock, with hands but without figures on the dial-plate. Slowly, very slowly indeed, the hands marked out the passing moments. With the vision came its interpretation, namely, that he should live absolutely in the moment. Thus lifted above the din and terror for the time, he felt himself sustained. The fortunes of battle shifted after a brief period, reinforcements came, and he withdrew with his comrades to a place of safety. Such an experience is indeed typical of the intimacy of relationship between the soul and its truer, higher environment.

The practical wisdom of the soldier leads him sooner or later thus to live in adjustment to the moment, outwardly alert and doing his duty while inwardly depending on whatever faith he is fortunate enough to possess. The unusual danger of his greater moment may open his soul still more to the resources of the higher world. He may simply feel a sense of sustaining power, or he may have a vision. He may secure this calmness by repeating a passage of Scripture, or he may depend entirely on his cigarette. The point is that in energizing to the full the soldier does more than merely to draw upon his physical strength or his nervous force. One does not feel when standing among a company of men fresh from a battle that they have "nerved themselves up" to endure it. They are often surprisingly calm. All ordinary emotion seems absent. If perchance there has been consciousness of spiritual power at any previous time in their lives it probably strengthened them in this test. Thus each man was undoubtedly true to his guidance,

whatever it may have been. Thus each has emerged with at least as much faith in higher things as when he entered the battle.

In this fidelity of a man to his creed, past experience, belief in a guardian angel, or whatever his idea of guidance, there is another instance of the union between the ideal and the concrete. There is as much power for use in our faith as we can make objective. The rest is theory or possibility. War-experience simplifies the situation immensely for us, and the probability is that most of us have a single point of dependence in the last analysis. This for us is our guidance. To it we turn as if reaching a hand aloft to some unseen power. Towards the power for which it stands, whether a saint, an angel, Christ or the Father, we turn in prayer. This act is instinctive in the human self when hard-pressed. We try whatever may avail, no longer afraid to be looked upon as foolish. Finding what avails we cling to it, and thus our guidance grows by recognition on our part. Fortunate indeed are we if we are able to follow up experience with thought and acquire an intelligible faith. The possibilities of acquiring such a faith become the greater when, looking beyond the mere present, we catch the new vision of death.

## VI. A New Vision of Death

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**D**EATH, WITH the war, has lost much of its importance. It has become familiar....Its approach is with a face of radiant beauty. In the kiss which it bestows there passes the tenderness of the Country for her children." Thus writes a French captain who has lived through one of the most terrible periods of the war, and knows from intimate experience and widespread observation how dreadful are life's last scenes upon the battlefield. He has been standing on a hill-top overlooking Verdun at the close of what he calls a triumphant spring day, absorbed in meditation upon the meaning of the war which he knows so intimately. Nothing is in motion over the broad face of what once was a peaceful landscape save what is destined to take part in the battle. Indeed, it might be said that nothing is in process of accomplishment in that fair field save under the mantle of death. Even as he contemplates the scene before him, impressed for the moment by its beauty, his eyes fall upon ugly and distressing sights which remind him that the finger of death has everywhere touched the brave men who have given their lives that Verdun might stand unconquered.

How does it happen that amidst such grim scenes, and while his country is still making the great sacrifice, this soldier, speaking for his fellow countrymen, is thus touched by the poetic beauty that rests upon the fallen? In what

sense has war made death familiar? How is it possible to contemplate death as a being clothed with radiant beauty, when that same being is presently to mow down the legions as if they were mere stalks of grain waving in the breeze?

At first thought it is because the nation's sons have already fallen in such numbers that death is literally commonplace, like the events which lead to it in the destiny which awaits us all. The ranks must be closed up. It is well to replace the fallen as one might slip a new part into a damaged machine, allowing for merely momentary delay. War with its high degree of organization has provided for the sad task of identifying and caring for the dead. In the trenches and at mealtimes, wherever men spring forward to play their part, all goes on as before. Scarcely a word is said concerning the comrade who has fallen. This is noticeable in the aviation camp when one more courageous pilot or bomber has gone, when one more scout-machine has failed to return. The aviators' work must go on without an hour's delay till the last moment of the battle. New "aces" must be forthcoming to replace those whom the enemy has brought down. So it is "on with the game." All are quiet, but all determined.

In the home-towns likewise the sad news that comes day by day is received with quietness and fortitude. The friends may have ceased to read the casualty lists. The neighbors may no longer ask if one's sons have made the great sacrifice. Everywhere the signs of mourning are seen and are taken with the deprivations and hardships of the war as matters of course or necessity. Everywhere one sees cemeteries small and great, with rows and rows of wooden crosses reared to the memory of those who have gone. Well may death seem familiar in a land where more than a million sons of the soil have fallen, and a million more from the friendly nation across the Channel. Back of the lines, in the trenches, at home and everywhere else an attitude of mind and heart must be acquired befitting the true patriot and Christian. One more brave comrade has "gone West," that is all.

Death has become familiar through efforts to push on to victory, to meet the oncoming foe and drive him back, however great the losses. For it must be done, "c'est la guerre," it is a stern necessity. At the beginning of the war it was different. There was enthusiasm then. Individuals were more readily singled out by the home-people. The deaths of men in the front lines and in the air were noted as if not so very many were to follow. But such hopes have passed with the months and years. The enemy has invented new and more terrible means of sweeping men to their death. Everywhere death in turn has become more terrible. One cannot think much about the deaths of those who give up their lives as victims of liquid fire and the gas-attack. Those who fight and those who care for the wounded or the dying are less and less able to think of these things. In a sense they must feel less and less, for whatever happens they must be ready to fulfil their parts. The enemy's most terrible instruments must be reproduced and made to inflict death without mercy upon the hostile ranks. The enthusiastic youths from America who have come to France with determination to end the war must be instructed in the same fierce, unsparing means of wielding death, as little accustomed as they are to warfare as veterans wage it.

Our boys proved their power to meet this need by hurling themselves with a daring against the foe that astonished even their brother soldiers among the French. Thus they made death "familiar" too. To mingle with them and hear in sympathetic responsiveness whatever they chose to tell of the scenes they had participated in or witnessed during the great days along the Marne or in the Argonne Forest, was to realize that somehow they had received with the "baptism of fire" a spirit and fortitude to face death by almost ignoring its sad presence. Like their elder brothers in the war, they had little to say concerning the sadder side. Their eyes were fixed on a purpose. They used war as a means to an end. They were not there to hesitate or to stumble, with hearts bowed down. Death had to be regarded as an incident, together with the hardship of being crowded like cattle aboard the transports in their voyage across the sea, and the miseries of

life in rain-soaked camps, muddy trenches or damp and dangerous dug-outs. The end had to be achieved. Then in times of leisure and freedom after the war one could begin to see the meaning of death, just as one could contemplate the fiendishness and the hell in retrospect, thereby making ready to do one's part towards the prevention of all future wars.

Death, too, is familiar to the fatalist, and the war, as we have noted above, has greatly increased the number of fatalists in the world. The aviator is perhaps a fatalist before he brings down the first enemy plane, and his fatalism is probably intensified as the combats grow in number. The soldier of the ranks acquires fatalism from experience. He seems to be facing a vast array of forces whose organization is essentially mechanical. He is a cog or organ himself in an opposing mechanism. It is all apparently a matter of mathematical calculation. So many units have fallen. So many others are to go. His turn may come soon and by an aggregating of forces over which he possesses not the slightest control. It is indeed oftentimes a question of the number of reserves the enemy has over yonder behind the front lines, or of the number his own side has in waiting.

The Mohammedan does not even pass through the preliminary intellectual process. He fights with a fearlessness born of his conviction that the hour of his death was long ago inscribed in the books. He is relatively indifferent to the dangers that await him, although likely to prove inconsistent when the great hour comes, less able, it may be, to persist than the believer in human freedom.

An indifference similar to that of the fatalist is developed in the minds of soldiers of all nations who become accustomed through the regularities of battle to seeing men blown to pieces. These men of lesser intelligence and coarser feelings are without that saving grace by which Tommy Atkins gives the lighter turn to death, as he takes the place of a comrade just slain. They are lacking in all the finer sentiments. They gamble and smoke their leisure hours away. They are trying to "make something out of the war." One would hardly think of turning to them for help or consolation. Their

presence simply reminds us that some men are in no way changed even by hardships or by the presence of courageous souls fighting for a cause. For them the war is prose simply. It is for personal advantage. Apparently one should gratify the self, and encourage one's comrades to drink and smoke and gamble their time away.

We must look underneath all these considerations to see why death has become familiar. The actual death of men in great numbers whether in the front lines or in the hospitals is indeed commonplace. We grow accustomed to reading about the sinking of ships with soldiers and civilians aboard, even to the shelling of life-boats containing the few hardy survivors of a ship that has just gone down. The crews and passengers of the transports that have escaped in a convoy may have to close their eyes as it were to the sufferings of their fellowmen left behind on the transport that has fallen a victim to the submarines, since the orders are to steam straight ahead and save the ships that may be saved. It is not the mere external event that signifies. It is what men see in it that avails, as the writer above quoted discerns in the soft touch of death on the cheeks of the fallen the unity of the national spirit, the beauty of the soul of France. The silent efficiency of the fallen heroes' comrades does not mean that the hero is forgotten. The government makes appropriate mention of him as a distinct individual, and he may presently become a national hero, as in the case of Guynmer. His name is not forgotten amidst the crowd in the region where he lived. The sad hearts at home can never be the same again, however many others may fall. There is a common spirit of mourning throughout the land which is somehow deeply mindful of all who have gone. Both the fighter and the civilian know death in the familiar sense in a more intimate manner than that of the mere process of destruction upon the battlefield.

The same writer quoted above elsewhere speaks of "the war which we live," which he compares to the waves of the sea. The war, Captain Bordeaux tells us, is like the sea with its motions without number. We are aware of the rhythms but cannot count the waves. So the events of the war as human



happenings belong together and cannot be isolated. To see why death assumes another aspect is to realize what the larger life is which man lives in "living the war."

First, however, let us put in a word of qualification lest one seem to glorify war and turn its terrors into suggestions of beauty. We may draw a rather precise line between visible events and things on the one hand, and their value or meaning in human terms on the other. The men who give expression to the saving grace or conceal their souls beneath stoic exteriors or behind fatalism are still genuinely human at heart. You must bide your time after the shock and strain are over, if you would know what they deeply feel. We may then learn from their lips what their experiences have meant as parts of the soul's long journey through life, wholly apart from the supposed glorification of war. To have eyes for the beauties of death is not necessarily to blind us to war's ugliness. Let us repeat what we have said above, namely, that we who have been there know in very truth that war is hell. We have witnessed sights which we can neither describe nor ever forget. But we have not returned without faith. We are not pessimistic or haters of our fellowmen. Life might have taught us the great lesson in some other way, had the souls of men been awake, had the world been truly Christian, had the societies for the eulogizing of peace done something more than eulogize. But the fact remains that undeveloped as we were we had to learn from war. What we now carry away with us is the whole sad story. We have known the great reality as one whole, and that is why we are now able to single out its elements and remain true to our resolutions.

When hostilities cease and give place to a period of reflectiveness on our part, we begin to compare notes with our fellows, and all the way back from the war-zone, in the camps, at the base-ports, aboard the transport, in the home-port once more and in the home itself we gain other impressions, relating them with what we have lived through at the front. Thus death, we find, has had its particular story for all, according to the time and place, The mother at home whose son has fallen is to be regarded in her own right,

whatever may be said about war in general. Those who remained at home, saving and producing, participated in the common spirit. That spirit lives on and is giving its message to the world. What has been the spiritual gain? we ask. What consolation can we give to the mother, the father, sister, brother, wife? If we have any faith whatever in the soul and the life after death, now is the time to share it. Let us not hesitate to employ poetic figures of speech or to be true to the whitest light our experience has disclosed even amidst the dark hour of life at sea or in the trenches.

The great reality which makes men free not only acquaints them with the tortures and the misery as no other men know or feel these, but it opens their souls in all respects, that is, it opens the responsive souls. We may then say in brief that death has become familiar because it has brought the spiritual world far more near. It is because the soul is in intimate relation with the eternal realities, it is through the spirit's triumph over the flesh that death is met in this transfiguring manner. These men whose eyes discern the heavenly beauty are not fighting for their country merely. Each is quickened in his own way by courage, faith, obedience, or whatever inner response he may be prompted to make. The more open and responsive the more truly he is fighting a moral warfare, one with the constructive forces as opposed to the destructive. Each has had a personal history and this history lives on, either in the present or in the future life.

To a remarkable degree the soul is lifted above merely physical events and things, even above pain and misery. With some this was true because of the burdens of the heavy packs that had to be borne, the disagreeableness of the mud and dampness, and all the other hardships so annoying that the mind instinctively sought higher resources. With others it was because the zest of the "game" while they were energizing to the full brought this upliftment. There were endless struggles and endless victories. Thus one soldier writes that at times he had a single desire, "to sleep, sleep, until the end of the world," so burdensome were the conditions he had to master. Another writes, apropos of the contest every one wages with fear, that

“there is a fear known to the most courageous at times, the fear of having fear, the fear that one may not be master of oneself at the decisive moment.” Others are lifted above their surroundings to the eternal present by a conscious faith. Thus a French captain writes, “In one’s life at the front one must live in the present without thinking of the future. To be nearer danger and death is to be nearer God, and therefore why pity us? Put your trust in God! Everything happens according to his will, and it is ever for the best.”

In the foregoing chapters we have noted various states of soul that maintain the poise of the heart amidst otherwise deadening circumstance. Thus the stoicism of outward indifference to death’s nearness may be a mere mask. The simplicity and childlikeness of heart which we observe in the soldiers of all lands while they are in repose behind the lines have much to do with the nearness to the spiritual world of which we have spoken. These French peasants with unspoiled hearts reminding us of the soul’s innocence in the childhood of the world have reared no barriers between the present life and the future. Death for them, we maintain, would be one more step towards a heaven which has never been closed to them from infancy to this the highest hour of their manhood.

The war which men “live” is a life in common which need not be analyzed in its outer phases, for all men see it and feel it who are present there. Usually there is some one gifted in analysis or in power of expression who voices the highest sentiment for the men in his group. Thus every one in the company comes to realize that his spirit is indeed triumphing over the flesh. A soldier who fought in the first battle of the Marne, for example, at a point where a retreat was inevitable till reinforcements should come, said that, in the felicitous expression of one of his fellowmen, “our bodies beat a retreat, not our hearts.” “The Frenchman does not like to retreat, not even strategically.” Another soldier put the matter thus, “In the danger I no longer knew myself: it was necessary to go and I went.” It was this indomitable spirit in larger social expression which uttered the famous “They shall not pass;” at a time when there seemed every reason to believe the enemy might triumph. As

one puts it, when speaking of the great crisis at the Marne, "They were not asked to be joyous; they knew that on their superhuman efforts depended the salvation or the ruin of their country."

One might find examples without limit showing the powers of men when they energize to the full. The daring of the young British aviator, probably unequalled in its way, affords us a clue to this releasing of our human powers. The exploit in the darkness of No Man's Land on the part of the volunteer is another instance. With the bold aviator it may be simply an instance of unmindful self-assertion, like that of the child at play. But something like this freeing of the energies, with the alertness, adroitness and exhilaration of pursuit, as the aviator dashes boldly over the enemy's lines and brings down a Hun in flames, also takes place in the mature man of resolute will or lofty purpose. Only when most truly and expressively himself is man most intimately and truly a child of God. At such a time man is most open to those heavenly powers which strengthen the heart to make the great sacrifice. The so-called sacrifice is even more than the word implies, for by losing his life the soldier finds it; his deed is positive, affirmative. The sublime fact is the reality which the heart finds, the power which pulses through the fighter's being when he thus energizes to the full. Like the brave seaman strapped in position aboard the destroyer or submarine, the soldier in the trenches is "out to win." No other expectation can be tolerated. Hence the same man who while in repose behind the lines asks with evident anxiety when the war will end, or skeptically asserts that it will never end "for it has acquired the habit," is all action and affirmation when the time comes to press forward. He fairly creates the victory which seems beyond all human power. To know him you must know what he is open to when the last hour comes.

What is man when fully himself? We are not accustomed to the question. We are prone to regard man as a thing of flesh and blood, as if the poor, tired soldier before us, dropping down on the bench to write a letter, mayhap his last, to the dear ones at home, old before his time, suffering from wounds or otherwise disabled, were the real human being and not merely

the outward semblance. We think of the spirit as a mysterious essence concealed somewhere within us, as that which we are suddenly to become when we shuffle off the flesh. We think of death as painful, as a terror, and of the subsequent experience as a long journey to a far country. Hence we have only the vaguest ideas concerning the person making the journey.

These vague notions do not by any means fit the facts of life and death as known in the war-zone. If these were true we could hardly have given voice to the new literature of the trenches, we could not have known the soul of Belgium, the spirit of France, or in any way have lived the war as a spiritual experience. Well may we draw close to the life our loved ones have lived, to feel our way into it if possible, and then try to reconstruct our ideas, taking our clues from all these rich evidences that the souls of men have been energizing to the full.

What if we say that the real individual all along is already in this present life a spirit, and that death is simply one more incident in the long series from infancy onward into the joys and beauties of immortality? What if we say that the soldier who beheld the great clock in the sky, the brave men whose patriotism lifted them above the ills and hardships of the flesh, the ardent sufferers in the hospitals who were so eager to recover and take their places at the front once more, and all who tell us of their visions and of the sense of sustaining power, were already open in some degree to the spiritual world in which we all in deepest truth "live, and move, and have our being," although unwittingly?

There is good reason to believe that death is for the spirit making the transition a simple experience, as simple as the dropping off of a garment upon the ground. This may be true even of the supposedly violent death upon the battlefield. Death is indeed very far from the terrible experience we have pictured it to be through our fears. We have judged by human pain in general and by the agonies which have sometimes preceded death. Hence we have taken our clues from the physical, to the neglect of the spirit. Or, we have assumed that the experience immediately following is widely

different from the life of the flesh. But the experience just after may be so nearly like what went before, save where there was agony and struggle, that the spirit may be scarcely aware that the transition has occurred. Then will doubtless follow a gradual discovering of the inward or true self, an awakening out of the sleep in which we all partly live while in the flesh, since we are so little aware of what manner of being the human spirit is.

The central thought for us then, if we would begin to enjoy the new vision and think of our loved ones who have gone as *living*, not "dead," is that death is a disclosure of realities true all the while the soul was in the flesh. The eternity which was "entered," as we unthinkingly say, was already here and profoundly real, since our spirits live in eternity as well as in time while we are in the body. There was no "dark, mysterious strait" between the two worlds, no "river to cross," and no abyss or gulf to leap, or across which the spirit had to be ferried. The spirit made no "long journey," as if the spiritual world were in some distant sphere or in another universe. Different indeed must the spiritual world be from the natural, since the latter is endlessly divided by spatial things. But everything which the new vision discloses concerning the life after death indicates that the spiritual world is infinitely near, that the spirits who have passed through the veil are round about us, closer to us in feeling and thought than before. This faith is expressed even by the common soldier who would not be regarded as "enlightened." It is implied in the visions which the men have had of angelic presences. It is implied in the sense of upliftment and heavenly care which the soldiers have perceived. It accords, too, with those messages from beyond which appear to have the largest measure of truth in them. Moreover, it goes with the whole philosophy of "the war which men live," the deeper experiences of those who have come to know the war as a struggle between constructive and destructive forces.

We may say with confidence that the spirit making the transition not only does not "cross a strait" or make a long journey, but does not make a leap of any kind, not even into angelhood. The ladder on which the soul has

ascended goes on and up. Experience continues. Life continues, the deeper life, without interruption in essence, in quality, in power, however moderate the awakening or however great the transition may seem when completely recognized as "death." For the changes occur in the garment which is left behind, and in the consciousness of the spirit who knows that this garment has been laid aside and another revealed. Man cannot be said to have lost anything truly his own. He possesses his identity, so that he does not mistake himself for any one else. He is the same in life, in being, in substance. He has left behind him a bodily instrument no longer capable of performing the functions of which the spirit is now becoming aware in their real, that is, their higher activity.

Taking our starting point then with life, not death, we may dwell on the continuity of life. We may see it as one whole with varying phases, one of which has been closed with its latest episode. The transition might indeed have come later. We may still cherish the ideal of greater faithfulness to divine wisdom, that death may come to all as a natural fulfilment of the spirit's powers within the flesh. We of course look forward to a time when none shall die on the battlefield or because of any other violence committed by men. But the new vision of death has been vouchsafed that we may all prepare for that rounding out of life in the natural world. It has been given us to lift us out of our grief and every other self-centering emotion, out of our mourning and our sorrow into thankfulness and rejoicing because of the greater freedom that has come to our loved ones, because of "the soft touch of beauty which death has bestowed upon the cheeks of the fallen." It has been given us to take away our fear of death and our whole thought of it as a terror.

I have stood among the survivors of a regiment just returned from a battle in which more than a third of their companions had fallen. These men did not disclose to me the new vision of death. They could not say what had befallen them. But in their muteness and their solemn presence I felt what no lips could have uttered, and it was the presence of the deeper life which

they brought, not the mere sadness of death. Their memories were full of the struggles through which they had passed and of the scenes which they had witnessed. But these outward scenes had the more truly strengthened their inward sense of life, the life which must "carry on" to triumph. No word of complaint fell from their lips. No one spoke of his own suffering. There was a common, a mutual life. In their presence one could feel the reality of the new vision, one realized that the spiritual world is near.

Once I conversed with an infantry captain who had lain almost helpless without food and drink for five days in a trench among the dead, before his rescue. He bore no outward mark of what he had passed through. He was as strong in his faith in the spiritual life as ever. His presence brought no hint of death, nor did his conversation turn upon the horrors and miseries. The same was true of a friend to the soldier who had received the last message for the loved ones at home from an aviator burning to death in the wreckage of his machine. The friend seemed to have been buoyed up by the thought of life, the life connecting him who was passing with those left behind. Not until long afterwards did he give himself over for a brief time to the sadness and the horror which had to be cast out of his mind that he might keep this sense of life.

So, too, in the case of another who had braved the worst dangers of the front line to carry food to his comrades and who was the only survivor in a group of five when a shell burst in their midst. Shortly afterwards the same narrow escape came to him again. This time he was picked up and borne to the rear, and months of suffering from the shock and strain ensued. But what I caught in his utterance and what I felt in his presence bespoke the same beautiful vision. For he was indeed a consecrated soul. He had hoped to lose his lesser life while finding his greater that by so doing he might serve his fellows the more. It was the prompting to the spiritual life that led him into the danger-line. It was with a deepened sense of life that he returned.

So, too, in numberless ways one catches the impetus to live the larger life from those who, enduring the warfare on land and sea, have seen death



passing in their midst. It is for those of us who have caught the vision in some measure to pass it on to those whose spirits are still bowed down with grief. It should be no slight thing to contemplate, this fortitude and this calmness wherewith the ones who are left have met the experience as their comrades went West. Well may we put two and two together, and try to acquire something like the fulness of this faith in life, sharing in sympathetic imagination the new vision.

Always the clue that is given us is in words of life, not death, not the sadness, not the mere description of death's outward semblances. Thus one comes to see that the guiding principle of thought is found, not in human weakness, but in human strength. We have too long thought of death as a yielding of power, as a sacrifice. We have dwelt on what was lost, on our own losses. We have forgotten the long period of development which brought the spirit to the triumphant hour of transition. Now we begin to see with clear conviction that the same power that is with the spirit in its approach to death, in the glorious fight for freedom, is with the spirit afterwards, when the spirit has dropped the earthly garment which we call the flesh.

The war which we "live" then is spiritual. It begins with the victories in our spirits. For war touches the whole of our natures and sets free the instincts, impulses and emotions, the basic impulses of human nature; and then, having cast these to the surface in the earlier months of the struggle, the spirit is more ready to live the larger life. It also sets free the basic impulses within the enemy. Hence in the larger sense it is a contest between good and evil within and without. It comes as a challenge. It seems in league with the older theories of death. It tries to inflict death in its worst forms upon us. But the challenge of the destructive forces is met by the constructive. It more and more enlists the powers of the spiritual world. Hence the faithful look more and more to the divine, praying for the triumph of life. The turning of the tide as the war comes to an end is indeed the victory of life over death. Our thought therefore turns from the visible environment of war to the invisible environment of the soul.

Some one has said that death is in reality a "step in life." So indeed it is if we view it in the light of the spirit's long progress from birth on through the events of our natural existence to their spiritual fruition. In this light death is not the cessation of consciousness but the transfer of consciousness away from material things as we have known them here. It may be a "sleep and a forgetting" here, but is no less truly an awakening and a discovering there. Since it is not in essence a painful process it is a step in freedom. The first feeling is likely to be one of joy at being alive, more truly alive, not "dead" as death has been regarded. It may indeed be said that death is in reality a resurrection, since the spirit is always more or less in bondage while in the flesh. We may then draw upon the whole literature of the new birth in order to complete the beauty of the vision.

To find our clue in the thought of life in the sense of continuity of progress for the human spirit, is of course to give up the old idea that death is the result of sin. For death is now seen as a natural, rational change which comes to all. There is indeed "spiritual death," or non-receptivity to the divine love and wisdom. But this is perversion of life. It may be as true of spirits in the flesh as of those who have left the flesh. So indeed the resurrection may have begun before the earthly garment is laid aside. Whosoever has experienced the new birth in some measure is prepared for the new vision of death. "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." But the question of sin is another matter. What we are concerned with just now is the certainty that whatever the life on earth has been up to the hour of transition in very truth it continues to be. For the mere event called death is less consequential than we had supposed. Many of our creeds have placed a strong emphasis upon it. Many of our customs have magnified its sorrows. We have not been true in conduct to what we profess to believe when we have repeated those wondrous words from the Master of life who assures us that God is "not a God of the dead, but of the living; for all live unto him."

The significance of this truth is that after death every one's state of life is at first what it was in the world, although it may presently take on a new

emphasis and draw to itself new influences. A little child in consciousness would then be a little child still, however old might have been the bodily garment. A man in virtue would be a man still. Thus a soldier going West through valiant service would bear in mind and heart whatever he had achieved in his earthly career, the quality of his life rather than his mere belief would determine the beginnings of his newer experience.

Thus viewed, as an awakening, not a journey, death would be the separation of the spiritual body from the natural, the freeing of the soul from material obstacles and the discovery and use of its spiritual senses and powers of thought. It would not be primarily a separation from those we love, and who love us, despite all appearances, but greater closeness to those with whom we are in affinity. For even while we are in the flesh we belong in spiritual groups according to our affinities, whatever the concealments we cast about one another through allegiance to conventionality and the wiles of the flesh.

After death the things that have been in the natural memory would of course become quiescent, and everything would be seen in a different light. For death is a departure from or a leaving of the outer or natural man and a coming to the inner or spiritual man. We may venture to describe the first intelligible moment as an awareness that the fleshly garment has been left behind and with it the type of experience pertaining to or associated with it. New associations would then be formed, and a gradual realization of the meaning of the change. Then would come an adjustment to the newer, freer conditions, the new type of consciousness, interior, illuminative; not conditioned and hampered as ours is now within the brain.

With the coming of this newer, freer consciousness there would doubtless be new contrasts, hence the recovery of surviving memories of life in the natural world, how one lived when here, what was achieved, wherein one failed. The survival of these memories would carry with it the survival of deeds, character, individuality, the prevailing love. These survivals would in turn form a basis for new experiences, new associations and consciousness.

In answer to the question, What do we carry with us? it could then be confidently said, we carry our personal identity in the interior sense of the word, the sort recognizable by affinity. That is, we carry the strength of manhood or womanhood attained, the strength of will or courage, the level of moral attainment won through the real victories over temptation, passion, and the other enticements of our selfishness. We carry with us the level or center of spiritual regeneration, the point attained if spiritual regeneration has begun, the inner integrity. But undoubtedly we also bear with us the opposites of these so far as they have not been thrown off in our interior development. Whatever is unregenerate in our natures will surely be seen in clearer light, for possessing "the ability to understand what is true and to will what is good," a sure contrast will be discovered, and we will be able to draw to our spirits that which is akin to our prevailing love.

That our lives are in large part shaped by our "ruling passion" or prevailing love, we already know from much experience in the world. The war on the part of the Central Powers grew out of their lust of power and swept forward to its destiny. It was met by an opposing love of justice on the part of the Allies. The war reached its climax at the time of the armistice with the love of justice in the ascendant. The period of controversy which then ensued grew out of the level attained with the signing of the armistice. There were no leaps. There were no miracles. Nor are there any leaps or miracles in the progress of that inner warfare which goes on in the natures of men. To be freed from the fleshly life by the transition called death is to continue with that process, amidst such surroundings as the prevailing love shall attract. Thus man can be formed for heaven by means of the world. Thus the life of charity leads to heaven. And by the same rule whatever men have set their hearts on in suchwise that they love those things more than the things of heaven will as surely stand in their way.

We know, too, that a man's character is determined by what predominates. Hence realizing that our life will follow us and will go on in freedom, we try to overcome any ruling affection or love that may impede our moral

progress. Whether we acknowledge it or not, and whether we live by it or not, we know for a truth in our hearts that "no man can serve two masters." And if we would "live the life," if we would serve our fellowmen and let love to God and man become our predominating love, we may find splendid and inspiring examples in the careers of those who have laid down their lives that our great and small nations might live in the security of democracy.

Never has a greater number of men been called together in arms to fight for righteousness than in this war. Never has death been more terrible externally, but never has it been more beautiful in the light of heavenly values. Through the sufferings on beds of pain, through the last moments on the battlefield, in the trenches, at sea, and in the air, we have caught a new vision of death. Like the soldier who saw the huge clock in the sky as a sign and symbol of heavenly succor and spiritual blessedness in the present, we have beheld the spiritual world in beatific vision over the ruins and above the wreckage of the war-swept front. We who have known our soldier boys and sailor lads intimately have almost beheld the continuous pathway of their transition. We know that nothing noble or significant was lost or left behind, since their nobility was of the spirit.

## VII. The Spiritual World

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**N**OW THAT the new vision of death has given sufficient contrast, it is well to look back over the past few generations to see by comparison whither our thought has traveled. The contrast seems impressive indeed if in imagination we put ourselves in that far-off time when God was still thought of as a solitary Being at home in some distant region, apart from our earth and surrounded by mysterious personages known as "angels." It was customary in that age to minimize the present life, as if it were a mere concession to man in preparation for his future state of bliss. The world was disparaged as vain, the flesh was condemned as the source of temptations to sin, and man's natural life seemed altogether miserable. The righteous could apparently enter through faith alone, that is, belief in the atoning sacrifice of Christ. Hence salvation was a fairly simple process. It was not then necessary to "live the life." By a sudden change man was to be transplanted into a secure place in heaven, there to enjoy a wholly different mode of existence in which there should be no more sorrows and withal nothing to accomplish. Or, perchance, man's transition to the infernal region was made with as great ease. Hell was put in sharpest antithesis to heaven, as if a man could be relegated there by arbitrary fiat. Sometimes, however, hell was made vividly fascinating by the lurid descriptions of the poets.

Although so much stress was put upon man's future state, little attempt was made to explain what that state should be. The human soul was to become a spirit at death. The spirit was ostensibly a kind of formless essence thought of in the vaguest sort of way. It seemed disloyal to heaven to attribute substance to the spirit. There was no definite idea of the spirit's relation to its former self, save that right belief had secured salvation, just as sin led the soul to hell. But little was said about the spirit's new body, despite the direct teaching of Paul that man possesses a spiritual body. The spirit's future abode was on the whole out of relation to law. The spiritual world was in brief the realm of the supernatural, and the supernatural was not in those days merely "above nature," but the source of interventions breaking in upon man's natural life in response to prayer or through some caprice of the divine will. The security of heaven could almost be bought for a stated price in some of the churches, while in others people were more actuated by the fear that "probation" would end with death than by actual love for heaven and its state of blessedness. Death indeed was in every sense of the word to be feared.

The reaction against these views has been in process ever since men began to realize that there could be no such transformation as salvation by mere faith, by any belief which absolved men from the need for genuine repentance and reformation. The change was greatly facilitated in the nineteenth century by the teachings of science concerning the reign of law. For thoughtful people began to see that if everything in the natural world has come into its present being through gradual change, then the generation of spiritual things could be no exception to the law of uniformity. That is, men could not attain a comfortable place in heaven by an easy leap, whatever their former life might have been. If law rules in this life, it must rule in the future. Consequently the supernatural heaven of old began to disintegrate.

This line of reflection was furthered by the teaching of science that nature shows no evidences of interference on the part of the Creator. The world

was lifted towards God into the heavenly light of the new age. Men came to think of God and to love Him in intimate relation with this world, with something of the soldier's certainty that God really exists. God indeed became immanent, indwelling through His wisdom as its Creator in this splendid world of ours. And with the change to the thought of God as immanent in His world, constantly sustaining it, intimately present with the children of men, there came new views of the spiritual world as related to the natural. Meanwhile, this world became more and more beautiful in our eyes. The flesh was no longer condemned. Men gave their chief thought to the development of the marvelous resources of nature.

To be sure, this reaction went to the verge of skepticism in some quarters. The maxim, "One world at a time," became the watchword for people who ceased to take interest in any sort of future state. It seemed to many that no one need any longer fear the fires of hell. Large numbers of men and women today still assume the right to ignore all else save the natural world, with its opportunities for pleasure, for worldly success and display. "One world only" is in effect the new maxim.

There was an eminently sane tendency in the reaction against the supernatural. It is necessary to be well grounded, to enter in fulness those experiences which pertain most truly to the life of the body and can best be enjoyed while we take satisfaction in natural existence. Unless well grounded we cannot build well. "All power is in ultimates," that is, in the concrete, in man's practical life. The more truly we know and profit by the present life the better equipped we are to understand the future. The more intelligently our life is related to the flesh the more surely may we enter into rational knowledge of the human spirit.

It was perfectly natural that men should discard the old idea of the supernatural world, with its dreary void separating heaven from the present warmly pulsating realm of joys and sorrows. Men no sooner renounced the artificialities of their former belief than they began to see how important is the life we now lead, wherever we are. By common consent, however much



we differ in belief, we have come to accept the Christian life of service as the real test of faith. Hence we who have seen the point have wanted to enlist with those who proposed "to do something about it," when wrongs were discussed and plans for improving human conditions were brought forward. Then, too, the great interest in experiences of a psychical nature and in psychical research long ago indicated the road to a radically different idea of the spiritual world. We began to study the unconscious in relation to the conscious. We found an instructive idea in Meyers's theory of the "subliminal self," that larger, deeper self reaching beyond our passing consciousness. Hence it became more rational to regard the human spirit as environed by the spiritual world.

One of the first of the clarifying ideas brought into strong relief by modern science was the thought of the entire universe including the spiritual world as uniform, orderly, everywhere exemplifying laws that do not change. To the devotee of the natural sciences this meant no more than the thought of law or uniformity as grounded in the nature of physical things. But to the spiritually minded it meant the idea of law and order as grounded in the mind and purpose of the Creator. Passing in thought from the natural to the spiritual, it seemed to them that the process of life must be essentially unbroken for those making the great transition. To be sure, they saw that death would be an unmasking, that man stands in need of "some deep revealing." But it seemed clear that the human spirit came under the same law of uniformity, hence that one could think of the moral life, of character, of man's future rewards, with the same reasonableness that had been applied to nature. The future life, fair or ugly, must then be the result of man's present existence. Nothing will keep him from the results of fidelity, love, the life of charity. Nor can a man evade the consequences of insincerity and self-seeking. We can be wholly at rest in this great thought of uniformity, knowing that primarily it is part and parcel of the moral order itself. Indeed, it is because uniformity is founded in the divine purpose, because it is moral

and spiritual that it holds true of the natural world. We may depend upon the universe because we may depend on God.

The change from the old idea of salvation was not wholly welcome at first. For by the change the responsibility is put upon the whole individual, and upon his whole inner life, not on his capacity for believing alone. We are human and we would fain evade responsibility. The men whom we take pleasure in condemning as "wicked" have some time expected to enjoy the pleasures of self-gratification without suffering the consequences. We are all slightly evasive on occasion. We plan to have the pleasure without the pain. The virtuous have anticipated a nobler heaven than they appeared to deserve, since the Saviour supposedly died to win for them this state of bliss. It is rather disconcerting to be told that one merits little and will receive only that measure of heavenly joy which one's life on earth may be worthy of, not as men judge but as the Lord gives in His mercy. We do not like to think that the problems remaining unsolved when earthly existence shall cease must remain over for solution in the educational future. It is still more disconcerting to learn that nowhere in the wide universe can one escape from the consequences of selfishness save in a regenerated mode of one's own life on the basis of the character attained, the responsiveness to the divine guidance. Yet what could be more rational or desirable, when we thoughtfully consider its bearings, than just this law that "as a man soweth, so shall he also reap"? What other ground of dependence could there be than the certainty and universality of law, founded in the certainty and universality of the divine purpose?

By this knowledge that the same law rules in the spiritual world that reigns here, we are lifted out of our old-time fears and troublesome anticipations. For predestination is surely not true. It is as far from truth as the fatalism of the Mohammedan soldier, who holds that but one destiny is possible. There is no such division as that which theologians were fond of making between the elect and the damned. The true God is not arbitrary. He takes no secret pleasure in consigning men to eternal torments or to any other sort of

torment. He does not punish His children. He is not actuated by caprice. We need never look forward to a grouping of souls by a principle devoid of connection with the life which we now know. God has not chosen certain ones for His glory, while the rest are doomed to hell in order to supply a sufficient contrast to virtue. We are one and all tending whither our own interior life fits us to go. We are one and all provided for by the same tender care and wise providence. The decisive considerations are not objective to us, are not imposed upon us, but are within ourselves. What seems like sheer responsibility, an irksome law which we are all under, is really a great spiritual privilege, the privilege of living in a universe that is through and through the expression of mercy, of love and far-seeing wisdom.

The experience which we call death must then be an awakening into clearer realization of our true nature. It cannot be the dreadful sundering of all our familiar ties which some of us have taken it to be. Nor can it be a transition into "a great unknown," as if an abyss lay between. There are no abysses and no straits, howbeit there are gradations of reality, hence degrees of difference between the natural and the spiritual. Since our inner life grows in an orderly manner out of the natural into the spiritual, we are building up the spiritual body which is to manifest in all honesty and without deceit or concealments whatever we are, for better or worse. Some of us are mere children, totally unaware of the interior life. But others are so far enlightened that the transition must come almost without a break in consciousness. Some, too, are so near heavenly things in the faithfulness of their conduct that they are already one with these at heart, although they may lack understanding. Each will begin with that which he really is, all illusions having been dispelled, all pretenses undermined, all hypocrisy unveiled.

Hence experience in a war-zone is excellent by way of preparation. For war is a terrible unmasking. We see men as they are, from general to private. We see the enemy as he is. We know what hell is. We have reason for our conviction that it can never be any worse. Accordingly, we count on the enemy for what he really is, treacherous, sly, but also so mistaken that he

thinks he can deceive us by his propagandism, his spectacular air-raids and other absurd schemes. We count on our own superiors in the ranks, too, for what they are. No longer can any of us pretend to be what he is not. If we perform heroic deeds and receive the *croix de guerre*, there are so many comrades who have been decorated, so many *poilus* who won their crosses before we even thought of enlisting, that we take no credit to ourselves for virtue.

Just as each builds on foundations already laid when he offers his services in war-time, so we realize when we think it over that all men will continue their constructive work, if they so will, and be equally free to continue to try the experiment of self-assertiveness if they choose. There will be within each of us who are aspiring much more than a core of reality or center of attraction, drawing its like. There will be a structure of character, a type of life with its modes of expression, a will shaped by contact with this present world, a dynamic or prevailing love.

We already have a clue to the principle which governs these relationships. For we possess minds intimately related with the physical organism through the brain, and through the organism with the world. Forth from the world there proceed enticements to pleasure, to self-gratification and all that goes with self-love. In fact, we are followed up by people who would either keep us where we are or drag us down, just as the soldier is followed up from the time he enlists or is drafted by those who distribute "smokes" or other inducements to bind men to the senses. Forth from the world there come activities that arouse us to labor, to seek success, to "play the game," train our powers, paint pictures, model in clay, write verse, compose, serve our fellows, and so on through unlimited possibilities of responsiveness. All the while, from infancy to old age, we are reacting, rebelling, producing or serving, as the case may be. What we elect to do depends on what we are. What we choose and make our own becomes part of us, shaping and molding our mental and moral life, thence fashioning the external conduct, the speech, the face, everything in our nature, to manifest that which is within.

For better or worse we are always building. Thus we are acquiring the modes of expression which we will later manifest through the finer substances of the spiritual world. We surely may think of the spiritual organism which is thus to manifest our nature more intimately and faithfully as at least as real, as manifold and expressive as these physical forms of ours. In truth the spiritual organism is far more real and highly specialized; for it will endure throughout all changes, it will more and more adequately manifest the soul.

Again, we have a most definite clue concerning our future in that part of our nature which already has the greatest influence on our present life. To be sure, most of us are centers of conflicting desires and impulses. We frequently wonder what it is that we really care for, what is worth while. We question whether we possess any purpose or inner principle of coherence. Yet it is still true that we are of certain pronounced types. We have our interests, our likes and dislikes. We give heed to this or that event or invitation which chances to interest us, passing by all the rest. Within the apparent incoherence, the duality of self or conflict of voices, there is a personal activity that steadily goes forth in pursuit, a will that shapes our mental life to its ends. We seek what we love most. Where the heart is centered there all our activities tend to congregate. Not in reality do we "serve two masters," whatever our mental camouflage. Reasoning back from what we find ourselves doing to what we must be in order thus to labor and pursue ends, we may learn our habitual temper, our dominant passion, just as we reason back from the enemy's deeds in the destruction of industries and the pilfering of machinery from Belgium and France: we come to know what manner of schemer he is with his boasted "Kultur." What dominates the enemy now, before he is conquered by force of arms, is likely to dominate his mentality after the armistice, however quiet he keeps. So we know that what dominates us now will continue to rule unless some deep experience shall induce a change. If we would change and build a better self under divine guidance, we surely know where to begin, we know where to turn for light. As we judge the enemy, so we come to judge ourselves: by what we

are interiorly, not by any appearance, however gratifying it may be to those who flatter us and seek our favor. We must not love any other master if we would conform our lives to the standard set on earth by the Master of men.

Man is not then to cease to be a soul and become a spirit at death. He is a spirit now, a spiritual being with an organism fitted for life in this world, with a mind that expresses the spirit and discloses the world by reporting its events and picturing its existence. Man already thinks in part with his spirit. The man thinking and willing is already the being who shall know the higher experiences of the spiritual world. Just as man's life possesses a content, a series of feelings, thoughts, pleasures and pains, affections and strivings in that wonderful stream of activities which we call "consciousness," so man's future will be a life replete with moments of keen feeling, with sentiments, aspirations, ideals. Our knowledge of present mental life gives us a very direct way to realize what the future states of life must be. We shall carry with us what is essential. We shall be able to put two and two together, identifying what we have been with what we find ourselves to be as a result of the "deep revealing." We shall connect what we then feel with what we have felt, that is, in essence, not with our merely natural memory as employed here. There may be gaps and losses. But we are aware of such now. Forgotten deeds and sentiments will recur to mind, mayhap to disconcert us. But we already have similar glimpses. We might have insight from the present hour if we would turn towards heaven in genuine prayer to know ourselves even as we are known. We may pass through a period of haziness and slow awakening as from a shock or sleep. But we witness such awakenings even now on the part of men who are recovering from the shock and strain of the long and terrible warfare in the trenches.

Since the spiritual world is not an artificial realm, peopled by thin beings in idle perfection wandering to and fro over the golden streets, or haunted by filmy ghosts of former men, or even a limbo to whose furnaces that do not consume we may consign the men whose creeds differ from our own, it is not a "place" at all. It is not a world beginning just above the clouds, or even

a world that touches this one as the earth's atmosphere rests upon the earth. We need to start from another vantage-point to realize its true character. That is, the spiritual world psychologically speaking is a series of states, mental and moral, pertaining to character and the real life, and gathering around the individual in such a way as to constitute "a sphere." One need not then ask "where" the spiritual world is, as if one could tell at precisely what point it begins in the total cosmos, what portion of the universe it fills. The spiritual world exists wherever men are found who have begun in some measure to realize heaven and to experience the better results of their own acts. But it also includes us all in its higher or its nether aspects, and so the virtuous life is not our only clue. There is no heaven for the soul to be "taken into," as if in sudden reward for duties done. There is no hell to be "cast into" by way of punishment for our sins, as if it were a locality or "pit." Heaven must first be within in order to be without, and we would hardly think of inner peace or uplifts of heart and will as occupying space. If hell exist within it will appear without, and we are unable to assign any spatial magnitude to our self-will. Eternity is not a hither region to be raised into at death, or a region out of relation to time. The human spirit already dwells in eternity, dwells there by possessing truths that never began and will never cease to be. It is there by living in some measure the immortal life.

The spiritual world is infinitely near but veiled to mortal sight unless disclosed to those whose spiritual eyes have been opened. It is not vague but in every way as distinct as this. It is not empty but filled, a world of forms and substances. It is not less permanent but more permanent than this, although its aspects may be far more numerous and because of these, because of the changes in man's spirit, it may seem variable. Plainly, it is not a subjective but an objective world, since it discloses to us what we are, since we behold the souls of men as they are. It is in every way as free a world, yes far more free, since affinities will be drawn spontaneously to their like, since men will more readily express what they are and in manifold ways develop under more favoring conditions.

Since the natural world is in space and the spiritual is not, but differs in quality from mere "things," bound as they are by physical forms, there is no "space" between the natural and the spiritual, no bar or wall between the vital present and that mode of life once spoken of as "beyond the cold grave." For, first of all, God is not in space, is not limited by these forms, barriers and places we see. God is the source of the life and substance of both worlds. Space pertains as we know it to these external forms, these forms that come and pass while our spirits endure. There may indeed be appearances of space in the spiritual world, that is, separations and distances on account of the differences of state among its inhabitants, and because of the varied external resemblances that represent their interior states. But we already speak of people round about us in the flesh as "distant" or "near" when we have no thought of the number of miles between them. Nothing stands between us and the spiritual order which we enter and which then becomes "near" as soon as we adopt the heavenly leading. Nor does anything keep us from immediately entering hell when we give expression to the self-love which generates it. The spiritual world is already as extensive as those beings make it who live in it, with the great variety of their states. It is wide as eternity, as rich as the diversities of beings who contribute their share to its joys and its labors.

The spiritual world cannot, however, be characterized as "near" in the sense of a mystical blending of forces or the insensible fading out of the visible into the invisible. There is surely a discrete difference between the natural and the spiritual. The natural is in "time" as we say when realizing that the course of events in nature is irrevocable. The natural is invested with spatial relations, with processes that come and go, as material bodies dissipate and forces change form. The natural is played upon, used, and in war-time man tries to harness or organize it so as to destroy every obstacle that balks his will. The bodily organism is the "garment" wherewith the spiritual clothes itself for a period. There is a radical difference between the garment and the spirit clothed. There is a nextness between spirit and body



without a blending. The spiritual world is near in the sense of contiguity, by correspondence, and because of the coming of heavenly influences from the spiritual into the natural. Each world subsists from its own vital center. There are many points of radical dissimilarity between them, despite all the resemblances.

Man was so created that he could dwell in the natural world and in the spiritual world at the same time, that is, through the co-presence of two types of relationship of which he is the center. He was created a type of both worlds that the two might be conjoined in him. That is, he possesses two natures, an inner and an outer mind. In his outward nature or external mind, he looks towards the world of visible forms, dwells there, gathering experiences from it, drawing it to himself or permitting it to attract him. He may even become imprisoned by his external selfhood, wholly given over to love of the world. In his inward nature or internal mind man looks towards the spiritual, dwells in it, receives influences from it, and on occasion has far glimpses into its reality, has a vision which succors him in his hour of pain, or feels an influx of strength which enables him to energize to the full, not in himself alone but in responsiveness to heavenly power. Thus when hard pressed, as on the battlefield, he may be driven to seek its guidances and its powers. Thus when at the point of death his last words may tell us of some of the wonders which his inner eyes behold. As a spirit he may indeed be lifted to the level of its realities, his mind may be lifted into spiritual light. If he knew himself more truly he would cultivate the conditions attendant upon the shining of the inward light.

While then man's two worlds are in many respects as wide as the poles asunder, they are both near because he may enter within or look without, finding himself in the sphere to which he turns. If drawn by the enticements of the natural world so that he is ruled by his external selfhood, he may as a slave to his passions become inwardly quiescent. He may be almost "dead" spiritually, as if cut off forever from the spiritual order in all its heavenly relationships. Thus he can become a mere thing of flesh and blood, an animal

absorbed in his impulses, a creature of self-love in every way as subject to outward conditions as the German soldier who has become a mere cog in the military machine, a unit in the mailed fist which guides the German state. Incredible indeed are man's powers of descent into frightfulness, his control over his fellowmen for mere purposes of inordinate ambition. Or, ascending into his truer nature, he may look down as it were upon the external man as relatively foreign to his will, refusing to keep company with him. He may thus renounce his former mode of life as sinful, and thus as utterly alien to the self he now wills to be. For he may come to see that it is love or will that constitutes his real nature, that makes him truly a man, in contrast with the lower impulses which he once took to be himself. He will then realize more searchingly that he is in deepest truth a spirit with a body, not a body with a spirit.

By making due allowance for the radical difference between the natural world and the spiritual, man may therefore draw upon everything he knows concerning his external life and see in it a sign or symbol of the spiritual world. He need no longer dread those disclosures which life makes for him when he learns "how the other half lives," or when war sets free the forces of hell. For he may then put down as already experienced very much that in the older way of thinking was consigned to the future life. Thus mindful that he has seen hell already, that he knows its deviltry and its consequences, he is made joyfully aware that he knows heaven in part too. He may then begin the study of life in earnest, with the realization that the more truly he knows the natural world the better prepared he will be to construct an idea of the spiritual. Thus to begin is to find neglected evidences on every hand, also teachings that throw so much light on the nature of death and the life beyond that he may wonder how he could have been so long unmindful of them.

We have passed then from an essentially theological view of the spiritual world, with its speculations based on artificial, not on rational distinctions, to a view that very closely conforms to the modern man's estimate of life

as a process to be lived, cherished, and purified. The newer views of our selfhood have greatly aided in the process of clearing the intellectual horizon. Meanwhile, the more thoughtful people in the churches have outgrown the older views. Then the reaction in favor of the actual realities of the Christian faith which the war has helped to bring about has tended to strengthen these larger views. The war has brought the spiritual world nearer. It has broken down some of the remaining theoretical barriers. It remains for the individual who has caught the new vision to make the utmost of every clue pointing to the nature of man as a spiritual being.

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## VIII. Man in the Spiritual World

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**N**OT LONG after the armistice was signed I visited a little ruined town behind the Champagne front. The Germans had marched through there on their humiliating return from the first battle of the Marne. Because a few of the inhabitants had displeased them, these Huns turned about in their march and burned a large part of the town. The attractive little church had been mostly destroyed, too, and only the outer walls remained. On this day, for the first time since the destruction wrought by the enemy, the worshipers had ventured to return, and little bunches of evergreen and vases of flowers gave a touch of beauty to the bare walls. These decorations bore testimony to the undying spirit of the priest with his little flock, to the men in blue who mingled with the townspeople in this first service of thanksgiving before the ravaged altar. One realized anew how very far indeed from the reach of armies are those things which the heart of man holds dear. The God whom we worship lives not in temples made with hands. Yet a few memorials gathered from the fields serve to mark His presence even mid ruined walls.

Thus is one minded to consider many things which the spiritual world is not, many means by which it may not be attained, while also remembering

that in a measure it is not excluded at all, any more than the worshiper is deprived of a sanctuary when the visible churches are destroyed.

As I came away from the ruined church I passed a lonely wooden cross by the roadside. An innocent shepherd boy had there been sacrificed because of some trifling offence displeasing to an arrogant Prussian officer. The little cross was a touching memorial and symbol. It made the courageous young peasant live for me in sympathetic imagination. Yet it also seemed to stand for that blessed utterance of long ago, "He is not here, he is risen." Thus symbolical indeed are all the wayside crosses which one sees in the war-zone. No visible sign or ceremonial is aught else than a symbol. There is no exclusive virtue in one material thing over another, though bread and wine have come to be sacred in religious ceremonials. The actual presence is indeed there in the heart of the devout worshiper. But so is the risen Lord in the ruined church, in the devastated homes throughout France and Belgium, Serbia, and the other lands where men and women have wrought and suffered.

We may then say confidently that the future life is not determined by poverty or riches in this world, not by renunciation of the world, or even by baptism in childhood, although baptism in childhood or in adult life may be a "sign and memorial that man should be regenerated." It is not decided by solitary meditation or the hermit life, any more than by participation in any kind of society. Its joys are not the result of mere piety, nor need we look forward to a mere life of praising and giving glory to God. Since heaven is not attained at a bound, we may dispense with the idea that our future existence will be spent in idleness. Without productive activity we are never truly happy here. Without a life of usefulness we could hardly be happy there. Just as life here is by no means the same for all, but abounds in variety without limit, so we may look forward to a future of infinite varieties and diversities.

In fine, we take with great seriousness the proposition that man is already in the spiritual world so far as his internal nature is concerned, and whatever

we find him enjoying in spirit here, together with all true worship in spirit and truth, all true service in the spirit, we may accept as a clue to his future life. Man is already partly social in all these matters. So we may say that human society is already partly in the spiritual world. Man as spirit is indeed essentially social. Because of his affectional nature he seeks fellowship with those who are akin. We have some inkling of this his truly social relationship in those rare experiences by which we are inwardly drawn to people who are drawn to us, although no external reason is apparent why we should meet.

For the most part we are external. We permit ourselves to be swayed by conventional standards, entering into partnerships for the sake of gain, through pride, zest for position, love of power. Then, too, "language was given us to conceal thought." In manifold ways we may hide behind the devices of the society into which we have been admitted. But now and then we transcend all this exclusiveness and aristocracy and judge by real values, or seek inner affinities. Thus we already know a few whose mode of life and thought is deeply akin to our own. We already belong to a small group of those who have been led by the same interior influences. What is more natural than to regard this grouping as extending into the larger spiritual world, and to say that it not only includes congenial souls within the flesh but those who have passed into the future life? We may indeed go farther and endeavor to conceive of the societies of heaven on this same basis, the basis of affinity.

We are thus put into a very different way of thinking about our fellowmen. We cease to think of them as mere creatures of flesh and blood, we cease to judge by external signs and semblances alone. We pass beyond the conventional standards of society and begin to realize what "righteous judgment" means. We come to regard our brothers in very truth as "heirs of the spiritual kingdom." We see that in a profound sense all who are seeking to live by spiritual standards belong together like one great man in whose selfhood all are "members one of another." What is needed is

outward expression of this inward reality. "Thy kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven." How different our ideal of co-operative service when we thus seriously regard ourselves as citizens of the spiritual world!

It follows that as a man is already a denizen of the socially spiritual world while still in the flesh, his spirit is so organized as to make possible his remarkable relationships to these two worlds. This statement flashes upon the mind with the force of a truism when one realizes the meaning of the foregoing studies in the spiritual nature of man and the new vision of death. For one sees that whatever man experiences by way of interior visions, whatever he is capable of doing by way of preparation for the future life implies the existence within him of the power or senses that make such an inner life possible. If already so far complex as to be a little natural world within himself, and everybody concedes this intimacy of relationship to everything in the natural world, he is no less truly a little spiritual world, in correspondence with all its conditions, its powers of operation. His mind opens out in manifoldness of mental life through physical sensation, feeling, pleasure and pain, thought, will, and the affections or love springing from these relationships. It also opens through corresponding spiritual powers which unite him with the spiritual world. If he possesses natural senses, he possesses spiritual senses, too; in fine, a complete equipment of powers essential to communication with spiritual realities, although few of us may be more than dimly aware of the operation of these powers while we are in the flesh.

We may think of these two groups of powers as interior and exterior. In the outer court of his nature man meets the physical world, greets his fellows in the flesh, and responds through his emotions, deeds, ideas, will. His natural world is precisely as large for him as his thought and will, his knowledge. He enlarges upon what is merely presented to his senses by the aid of all that science has taught him. He enlarges it by sympathy, by the aid of the press and telegraph. But he also possesses an inner court where he meets spiritual beings, where his spirit discovers powers responding to his higher

affections and his prayers, where he seeks guidance, knowledge of what is right and true. He may close the door upon the outer world and enter "the secret place." He may seek wisdom concerning the spiritual world and the life after death, and enlarge his inner world just as by acquainting himself with the teachings of geology, astronomy, evolution, and other branches of natural science he enlarges his outer world. His mind is so constituted as to receive the divine life and to appropriate it as love and wisdom. To become at home in the inner world is to have a general idea at least of that part of our nature which we will bear away into the future life.

Taking our clue from the thought of the larger selfhood, the subconscious as well as the intuitive side of our nature, with the wealth of reactions which occur when we energize to the full, we have a definite way of thinking about that part of us which survives. For we need no longer think of the spirit as localized or imprisoned in the brain. We may think of it in the light of all its relationships, through premonitions, guidances, telepathy, and the other experiences which show that the self gathers information from beyond. We may conceive of consciousness as something outside of and beyond the mechanism it uses. That is, the brain will no longer be thought of as if it produced consciousness but rather as the instrument of the mind for gathering impressions and translating volition into action.

Since the test of entering into the freer relationships of the spiritual world is man's life as attained in this world, we know that for those who have lived righteously there will be a more decided turning of the will towards heaven. We may therefore think of our loved ones who have "gone before" with utmost confidence. To "go West" is to earn the reward and experience the freedom which have been prepared for us here. To "go West" is to go with and among one's spiritual kindred, in genuine recognition of inner affinities. It is to find new opportunities for service, new choices on the basis of fresh experiences added to the deeds borne away from the natural world. It is also to find freer opportunities for thought of the intuitional sort, the growth of that larger selfhood of which we are but dimly aware in occasional moments.



“Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth. Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow with them.”

Very far have we traveled from the former idea of a world which must be burned up or otherwise destroyed before the day of judgment should begin. Far, too, are we from the idea of a physical resurrection in which “at the last trump” every soul should join its body. Every day is a judgment day which brings us to righteous consciousness. Every day advances us in which we decide what master we will serve. We pass judgment on ourselves as the spiritual life within us grows, as we give ourselves in allegiance to heavenly standards. Thus we begin already to think and to act in a measure as we will think and act in the nobler future when motives can no longer be concealed. It dawns upon us finally that not even in hell could one have a divided mind. Thus we realize that as we “die daily,” as we “pray without ceasing,” so every day is a judgment day. With this discovery there fades from view a whole world of artificialities that have gathered about death as a supposed “long journey” or sudden change into a totally different world. We come to a point at length where we believe confidently that nothing in the future will cause us seriously to be taken by surprise.

May we speak as confidently concerning those who are to be found in heaven? Surely, since we have come to know in some measure the life that leads to heaven, that man is already in the spiritual world so far as his interior nature is concerned. The test is heavenly belief and love, service through love of man and love for God. Heaven is constituted of those whose prevailing love is of this higher sort in contrast with mere love of self or of worldliness. This higher love increases by loving the neighbor as oneself, or more than oneself. It will increase immeasurably in the other life.

Hell exists for those who reject this higher love. That is, hell is the state of alienation or separateness from the influences that lead to love of the neighbor and love for God. That is, it is not a place, not a condition imposed upon us, but is essentially a state of negation or denial in which man is untrue

to himself, like a house divided against itself. Hell regarded as continuous or permanent would be a state of persistence in this denial. It would be confirmed love of self, a life of selfishness preferred, made a habit. It would endure as long as this preference should rule. It would vary with the degree of selfishness, the variety of self-will, the persistence in inflicting itself upon others. Organized in a military state, it endures as long as it can entrench itself in new and fiendish devices, as long as its destructive forces are better unified than those of the nations fighting for justice. Its torments depend upon the degree of the alienation which invites them.

Is there a purgatory? Say rather that there is a world of spirits into which men go after death until their interiors are opened, until their prevailing affections are disclosed in such a way as to indicate to what spiritual growth they belong. This No Man's Land of the Spiritual World is then a kind of clearing house. Into it men and women are continually passing, there to remain a shorter or a longer time according to their interior states. We are well acquainted with such intermediate states in our ordinary human society. Only the people of the most pronounced character show plainly where they are. Any number appear to be neutral. Some of these we could quickly classify if we were given the privilege. Others would long puzzle us. We would not wish to make any mistakes. How much more righteous and sure must be the judgments of the future life before the Wisdom and the nearer presence of that Love which causes all interiors to appear at last for what they are! Man would not then hesitate as he does now between two gates. We would not so long try to serve the destructive forces while pretending to love the constructive. At last we would will to serve one Master.

Must a soldier boy suffer in the future life because he has slain human beings? Our deeds or works are not judged in righteousness by what they outwardly appear to be, but by the will and thought behind. They are in quality what the love is that produced them. If they spring from willing performance of duty, from obedience, readiness to do one's part in love of country, love for the neighbor, they are known by the motive from

which they sprang. Hence the suffering or the joy our deeds bring upon us depends on the spirit in which we act. One who kills out of delight in killing suffers accordingly. One who slays because slaying is assigned to him as his task is rewarded according to the love wherewith his duty is performed. In war-time the majority simply give themselves in readiness to do what must be done. "C'est la guerre."

Are our soldier boys and sailor boys in heaven? That depends upon the degree of heavenly affection and character they carried with them into the realm of truly righteous judgment. We may think and speak with conviction in so far as we have seen the light of heaven in their eyes or felt its power in their deeds. We may be heartened by those who on the battlefields have had the new vision of death. Our boys have made a "step in life." They are not dead. Nothing good in them is lost. Nothing good will be taken from them.

If they did not have right beliefs concerning these matters could they enter heaven? Surely, if their hearts were right. Right beliefs may be added to "hearts loyal and true." In so far as they have come to realize that "God really exists," as one soldier put it, they possess a gift more precious than mere belief.

If they were unregenerated at death, is there any hope for them now? Unmistakably, for the new birth begins only in part, with some, while in this life; it is a gradual process. Everything will be done in the future life to increase the element of goodness produced here by response to heavenly things. We may think of our friends as among teachers far excelling in wisdom those we know on earth, among beings in whom love to the neighbor and love for the Lord transcends all other affection.

If they have sinned will they be forgiven? Just as surely as when here. Forgiveness is not the taking of our burdens from us, as if we could shuffle off responsibility. We are forgiven when we acknowledge our wrongdoing and turn away from it, refusing to identify the sin with the soul, "made in the image and likeness of God." We may be affirmative in every way when

thinking of our loved ones. Our clues are found in life, not in death; in the Bible as it reads in the spirit, not as interpreted by "the letter which killeth."

What manner of faces have they? That depends upon the quality of their love. By various devices we conceal our true selves here. Our faces change more or less according to our allegiances, as every one of us knows from observation of people who have either degenerated or had a vision of the higher life. Our faces, our whole aspect will of course change in more marked degree in the other life.

Are they among angels? Not merely because they have passed through death. The future life is surely no less varied than our present existence, particularly in the world of spirits, in which we probably find ourselves at first. We are among angels here, knowingly or unknowingly. We seldom know people as they truly are, for we judge by externals. Our faces and bodies here are natural, express what man is as a natural being. Meanwhile the spiritual has been growing up within the natural, and it may already be angelic in type.

Having dispensed with the notion that angels are peculiar beings with wings, minds without form, or ethereal beings with little vitality, we may think of them according to the best we know of spirits in the flesh. For they were not created in a class by themselves, as if they had no need of experience. They are men and women more advanced than most of us who like ourselves have "learned by doing," have passed through the warfare of destructive and constructive forces, and have attained the level where they both will and do what is right. They are wholly like ourselves, able to see and hear as we do, with all the senses we possess, in short, lacking nothing that constitutes a human being. Like ourselves they possess understanding and will, although they are surely far more intuitive, that is, they have spiritual perception, discern the heart of things, behold the hearts and minds of men and are able to speak with them even more directly than we address men here. We may therefore think of them as round about us, helping and guiding us. We may see them in imagination on the battlefield, beside the

hospital cot, wherever soldiers and sailors are in need, just as in civil life our guardians are near. Better still, we may see them "in spirit" meeting spirits just passing from the body and needing friendly guidance and strength. We may see them, too, marching among the troops as men claim to have seen them at Mons, as they may have participated in the first battle of the Marne, as their presence may have made possible the turning of the tide.

Our thought on all these matters becomes greatly simplified when we no longer think of heaven and hell as places. With the idea that angels are ethereal beings of another race, we of course discard the idea that evil spirits are former angels who have been cast down from heaven. Our starting-point is first and last with human beings on the earth or on other planets, with the possibility that each individual may become a little heaven or a little hell. We then see that the words "heaven" and "hell" are collective terms. Heaven then is constituted of more highly developed men and women who have passed through their earthly experience and learned its lessons, thereby acquiring an eternal affection which has drawn them to their kind, and to their life of service in the love of God and man. The heavens are assemblages of such beings, beings of love and charity, each with that ineffable beauty of form, of face and character which expresses eternal love. They are angels in so far as they receive and respond to the divine love and wisdom, living the heavenly life.

So, too, the spirits which have not yet become angels are discernible by their types of affection. For love or will is as surely the life of one man as of another. Every spirit serves a master, an interest, will or purpose. The spiritual world is in general as extensive as it must needs be to afford a free field for all types, down to the lowest inclination, the lowest hell which self-love creates for itself. Its contrasts, those of heaven and hell, are precisely such as the loves which men foster and express. For heaven or hell is primarily man's own interior state. That is to say, he may in his separateness or isolated selfhood, his alienation from the divine guidance, make of life a "little hell," and may gravitate to his like in so doing. Or, realizing the source of his life,

of all goodness and power, he may enter into the heavenly order and find a world of blessedness among those who acknowledge that there is but one source of life, one God of heaven and earth.

Plainly, there is a discrete difference within the spiritual world, between heaven and hell, as there is within man's own nature, with its two gates, its two voices. We are aware of the same distinction when we contrast "the little bit of heaven on earth" which we know in the home or in the Church with its opposite. Hence we know that in the highest sense it is love that constitutes heaven. Heaven is where God is known and recognized as the source of this love which endears home and the Church to us. Its central principle is the prevalence of one standard of goodness, that which is done from the divine, the perception that one wills and does nothing good by oneself, thinks and believes nothing true from oneself alone. Thus each angel is a heaven in lesser form, according to the quality of the love. It is love which brings about the superior union within the spirit. It is love which unites the spirit with kindred spirits. Thus on and on. One could not develop the idea of the spiritual world in its fulness without in each case singling out the love which underlies its discreteness, which thereby gives character to heaven and distinguishes it in every way from all the hells of self-love.

We may distinguish the spiritual world in its higher aspect all the more clearly by pointing out that it is the realm of causes, in the larger sense of the divine or creative cause, the First principle of the universe. To see the force of this statement one needs to put the mind still further into the spiritual order, looking from within outward. The process is difficult for some of us; for we have not only been influenced by the doctrine which says "one world at a time," but have almost come to think of nature as self-existent and the source of its own evolution. We have ignored the teaching of the Bible that the kingdom of heaven is "within," and comes "without observation" from within outward; and hence we have failed to realize that the little kingdom of our own inner selfhood bears a causal relation to the outward realm of

our conduct. Thus we have remained in never-ending perplexity over the warfare in progress within us.

To correct our thinking in these respects, we remind ourselves that God is not near in the old-time sense of "interferences" due to response to prayer or an arbitrary will. The sometime world of the supernatural, a domain apart from law, has entirely ceased to exist for modern thought. What exists is according to order. God is present through law, through system. His presence is as much needed as at any time in the age-long process of evolution which brought our world into being. His operation from the spiritual order into the natural is unceasing. The dependence of the temporal world upon the eternal order is constant. God is Spirit and all His energies go forth from the eternal world, taking form from His life as the one source of efficiency. Without in any sense confusing Spirit with electricity, heat, light, or any other form of physical force; without identifying Spirit with the substances of which the natural world consists, we may go as far as human language can carry us in the endeavor to realize the ineffable dependence, the unspeakable intimacy of the relation between God and His world. Nothing in nature possesses life of its own, or acts independently. All nature is actuated by divine life from the eternal world.

To gain this point of view is to have a kind of picture of the unceasing stream of life from which all visible beings and things exist, the Cause unseen, the actuated forms visible. One then sees in nature, stupendous and orderly in space and time, the external forms by which the Spirit is clothed. One sees that Spirit has adopted these forms of expression for a purpose, that nature is responsive, plastic in the presence of the Creator. All visible evolution is thus the outward ascent from lowest to highest of that which first went forth from the invisible to foster this long ascent in order and degree.

Gaining the point of view at large, one realizes in what a profound sense man is a spiritual microcosm. For within his life the order of causality is the same, from within outward, from the internal man to the external, from spirit to body. Within his life the same process is going on in miniature by which

nature as a whole is produced and sustained. It is his spirit that imbues the flesh and might learn to master its proclivities. Man as spirit has marvelous opportunities open before him in so far as, learning this true order of all causality, he also learns that one source of all power and his relation to it as a recipient. The triumphs of the spirit witnessed in the war-zone are merely beginnings in this field, in contrast with the possibilities within the grasp of the highly enlightened man, one who knows in very truth that he who controls his spirit is "greater than he who taketh a city."

The reaction against the supernaturalism of old has gone so far in our time that we have grown accustomed to the notion that nature is self-operative. Having gradually substituted the idea of self-acting forces for the thought of God, we have next discarded the idea of a creative purpose in things and have come to regard nature as a field of contending powers, the outcome of the conflict being largely in doubt. To be sure, the thought of God as immanent has in some respects brought the idea of causality once more into the foreground. But this is the causality of sequence within the world. It dispenses with the conception of God as above the natural world. It practically identifies God with the sum-total of physical forces.

Really to grasp the great idea once more that God is not only the Creator, not only the source of all immanent life, but the sustaining Spirit of which the visible world is a mere manifestation, we need to realize how little is explained by natural evolution, by a merely historical account of the events that come and go. Our thought of God as Cause thus begins where all ordinary science ends, as we penetrate beyond the visible to the invisible. We take our clue not from external things, but from interior states. We realize that the causal order of things is through and through spiritual. Thus visible forms fade away as it were in the presence of the changeless realities of the spiritual world. Thus time seems utterly superficial in contrast with the eternal order. Thus space becomes appearance. We begin to dwell in thought with the immortal powers, realizing that what is revealed from within is far more real than anything that we can see or touch with our natural senses.



Sometimes when this interior thought begins to take firm hold upon us we recollect the old question so often raised by those who cannot quite see the spiritual law, Why this long process? Why was not man created conscious of that which is real and worth while? If spiritual, why does he not know it? If the spiritual world exists, why is there not more tangible evidence of its reality? It is well to give the implied objections full force, that we may realize the beauty of the divine law, and so come to appreciate in part at least the joys of life in the spiritual world.

The answer in brief is found in knowledge of man's spiritual nature as considered in the foregoing. Man was created a free, rational being. Spirituality is not forced upon him. Indeed, he could only become spiritual in conscious actuality through awareness of alternatives and individual choices. For experience shows that man really appreciates and uses that only which he enters into willingly, intelligently. Man is primarily and essentially a will, a center of love or aspiration. He longs to achieve, to succeed, produce. He thereby acquires power and takes unto himself his kind. Will, to achieve, must be free, able to weigh and consider, experiment, turn for or against, within and without. Man could not be constituted otherwise and be himself, individual, distinctive. Thus organized, his field of experience is inevitably what we find it to be. He could not have been born and kept in a state of open vision, untrammelled innocence and undisturbed peace. For knowledge is made securely possible by contrast. Virtue must be tested. Peace must be won as a goal after justice has been attained. Peace is not an end in itself. It cannot be isolated and won by itself, any more than we can attain happiness apart from the environment in which it is produced. Nor can war be isolated or understood alone. In the divine providence war is permitted to bring civilization almost to destruction, that man may recognize its evils, trace them to their source, and so learn to prevent all wars by grasping the conflict within his breast.

Doubtless the child, ere its larger contact with the world begins, has in a degree an untrammelled openness to heaven, as did numbers of men in

the childhood of the race. We still find men, as in the case of some soldiers, who have retained this unspoiled innocence of the race's childhood. Doubtless, too, there are times of need, of sorrow and misery, when even the sophisticated are succored by ineffable presences that penetrate all barriers. Then, too, we are always sustained, held and withheld by the divine guidance. Without this intimacy of relationship with the Father we could neither advance nor live. Again, heaven is near beyond all description in the inner world. The Father ever dwells in the "secret place." No relationship is altered, therefore, on the heavenly side. It is still normal for man to have actual experience of both worlds. It is still normal to commune with the angels and receive help from them, that is, from the divine love and wisdom through them. What changes is simply man's consciousness, his attitude and the attendant life. His consciousness necessarily changes in part, that he may apprehend the two worlds, learn by doing and trying, as if he possessed power of his own. His attitude as inevitably changes, for he could hardly come to know himself in relation to the world and its enticements unless he should in a measure yield himself to the world. He could scarcely know his own self-love save through the objects which he finds himself pursuing as if they were valuable in themselves. Nor would he ever be likely to espouse the spiritual life once for all unless he should know something about its opposite. What gives us pain is that in man's identification of himself with what he loves in the world he goes so far as to separate himself in attitude from his Maker. The extent to which this alienation is due to ignorance in contrast with sin, is a question which few have undertaken to settle.

The central consideration, however, is not man's ignorance, as great as it may be; but the inspiring truth that man is not cut off from the sources of his inner life. To awake to the great truth of the nearness of the spiritual world is to realize that one need not go anywhere to find it. However remote the spiritual world seems in our ignorance, it is immediately here in the moment of our return to thought concerning it. Time is effaced by such a realization, and we become one with the innocence of childhood, and one with the

unspoiled heart of the beginnings of the race, as indeed we are drawn near the soldier or the sailor whose heart has been uncovered by the war. What now seems far from us is the sometime world of our alienation, when we tried to think without God, when we tried to be something by ourselves. Now we know for a truth that "everything is near which man loves, and remote according to his indifference or dislike."

The existence of the near-by spiritual world is demanded by just this restless dissatisfaction of ours which ever urges us on in quest of peace. Were we mere beings of flesh and blood we could be content to pursue the career of an animal. Were the mind nothing more to us than a brain secreting evanescent thought, we should care nothing whatever for the realities of the spirit. But that a real spiritual world exists in which we shall more and more satisfactorily exercise our powers may be rationally inferred from the very presence of these our partly hampered powers and the interior senses of which we are as yet so dimly aware.

The truth about man is that, although a spirit dwelling in the spiritual world, he can think and will, speak and act "as if" a mere creature of flesh and blood in the natural world; he can think and will, speak and act "as if" from himself. Hence he may collect facts and devise a way of thinking as if nature were all, as if self-caused and self-sustained. Hence, too, he may pursue his own interests to the limit. But the very mode of thought and will by which he thus develops illusion after illusion tends to bring him to the point where he is ready for the inner truth that God only is the efficient cause. That is, man can have all the experience needed right within the divinely ordered world whose realities have not even been touched by his separated consciousness and ignorant actions.

What a glorious truth then is this great discovery that by a change of consciousness and attitude man can begin here and now to live from the spiritual world! Let us note the main steps of the argument by which we have proceeded.

The starting-point is with the thought of God as Creator of a visible sphere of activity for man, a world-order where man may touch things in utmost externality, where Spirit is expressed in outmosts. This fair world of nature, orderly and uniform in space and time, is everywhere responsive to the Spirit that called it into being, everywhere instinct with life and power, yet not its own. Man as a child of nature is under the law, yet provided for and made free by the conditions that limit him. For in every respect the visible springs from the invisible, and the more thoroughly man comes into relation with nature the more intimate is his preparation to know God. Nature is for him where his interests are. It is at any moment what his attitude makes it, rigid or plastic, stern or friendly according to his love. If he lets his thought look through its events and things to the spiritual order behind, he passes almost insensibly from the natural to the spiritual. For nature after all is but a garment, a thin veil. What is needed is a vision, is that heavenly light which shall unfold its laws and processes into the same ones that fill the spiritual world. There is literally no barrier between. His thought passes into the world of spiritual realities as directly as we sometimes look beyond and within the glories of sunset to see in them symbols of heaven.

The spiritual world is wherever one thus passes into the home of goodness, the source of truth, here within our daily thoughts. It consists of God and those who gladly live and think from Him. It is inward peace and blessedness. It is the basis of all true repose and faith. It is love's sphere, and they dwell therein who live for their fellowmen. It is dynamic in character, and forth from it come our good impulses, our quickenings and guidances. So near is it that when perplexed we may turn to it and receive illuminating clues, according to our need, according to the degree of our responsiveness. So near indeed is it that through its sustaining presence we may enter into communication with the living Lord, the Father made personal and immediate to men.

Above all, therefore, the spiritual world is the basis of practical life, the life that is truly practical. Very far indeed is it from the visionary and the theoretical. For the spiritual world is made known to men above all by

experience, through life. There is an inner witness that it is near and that it is real. This witness not only bears its own evidences, higher in kind than any we seek when we ask "to see and handle" in order to believe, but it brings a prompting or impulse to go forth and carry the glad news to others. The final evidence is therefore seen in the fruits resulting, in "the signs that follow." The spiritual world is really existent for those who live by and from it as the direct source of life and power. The spiritual world for the individual man is in fact the meeting-point with the Giver of life.

If you would know of its existence in very truth, seek it with your spirit; think with the spirit, no longer in terms of sheer cold facts and inferences that acknowledge only the brain. Turn to it in the believing attitude, opening the soul to receive. Turn to it with your problems and your needs. Make your prayers vital moments of communion with it, lift your thoughts to its level to gain its illuminating point of view. Be still and realize its living presence. Let your meditations take their very inception from the thoughts which it yields, after you have come into relationship with its power, with its wisdom and its love. The more real the spiritual world becomes to you as a realm of immediate resources on which you may draw, the more truly you may come to know it as the abode of the loved ones who have gone West. There will then be a lessening sense of separateness, an overcoming of the old ideas of grief, sorrow and pain. You will then go on living in spirit with your loved ones, realizing that you are growing together, developing into greater unity of spirit.

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## IX. The Natural and the Spiritual

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IT IS an interesting and significant fact that the men at the front who have brought us the new vision of death have apparently felt no doubt concerning immortality. The editor of one of our leading religious weeklies assures us, after an extensive reading of books by chaplains and nurses who have been by the side of thousands of dying soldiers, that there is unanimous agreement on this point. It seems to matter little what may have been the prior religious belief, or even the doubt. The approach of death has found the men actuated by what this editor calls "the instinct of immortality," so that practically every soldier who died "took it for granted that he was going on living in some other world." "The interesting thing was that this instinct of immortality was as strong in those who had had no particular religious training as among those who had been reared in the Christian faith... It would seem as though there was a fundamental consciousness, an ineradicable instinct, of immortality in the human heart, a sense that we are eternal beings, and that this world is but a stage in a long progress. Place has nothing to do with this persistence of personality. We may be here, we may be there, but we are immortal in an eternal order."

With these men, therefore, it was not a question whether or not the soul exists. Of course it exists, of course it is immortal. God really lives, Heaven

is real. The human spirit will reap the reward of its labors. Life will go on and there will be real progress. God will be the same in the future life as He is here, the same infinite Father of love and wisdom, of mercy and justice. We may depend upon all these matters as certainties. They are probably as certain for the men who merely faced death or were wounded as for those who died in the trenches or hospitals.

It seems no less plain that in the opinion of the soldier what avails is a man's life, not what he believes. Thus the writer above quoted finds the chaplains and nurses agreeing that in hardly any instance was any fear of what might follow death evinced by the dying men, and this was as true of the men who were not particularly religious as of those who were. "Conduct" was the thing which in these men's thoughts "made a man worthy to go on, which assured him a 'happy' issue out of all his troubles. All the men who had been brave, clean and unselfish and honest, whether Jew or Gentile, Protestant or Catholic, professed Christian or not, were sure of being saved.... There seemed to be an almost universal feeling among these youths that goodness of life rather than correctness of belief determined the issues of life and death. They felt that the good man might die happy, the mean man had reason to be miserable."

All this is a very great gain. It gives us opportunity to turn at once to the future life as existence in a real world in which the men who have "gone West" are reaping the benefits of their service. We may think of them as far more free, happier, with greater powers of life and work. We may think of them without grief, dwelling on the glorious truth that they still live, that they are not in any sense "dead." We may think of them, too, as round about us, associated with their kindred, and finding new opportunities for faith and love. Accordingly, we may begin forthwith to acquire a way of thinking about the relationship of the future life to the present existence, and to consider the spheres of influence between the two.

Hitherto we have perhaps depended too much on mere belief, or we have sought proofs of immortality, as if the whole matter were a question

of intellectual evidences. Some of us have depended on possible spirit-messages from the great beyond, and we have been disappointed that no satisfactory account of the life after death has been forthcoming. We have spent much time over trivial evidences of spirit-return. We have looked for external proofs, something that would convince the critics. We have given more attention to psychical research than to our own deepest experience. The psychical has to a large extent obscured the spiritual. We have permitted the scepticism of modern science to intrude, as if everything were a question of laboratory methods. Now we are brought back from criticism to life. The testimony of these thousands upon thousands who have "gone West" speaks above all doubt. It speaks to the heart and finds us in the believing attitude.

Since the spiritual world is not a "place," not a separated realm about which nothing can be learned till after death, what we need is a way of thinking about it which will give practical results in this life. If we gain the inner point of view, seeing all things natural springing from the spiritual as the world of causes, we will have a basis for the interpretation of any experience which seems unusual. The normal or natural will then be the standard, just as our soldiers look forward to a future life growing out of the present existence and taking its start from conduct as known and expressed here by men of character.

To gain this point of view and regard the whole of life in relation to it will also be to grow in intimacy of relationship with God, since it is through the spiritual world that God is most directly present with us. We have failed to understand the connection between the natural and the spiritual just so far as we have failed to consider how God is related to us. The end to be sought is growth not only in knowledge but in actual realization of the divine presence. To be able to put ourselves into an attitude to receive and respond to the divine presence is to make the spiritual world vividly near. By thus learning first of all to dwell more truly with God, we shall grow into right relationship with the spiritual world as a whole. The spiritual is the key



to the natural, and also to the so-called psychical, the realm of spiritistic experiences.

Ordinarily, we use the term "spiritual" in reference to the ideal life, the goal of all true religion. But when it is a question of the entire spiritual world we of course remind ourselves that man as spirit in process of religious development is both higher and lower. As spirit he passes through a warfare. He meets temptation. He encounters evil. He faces two gates, hears two voices, is more or less subject to division within his nature. It is plainly impossible to understand his spiritual career save in the light of the tests he has met, the purification which has taken place. What we mean by the word spiritual in the ideal sense is a certain union between lower and higher, a union between mind and heart, between theory and life. In contrast with the spiritual life there is spiritual death, there is sin, there is hell. We can hardly describe the higher without reference to the lower. We certainly cannot ignore the contrasts through which man as spirit comes at last to know himself. There is a great difference between a simple, natural life of spontaneous responsiveness to one's surroundings and a life of intelligent endeavor to live according to the love and wisdom of God.

Again, we speak of war as spiritual, meaning no doubt that war spiritually regarded is a protest against war, a reaction against the evil or destructive forces of the world. But there are two parties to every war. Each participant is in a certain stage of development in the war within himself. We look forward to a time when there shall be no more wars in the natural world because the destructive forces will have been overcome within man's nature. War is due to the separation of powers which belong together. The end in view is union. Man regarded as at war within himself is all the while a child of God in process of development.

The term "spiritual" then has progressive meanings according to the connection in which we use it. Man is a little spiritual world within himself, but he is also "in" the larger spiritual world of his social relationships and in his union with God. The remarkable fact about him is that he represents

the universe, both natural and spiritual. The more deeply we enter his inner world the more fully we find ourselves in his outer world. Man as a spiritual world is in direct association with the spiritual world in which he lives. That which appears to be contradictory is in reality reciprocal. The same conditions which appear to thwart man in his ignorance prove to be favorable to his progress in spiritual things when understood.

Whatever our judgments concerning war as a contest with weapons in the natural world, we cannot then ignore the fact that spiritually regarded man's whole career up to a certain point is a struggle between forces, in the midst of which he is held in equilibrium. To look within and behind the struggle is to see that man from within is impelled to go forth into experience. The impelling power is divine. The goal in view is divine. All man's powers in their rightful place are good. It is part of the divine purpose that man should learn from experience, from struggle, through freedom, in partial ignorance of his own nature. What we condemn when we carefully discriminate is not the life-process, surely not the lessons it teaches or the end in view. We condemn the uses to which man in his ignorance and his freedom puts powers which in themselves are good. We condemn the self-love to which man yields when he might love his neighbor and his God. We condemn his sin. We despise the fruits of selfishness.

The way out of the apparent contradictions is found, therefore, when we clearly see that the spiritual world both within and outside of man is the world of causes, that the impetus is from within outward, that the inner is in miniature what the outer is found to be in all its extensiveness and power.

The outer war which man wages, for example, began long before in his spirit. Man takes part in the outer war according to his motives, his state of development. If still autocratic, actuated by love of power, greedy, sly, cunning; he puts these motives into action and presses forward to his own destruction, in league with externally destructive forces because not yet victorious over the destructive forces within. If he has begun to condemn selfishness within himself, he condemns and takes action against it in others.

If already able to "control his spirit," he is in a position of ascendancy over the man who is merely able "to take a city." Long before he participates in the war against the organized greed of the Hun he has been making himself morally ready. When called into action to defend the colors he brings into play a wealth of power expressive of his whole inner life. The external warfare depends in quality upon the degree of the moral preparation.

If we could have looked down upon the whole scene of conflict in the great war with the eyes of pure spirit we probably would have seen forces gathering and at work long before the external drama began. Indeed we may say that the war was settled in the spiritual world long before it was wrought out in the natural. Hence it was that some were able to feel the spiritual turning of the tide. To say this is not to swing over to fatalism, as if there were a plan in the nature of things for just this war. It is not to say that the war was part of the divine purpose. But more extensive spiritual vision would have disclosed the hidden tendencies and concealed motives within the national mind, the mind that expressed itself in Prussian militarism. Such a vision would be similar to ours when we watch children at play, when their little disputes and their motives are transparent to us. We see storms gathering. We foresee results. But we also endeavor to be influential by wisely directing the attention away from disputes. We are influential, and yet we grant a measure of freedom. So, too, in the great war those who were fighting to end it may have received help without being deprived of their freedom. The external war might well have seemed an effect in contrast with all the invisible forces taking part in it.

The point of view is perhaps unfamiliar to us, but only because we are for the most part absorbed in mere effects. We constantly reap the benefits of our own inner deeds without realizing that our harvest is dependent upon the seeds we sowed. We have been unmindful of the long inner history which has brought us where we stand to-day. We have been educating ourselves for the work we are now doing. Life has been making us ready, just as in the war we found ourselves expressing the moral idealism of our whole history

as a free nation. In all branches of service in the war men found themselves drawn into places for which their whole past development was in a way a preparation. Thus the daring young aviator, for example, was in his proper environment. Thus the friend to the soldier exercised a function which had been thought out in advance to meet the new conditions of the latest of wars. Thus indeed the whole victorious campaign of 1918 was the external working out of the plan made possible when unity of military command was obtained.

Man finds himself in this marvelous stream of events and things which we call "life" amidst tendencies without number. Some are growing in emphasis. Others are waning. Some he feels in harmony with. Others jar upon him. Inevitably he chooses while he observes and feels and thinks, for life leads him to concentrate and he cannot compass much at a time. What he chooses is in accordance with his prevailing love, and what he chooses is all the while making ready his future for him. He lives mostly in effects. He even praises surfaces as if they were the realities of life. But as inevitably as if he lived for causes he enjoys or suffers according to his choice. Thus all the while his spiritual world is causing his natural world.

We more clearly understand the lesser relationship of man as spirit to the deeds which express his spirit if we first think of the great relationship of God to the world. It is perhaps overwhelming for the moment, this idea of the divine causality. Yet reason assures us that to understand anything aright we must begin with the thought of God as "the First," the one final source of power, life, substance, form and development. For nothing can originate from itself, nothing can subsist from itself. From the first to the last, that is, the most outward form of manifestation, the life of God goes forth in orderly progression, one stage of creation leading to another, each imbued with energy from the same source, according to its kind or type. Creation as thus regarded is not a sudden process, nor is it completed in point of time. It is perpetual, unceasing, constant. We may think of the creative Life as ever going forth from a center or sun, radiating its influences to the utmost

confines of the universe. We may move with it in thought in the most interior sense while we regard the process in the light of the spiritual world. We may then see the outer or natural world in a less interior sense springing from the spiritual. Thus if we keep the interior point of view, seeing all from a single source, we may follow the process without break or confusion.

We know that everything in the physical world, every plant, animal, also man, is sustained directly or indirectly by the energy which radiates from the sun, by the heat which is received and transformed through organisms adapted to its use. Let us transfer our conception of this process to the spiritual world, and behold man receiving power in a similar manner from God, the source of all his life, all goodness, all wisdom and love. As continued existence in the natural world depends on constant reception and assimilation on the part of each organism, so in the spiritual order of existence there is perpetual incoming of life, an activity which sustains and preserves us all, without which we could not exist for a moment. The divine power accomplishes all these ends by one uninterrupted process. It creates, causes to live, imbues with power to react and appropriate, sends man forward into accomplishment, sustains and guides him, teaches and quickens him. Man on his part receives as manifold or varied that which in its essence is one. Man's spirit is so organized as to receive in each region of his nature whatever he needs for his life and development. He receives unwittingly that which must be his in any event, that he may continue to live. But he may learn to receive and appropriate intelligently the wisdom and the love which hitherto he has lived by as if they were his own.

One cannot then grow into deeper knowledge of the divine "influx," as Swedenborg calls it, without deeper insight into the human spirit as the real man. As a spirit man is "in an interior degree," while his body is in an exterior degree. His inmost being is of such a nature that he can receive through his will and his understanding the influent life from God which imbues and sustains him. Man is by origin and structure a responsive spirit. He has an inner or spiritual mind, acting by spiritual power, not from sense-impulse,

not from the brain; a mind of finer substance persisting through all the changes and vicissitudes of the flesh, and enduring into the future life.

Man is of course subject to many kinds of influx, as our common speech indicates when we speak of the "influence" of nature upon us, the influence of human society. Everything that affects man takes place by influx. This is the way all life acts. There is an influx from the natural world and one from the spiritual. Man is quickened to ascend or is drawn downward by these influences. The great fact is that while the influences coming to man from nature and from man are relatively indirect, that from the divine life into his spirit is direct or immediate; first into the will, then into the intellectual part of his nature, and thence into the senses and into his life in general. Man's power to reason or reflect, to understand truth or goodness, is from this interior life which first touches his will. As Swedenborg puts it, "the things that flow in with man through heaven from the Lord, flow into his interiors, and advance down to the ultimates or outermost parts, and there they are presented to man in sensible form, consequently flow down into the sensuous, and through this into the things of the body. If the sensuous has been filled with phantasies from falsities then the truths which flow in are there turned into similar things, for they are received there according to the form that is induced on them. That which flows in is changed and turned according to reception."

To know that the divine life flows into our spirits and is received as love and wisdom is to have a definite idea of "the secret place," in which "the Lord stores up goods and truths," with which He endows man from infancy. Nothing of course can injure this the most spiritual part of our nature. But the inflow may be impeded. Man receives and assimilates according to the forms and states of which he consists. He recognizes or fails to recognize according to his state of development. Everything depends for him upon the quality of the recipient forms. Indeed it is a universal law which we can all verify that "influx accommodates itself to efflux." To give we must receive, but to receive more we must give what has come to us. If a man

simply receives divine truth as one might listen to instruction without thinking about the principles in question, he of course does not continue to receive such truth. If he is prompted to do good, to serve his fellowmen, and remains quiescent, such promptings withdraw or cease. To apprehend what he receives man must respond, react, practise. To grow in goodness he must live by the promptings to goodness which have already come to him. To increase in love he must display love.

Wonderful results ensue if man receives the heavenly influx responsively, and uses what is bestowed upon him. His heart is touched, and he is quickened to serve his fellowmen. His understanding is imbued with spiritual light, which in its essence is truth. His interior sight being opened, he is in a state to discern the spiritual meaning of life, to think from eternal principles. Again, he receives the essence of faith and charity, and is withheld from evil. He receives freedom, the power to discern and apprehend for himself, the freedom of thinking truth and doing good. The divine influx brings his inner life into order, "disposes man for receiving heaven." Man becomes "new." Above all he is made active, he is vivified and quickened to manifest the love which has touched his heart.

If now we ask why man endowed with all these ideal possibilities is not at once vividly and fully aware of them, the answer is that he is born in ignorance "with his interiors closed," and must be taught those matters which pertain to the divine order. Moreover, in his unenlightened state he is actuated by two loves, by the love which looks to self and to the world, and by heavenly love. Unaware that he has no power or life of his own, he assumes life and power as if from himself. Being free, he is able to foster his love of power until he closes the door to heaven and becomes "spiritually dead." Again, he yields to anxiety, fear, doubt. He becomes weak and negative. "Good cannot flow into what is negative, nor indeed into doubt." Once more we see the importance of the affirmative attitude.

No man, indeed, even in a state of entire servitude to self-love and love of the world is wholly cut off from the divine inflow. Yet, so far as his

conscious existence is concerned, everything depends on his attitude and response. For he is free. He is not compelled to acknowledge the source of his life and power. He may attribute all his power to himself or to nature. He may rebel against the very life that would bless him. If obstinate, unyielding and discordant, he perverts the stream of life which might have pursued its course in crystalline purity.

If man misuses the energies that stream into him from the central source of his life, his nature is affected all through. His bodily organism responds to the states of his soul. For there is an influx from the soul into the body. This is the way the soul normally and regularly affects the body. If there is discord at the center, there will be discord in the external life. Anxiety and grief, for example, will manifest themselves in the nervous system, in the facial expression, in bodily life generally. The same will be true in case of inner combats, when hate and anger prevail, when the mind is given over to sensuous pleasure. Whatever perverts the affections and turns them into envies, bitterness, jealousy, and the like, will be manifested in the activities which spring therefrom, in the conduct that results.

But if tranquillity reigns at the center, there will be freedom from nervous tension and a similar freedom in the forms of bodily expression. With the cessation of fears and anxieties, lusts and conflicts, there will come relief and restfulness. When faith and love are paramount, there will be harmony with the incoming divine life. Interior peace will thus be the basis of a mental and moral life of peace. Openness to heaven will foster openness throughout, in attitude, in external expression, in the honesty and frankness which bespeak the joyous and responsive soul. Above all, if there is unity between the understanding and the will, the spirit will not only be receptive to the love and wisdom of God but will be actively expressive in the life of service. To live according to "the order of heaven" would be to receive the divine influx into all one's members in due order and according to need. Had man always lived with his interiors thus open to heaven, he would have been free from all miseries, even free from war.



At first thought this idea of the divine presence as brought near by influx seems to favor the notion of a mystical blending between God and man. Second thought, however, shows that Swedenborg's view is far removed from this idea. One cannot understand what influx is and how it takes place save by gaining a more precise idea of man's nature, the spiritual world, and of the spiritual in relation to the natural. It is not a question of blendings but of differences, contrasts and oppositions persisting through all the resemblances and analogies. It is by correspondence, not by unqualified inflow, that man and God are related. It is by contingency that the natural and the spiritual are associated, not by a mingling.

This becomes more clear when we compare the natural and the spiritual. The natural world in general consists of physical forms and substances which occupy space. The existence of visible things taking "room," presenting hard surfaces, subject to the operation of forces like heat and cold, is in sharp contrast with the existence of spiritual states, such as love, happiness, peace, all of which are qualities of the soul. There is no shading off of the visible into the invisible, but always a contrast between space and that which does not occupy space. The human spirit and the body in which it is clothed are by no means convertible into each other, despite the fact of interaction between them.

Note the connection, for example, between an idea pertaining to a person's convictions and the manner in which his idea finds expression through the organs of speech, by his gestures and facial changes. An idea is not in any sense like a "thing," and yet things may be so grouped as to stand for ideas. Thus a feeling of warmth or love may find expression through bodily attitudes and movements, yet how far removed is the affection from the visible signs! The will actuates the body in its motions, for example, in playing a musical instrument, yet there is no resemblance between the will and the organism which it uses. Bodily attitudes wonderfully suggest interior states and feelings, so that we infer the inner attitude from the outward forms which portray it. But wholly unlike what a man does are the intentions

which led him to do it. We grow accustomed in time to judgments based on knowledge of men's purposes, we think of the whole spiritual life as the sphere of purposes, and of the whole world of things as representing purposes.

Enlarging our thought, we think of God as the Creator of the universe through His purpose in causing the world to be. Thus the Spirit is formative, it goes forth to produce, to convey and foster life, carrying created forms through all necessary stages of development to the far-off end in view. The creative energy of course passes down through and then rises through all visible forms. The descent is from level to level. So the ascent is from level to level, that is, from degree to degree. The dynamic relation is orderly. The invisible puts on a visible garment. All the forms, forces, substances, bear relation to the inward purpose which they express according to their type or level. Thus the outer corresponds to the inner.

It is a well-known fact that man as a miniature world in himself corresponds part by part, function by function with nature. The philosophy of evolution has made us well aware that man is an epitome of the long process of natural development. Swedenborg, reviving the ancient idea once taken as the clue to man's relation to the universe, goes further and points out that man "corresponds" in form and function not merely with nature but with the spiritual world, and that this relationship is primarily due to the universal law of creation. That is, each and all things in nature correspond to spiritual things. Man as partner to both worlds shares in this two-fold relationship. Whenever anything from the spiritual world as the realm of causes becomes visible and perceptible before the senses there is correspondence between them. There is such a correspondence between spiritual and natural things with man. Correspondence means that the spiritual causes the natural. Thus things which are radically different and sharply contrasted can exist together and operate as if one. The most striking instance of this is seen in the fellowship between the soul and the body. Nothing would seem more unlike the body than the soul. Yet the soul controls and manifests itself

through the body. Nothing would seem more unlike God than His world. But the world manifests the beauty and majesty, the love and wisdom of God.

Complete knowledge of correspondences would enable man, when observing the things and events around him, to look beyond the visible to the invisible principles and meanings manifest in them. In the same way he would be able to turn from his own mental life to the spiritual world, and from his spirit to heaven. He would look behind his affections and thoughts, back of his spiritual form to the heavenly realities for which these stand. Finding in his interior nature "an image of heaven," he could intelligently adapt his attitude to the life which flows from heaven. For the purpose of the relationship plainly is that man may enter into union with the divine love and wisdom. Whatever degree of union he may have attained depends of course upon the degree of his love to God and man.

In a general way every one of us is aware of this relationship known as correspondence. We find ourselves placed in surroundings corresponding to our needs. We notice the same relationship with people in association with us, with the occupations we choose, with experiences required for our development. Every now and then a new event occurs, like the great war, to remind us on a large scale of this ancient truth. But what we fail to notice perhaps is a certain break in the relationship. As a matter of fact, man's nature is complex and unless we look entirely around the horizon of the influences to which he is subject we can hardly understand in what sense his inner world corresponds to his outer.

From within and above, by the internal way, man is the recipient of the divine life. This is the basic fact, the central clue. And man may look upward to God with the realization that he is "made in the image and after the likeness" of his Creator. But as a natural being man receives influences, by the external way, from the outer world. What the world brings may be very different from that which heaven brings. Man may, for example, take on through inheritance a burden which in spirit he feels is out of relation

with his ideal. He is born into an environment which thwarts his better self or entices his self-love, as the case may be. His body may be misshapen or weak. It does not follow that his soul is weak or ugly. The influences from the world may drag him down, while those from above seek to lift him up. Hence the warfare. Hence the great mysteries of human life—mysteries for those of us who do not yet see with what love and tenderness we are sustained and held in equilibrium by the Father until we are brought to judgment and lifted into freedom.

Plainly, we are not in a position to advance far into the little-known region of psychical experiences until we have become aware in some degree of these our relationships to the world and to the divine life. For the goal is spiritual, not psychical. The purpose for us is that we shall grow more and more into the image and likeness of God. This unrelatedness, this conflict with the world and within our own natures, is given us for our testing, it gives us our experience in life. When we become deeply aware of it, we can assign to their proper sources the influences that surround us. Thus the natural world will come to occupy its due place in our thought, the spiritual will seem more and more real, and in its intermediate relationship we shall be able to identify the psychical.

When, for example, a man is prompted to cross the seas and give his services in the great war it by no means follows that his guidance has led him forth because he believes in war. Far more ardently than the theoretical lover of peace who remains at home in unproductive protest, he is ready to give all there is in him to help bring the great war to an end. There is no correspondence between his ideal and this dreadful thing which deals death and destruction on every hand. There is no harmony between his inner life and the discomforts and toil of life in the trenches. As a spirit he has outgrown war. He is present at the front in reaction against it. But there may be the most intimate relationship between the moral and spiritual powers to which he is open and his inner state of development. He may find himself assigned to duties for which he is peculiarly fitted. He may have guidances

which save him from danger. He may have a vision that sustains him in the hour of his greatest need. And there may be in every way a fulfilment of divine purposes in his life.

Coming to consciousness of what he really is as a spiritual being, man looks outward upon the world, noting its influences upon him, the problems he has taken up through heredity and environment. Looking towards his body, he finds himself expressing the desires and sentiments, the love or thought prevailing within. He finds that as his spirit changes his body responds, or at least gives him further opportunity for the triumphs of the spirit. Considering his fellows, he finds himself related to them through outward society and interiorly by spiritual kinship. Returning once more in thought to "the secret place," he realizes what possibilities are his through progressive responsiveness to the divine love and wisdom. He is dependent on outward conditions and yet he is not. He is bound and yet free. His natural life is growing out of his spiritual. He is dwelling in two worlds at a time. In due course the natural garment will fall away and with it the natural world as he now knows it. Then will appear his spiritual body in beauty of correspondence between his inner life and his outer. If this transformation shall come in the fulness of time, when he has outgrown his relationships with the natural world, it will be like the unfolding of the bud into the flower, the coming forth of the butterfly, yet signify far more, in every way more beautiful. But even if a shell destroys his natural garment as in a twinkling, his spirit shall no less surely stand forth in its immortal beauty, according to the life he has led. His future will correspond with and grow out of his present, the interior present of his truer, better life. Nothing external can touch or mar his better part, in its integrity as "made in the image and after the likeness of God." Death is indeed an incident. It is forever secondary and external. It settles nothing, destroys nothing that pertains to the spirit in its integrity, in no way keeps man from coming to his own. What signifies is life in its inner continuity, as a never-ending gift bestowed upon us from above. What signifies is the divine presence, never separated from the soul.

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## X. On the Threshold

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FROM A strictly orthodox point of view an interpretation of the future life in which the emphasis is put on conduct and the verifications of inner experience is a disappointment, since it appears to be a substitute for Christian teaching. The usual faith in Christ, so it is contended, is all the comfort required by the bereaved. The historic evidences of our Lord's life and words are sufficient proof of immortality for those who accept Christ as "the only begotten son of God." Why then should we not retain the terminology of Scripture, pointing out that the spiritual awakening pleaded for in general terms is "baptism," while the reconstructive work is "repentance"? If we mention the presence of departed friends, why not also include "the communion of saints"? Why not, in short, stamp one's argument with "the truth of history and the authority of God"? It is surely disappointing to be told that religious belief appears to count for so little in the case of dying soldiers and sailors.

The reply is that there is no objection to the usual terms if they represent *the experienced realities of the eternal life* in such a way that the spiritual world is vividly real and dynamically near. For many the language of the older salvationism has lost its significance. For when sorrow came into the household the exponents of that faith failed to bring the comfort sought.

Hence increasing numbers have looked for light outside the Church. Meanwhile the faith uttered and lived by the Lord is indeed sufficient to comfort every aching heart if interpreted by those who verify it through spiritual life. Whether within or without the Church, what is needed is realization of the everlasting realities. The truths of history may either lead the way or be regarded as confirmatory, according to the way the individual approaches them. The "authority of God" is disclosed not merely in the teachings of Scripture as commonly understood but in the inner Word, and in the individual heart. The "communion of saints" is indeed splendid and genuine for those who have kept it as a vitalizing experience, just as the unspoiled heart has continued to believe in angels as real beings who guide us along our way or fight on our side. There is one truth, however expressed. The essential is to find the reality which it stands for. Some men are baptized in due form and undergo a repentance which is signalized as such. Others have had their souls tested by "the baptism of fire" on the battlefield and have undergone a change witnessed only by the angels. It is not the symbols or rites but the reality that avails. Well may we listen with reverent ears when the soul of the warrior bears testimony to the eternal realities of the spiritual world as he has discerned them.

It is not with the intention of making too much of individual experience that people who were spiritually hungry have sought light in other fields. Nor has any serious student of these matters tried to devise a substitute for Christianity—the true Christianity of the Master of life and death. Every one whose interest is deep and permanent must sooner or later learn how to estimate psychical experiences in relation to the spiritual life. Every one must find his bearings in the spiritual world. Hence it is natural that in our day a distinct realm of experience has been separated off from the "supernatural world" of the older theology, and from the religious sphere of repentance, conversion, and baptism. The actual phenomena are doubtless of familiar types, as old as human nature. But keener interest has led to difference of emphasis. We are not merely eager to test the conclusions of psychical

research, but we are willing to read any number of books purporting to contain messages from departed spirits. The real question is, Can you and I learn to know what is genuine in all this literature? Ought we to experiment by the various methods such as automatic writing? Should we try to open communication with those who have "gone West"? Is there a standard by which to distinguish what is desirable in psychical experience? Shall we believe whatever is told us concerning the angel of Mons and other spiritual beings seen by men at the front? What shall we say concerning messages purporting to come from soldiers and others in the spiritual world?

These questions are perplexing to most of us and are not to be readily answered by those eager to test psychical experiences for themselves. One might believe in the inner reality of the soldiers' visions while questioning the external evidences. Very much depends upon what we are looking for. A psychical phenomenon is in every way as certain as reality for the one who uncritically believes it, but undue criticism may lead to a closed spirit on our part. Many people are in an attitude similar to that of one lost in a forest where every sound is ominous and every unknown shape suggestive. What is needed is some one who is familiar with all the objects and sounds that may arise. The difficulty is that men who might become masters in the psychical world turn to other regions, leaving the occult sphere to those unfit to serve as guides. Ideally speaking, what is needed is description of the experiences in question, whether they appear to be objectively real or not; then explanation of the facts in accordance with a sound view of the spiritual life. We are not likely to find all the evidences we seek either in personal experience or in any book. At best we must depend on evidences and interpretations gathered from various sources. If at length we arrive at convictions these are likely to result from comparison of evidences tested by reason and verified by experience.

No one would wish to turn a deaf ear on an angel, or close a window that looks toward heaven. But it seems advisable for most of us never to render ourselves unqualifiedly receptive to psychical experience. If new



experiences are vouchsafed us, we may take them under advisement. But a gift is better than a purchase. For the present we are spiritual beings living in the natural world, and our adjustment to this world is the test of our sanity. What we may most wisely hope for is normal inner experience added to the life we ordinarily live, as we pursue our daily affairs. For we already live in and receive influences from the spiritual world. It is normal to have evidence of its existence and its presence. It is normal to believe in angels and in the divine guidance which comes through them. Consequently we have every reason to expect and to desire those evidences which belong without conflict and in all reason with the facts and conditions of our natural life understood from within.

It is no doubt reasonable to explain on a physical basis whatever experience can be so accounted for without closing the mind to heavenly things. This need not go so far as to involve the acceptance of medical materialism, for the state of the body or the condition of the brain may not afford any clue at all. But it is well to remember that a sound mind and a sound body belong, in general, together. Thus, too, we may be mindful of the effects of undue sensitiveness, morbid introspection, immoderate self-consciousness, expectant attention and auto-suggestion. That which is heavenly is able to withstand the test. If we hold doubtful facts in solution, time will clear the way for us, just as we wait when various prognostications are made by astrologists, palmists, phrenologists, and the like, giving one prophecy a chance to destroy another. Time will greatly narrow the field. We need not acknowledge ourselves convinced if we are still able to propose reasonable objections. Scepticism is sometimes imperious. But by being now responsive and now critical, scrutinizing even our doubts, we may grow into a wise attitude towards the whole field.

Very much depends on the way we begin. If credulous, a man may be deceived from the first moment, unable to determine the reality of even the simplest psychical experience. If not only sceptical but prejudiced, he may deny the possibility of evidence before he has had the slightest opportunity

to test the phenomena in question. If one is looking for psychical experiences simply, one may remain on the psychical level for years. But if one is in quest above all of that which is spiritually and divinely true, one may pass quickly by any number of pitfalls, side-issues and illusions in the psychical world.

That much depends on our anticipatory beliefs is shown by an examination of books of a spiritistic nature in which writers record conversations with invisible friends who have volunteered information about the spirit-world. Such conversations appear to have been talks with oneself which later took on an objective turn. They disclose the tendency of the writer to believe or disbelieve, for example, in reincarnation and to attribute this belief or disbelief to the communicating spirit. Now, we all talk with ourselves, and our wiser remarks readily fall into a group under the head of "the higher self." Differentiate a part of yourself in this way in accordance with its interest in the spirit-world, and you may unwittingly allow it to evolve into a supposed discarnate spirit who will forthwith describe life in the spirit-world in terms of the doctrine you chance to hold. Most of us check this process before it misleads us. Even in the case of conscience speaking in the words of an "inner voice" apparently not our own, we well know that the actual words are ours.

Were it possible to observe the inner processes of people who readily become spiritists, we would doubtless note a stage of thought in which a subjectively perceived message or a communication received through a medium hangs in the balance between illusion and reality. In this plastic period acceptance of the message as objectively real is likely to come at a critical moment when it is associated with the name of the spirit who presumably transmitted it. The hypothesis once entertained that a spirit bearing the name in question actually made the communication, it thereupon becomes an easy matter to revive the association. Steadily the supposed spirit-personality is evolved into the fulness of life, all doubts are put behind, and any number of spiritistic beliefs follow. But if at the crucial moment one chances to inhibit the tendency to name the supposed

spirit, if one withholds assent until other messages have been received and compared, one may be able to explain the whole experience in another way.

Even in the case of a medium as famous as Mrs. Piper, there is a suspiciously suggestive repetition of messages purporting to come from a given spirit. Either the spirit acquires a habit of communicating in the same language, beginning in practically the same way each time, or the medium's organism develops the habit and is able to produce messages of that type without limit. One would like to be sceptical enough to avoid associating a first message with a name, and able to check the almost irresistible tendency to evolve the supposed spirit into a communicating personality. For when an hypothesis is once entertained it is with difficulty that the mind is disabused of it.

How, it will be asked, are we to acquire sufficient alertness to inhibit experiences which would otherwise have an illusory history, yet discern those that may be genuine? By noting our initial acceptances and inhibitions in other fields and learning the signs. Gossip, for example, grows within our minds and is conveyed to responsive ears because we give heed to a rumor at the favorable moment, when good sense would have checked the process had we refused to countenance a doubtful hypothesis. Every rumor and false report, every misleading headline in a yellow journal was once a mere hint in some one's mind, welcomed because it furthered the vocation of the one who willed to make the most of it. All our beliefs are accepted because we are ignorant enough to harbor them in the beginning. The more knowledge a man has the greater number of inhibitions he is able to command. The riches of modern science are revealed to the man who is able to fight against belief so long as warfare is rational, while the opinions that usually pass current in the world are explicable by the credulities that presided over their genesis. The negative attitude grows out of the doubts, fears, suspicions, which we foolishly entertain. The affirmative attitude begins the moment we turn positively away from these weakening mental states.

In the mystical world in which "miracles of healing" take place one object will serve as the repository of therapeutic power as well as another, if accepted in accordance with the appropriate climax of religious suggestions. Hence the bone of a saint is as efficient as water or a handkerchief that has been blessed. Everything depends upon the given expectations. So in the still more mystical world of the inner life, shrouded as it so often is by darkness with its promising wealth of suggestions; what a spiritual vision is said to be is dependent in part at least on the long line of beliefs that determine the attitude of the recipient. He who would sift the matter to the foundation must be ready to explain the inner life so far as possible by the beliefs and impulses of his own selfhood, never attributing a phenomenon to a discarnate spirit until compelled by evidences gathered on various occasions.

One of the subtlest mental processes is that by which we assume the identity of an experience with the theory apparently proved or disproved by it, just as the soldier sees in the vision on the battlefield St. George, St. Michael, Joan of Arc, Christ, or merely a "being in white," according to his religious faith. In truth, there are various elements to be considered: the facts, the personal equation, the acquired belief, and the theory which the experience seems to point to apart from all temperamental reactions. Prejudgment is as insidious as expectant attention. What is demanded is a power of observation subtler than suggestion itself. When thus acutely attentive we should be able to detect experiences emerging into the field of consciousness on the one hand, and on the other the alleged interpretations of these experiences which steal in and try to take possession of the field. It is necessary to be very acute.

For example, I once visited a house in which the phenomena of table-tipping had appeared. Invited to witness manifestations which had puzzled the participants, I sat down by the table opposite a man as ready as I to test the matter. By concentrating with utmost acuteness on the play of inner experience, I detected an involuntary impulse in the act of gaining headway,

and checked the movement before my arm could stir the table. I was also on the lookout for any activity which might be aroused by the suggestions of those present who believed in table-tipping. I was willing to discover whatever reality there might be in the experience. Hence my attitude was not wholly sceptical. Had not I watched for the slightest movement with uncommon alertness, I might easily have become a victim of temporary automatism. But the activity thus checked at the start soon subsided, and the table remained motionless. Had there been no inhibitory attention acquired through practice in other fields, the impulse might have gained sufficient headway to move the table without any awareness on my part that my arm was moving it. The new activity once acquired, I might easily have developed the belief that the messages were real, or might have permitted the table to spell out words in accordance with the thoughts of those present.

Now a spiritist may say that the interference was arbitrary and deprived me of genuine experience. The rationalist replies that any experience that can be accounted for by reference to involuntary or other movements within the organism should be so explained. For instance, a friend of spiritistic persuasion once asked me to place my hand on hers while she held a lead pencil, with the hope that we might receive an automatically written message from the spirit-land. She had often sat with her husband in this way and received messages from their departed son. She hoped to receive information on that occasion in regard to an important plan of mine. We tried the experiment several times. Each time the pencil wrote—involuntarily, so far as I could tell from acute introspection—"I want you to..." Now, my friend wished the message to be, "I want you to stay," while I hoped it would be, "I want you to go." In so far as our minds were in agreement, the pencil wrote most readily. When disagreement was reached, the marks ran off into indistinctness. The rational inference was that our organisms, working together, produced the message, and that the message bore no connection with spirits. Doubtless my friend's messages from her departed son, although containing much which neither father nor mother had

previously thought in just those connections, were mutual products of their eager minds, stimulated by the theories they held, the views which subtly affected their "will to believe."

Everything turns, therefore, on the interpretation of inner experience. The uncritical person believes that an inner experience is whatever it happens to be. Experience is supposably a mere gift, as if the organism were a perfectly transparent medium touching thought at its acutest point, without relationship to the reactions of the recipient. But careful study has taught us to look for the conditions within ourselves which in a measure transform whatever we experience. It is possible to make sufficient allowances for our own reaction to determine what parts of our experience come from the outside.

One of the subtlest factors is habit. Every one who has experimented with the phenomena of thought transference has had opportunity to observe how readily the mind simulates reality. During the first three days of a series of experiments which I once made with a friend, both my friend and I succeeded in making our minds sufficiently receptive to catch the other's thought. We afterwards compared notes and found that we had succeeded. By the fourth day our minds had become so accustomed to the conditions that involuntarily the mind projected a message into the foreground of consciousness as if the sentence came from the other partner to the experiment. I found it impossible to check this impulse to throw a thought into the field of consciousness. Consequently it seemed desirable to forego that series of experiments. On the other hand, my experiences with telepathy during a period of years showed conclusively that when the mind was not experimenting, was not expectant but was the recipient of a thought coming spontaneously, there were evidences of a thought's reality that could not be questioned or explained away as mere products of my own mind.

The chief illusions in all these matters are doubtless due to the temperament and organism of the recipient. Here is a striking case, for

example, of a woman who for twenty-five years centered her life upon messages from departed friends. So sure was her apparent hold upon the spirit-world that almost immediately after the death of a man in public life in whom she took interest a message came through the medium whom she employed for this purpose. The suspicious feature of these messages was their pronounced agreement with the opinions of this ardent devotee of spiritism. The medium appeared to be like clay in her hands. Every member of her household was equally subservient, for she was temperamentally a queen. To the onlooker it seemed plain that the entire spirit-world in which this woman dwelt was the creation of her imperious temperament, although her first experiences in this field may have been spontaneous and real.

Wherever such a temperament dominates the horizon one may well be suspicious. This woman had no belief in God. Deeming the universe defective and taking no interest in the natural world, she had created her own world from within. That is, she did not see or know the real world at all. She lived in a realm of the imagination into which she had projected her thought. Hers was an extreme case. But in a measure each of us projects his doctrines into his world. He who has not yet found his relationship to God and his fellows in the natural world is scarcely able to understand even the simplest relationship with the spiritual world. He is best able to interpret inner experience who best understands himself. The one who in daily life is a creature of emotions and habits will readily yield the organism to subjective experiences of an illusory character. One who is not yet aware of the prejudices of our social thought will easily become the victim of inward dispositions. Hence to be on guard in the physical world it would be well to begin with the reactions which shape our social experience. Once acquire the habit of inspecting your impulsive activities in process of emergence, and you will be able to check a thousand undesirable experiences, transforming their energy into the life of productive reflection. You will then find it easier to gaze into the inner world with open eye.

There is a safeguard in the endeavor to acquire spiritual truths by which to test these matters. If one book purporting to contain messages from the life beyond puts the emphasis on the doctrine of rebirth in successive fleshly bodies on this or other planets, while in another book this doctrine is rejected, one may hold the two books in abeyance while seeking light elsewhere. Later, one may reach the conclusion that after death the soul is educated and otherwise helped in the spiritual world, and consequently that the doctrine of rebirth is untrue. One then possesses a guiding principle by which to test teachings purporting to come from the life beyond. Later still, one may grow in knowledge of the human spirit and be the better able to judge communications that "ring true." Or, one's knowledge of spiritual influx and correspondence may increase so that one has a way of arranging the facts of the spiritual life and assigning a place to psychical experiences. One's ideal is to grow in responsiveness to the divine love and wisdom in "the secret place." One desires knowledge that is useful. Thus the mind is far more open in certain directions than in others. It does not invite experiences of the ordinary spiritistic types.

There surely is a philosophy of the spiritual world in its relation to the natural which we may accept with confidence, knowing that the spiritual world in which we believe is not a figment of our thought. But just because there is such a philosophy one is sceptical concerning spiritisms and theosophies. One therefore distinguishes between the term "spirit-world," meaning the realm of thought reared by people who take their clues from mediumship and are more interested in spirits than in Spirit; and the "spiritual world," meaning what we have found it to mean in the preceding chapters. One also discriminates between the spiritual world and the more or less artificial realm which may be called the "occult world," the realm of "auras," psychical "planes" and "astral" bodies. By the term "psychical experience" one means any mental phenomenon such as an experience in thought-communication or telepathy, any message produced by automatic writing, by the aid of the ouija board or through mediumship. Such an experience or message may



later be found profitable, may be in part spiritual. But by the term "spiritual" one means relationship to the invisible world which surely exists, whatever the interpretation; the world which centers about God, the Father of all spirits, the true Lord of heaven and earth, and not about mere spirits good or bad, not about the doctrines of reincarnation or occultism in any form. Thus a real experience of an angelic presence is spiritual. Angels come to us for a divine purpose, not to gratify our occult curiosity, not to acquaint us with mediumship, nor in response to the interests of mere science. Communion with God is spiritual. Spiritual experience sets the standard. It guards the mind against side-issues.

There is plainly a great difference between messages presumably coming through a medium, by automatic writing or other material device, and messages coming by direct impression in a manner resembling thought transference. If for years it has been one's habit never to ask for messages, never to experiment, but simply to be ready in case any word may come, under these conditions a message may carry a conviction that is overwhelming. For it may be totally unexpected. It may come when the mind is busily engaged in external pursuits. It may yield information which the mind did not possess. It may also bring unmistakable evidence that a certain well-known friend is the communicating spirit.

Psychical experience is threshold experience, and may imply the world of our own subconsciousness, "the subliminal region" of which Meyers has written; or relationship with other minds, within or without the flesh. It comes between the mental experiences of ordinary natural life and the spiritual experiences definitely known as such which disclose the divine providence to us and relate us with heavenly beings. This region "between" is more or less hazy, and calls for discernment. Nevertheless, what we experience here may very directly lead the mind to spiritual experiences and to genuine spiritual knowledge. Thus a person might begin with automatic writing and soon give it up in favor of direct inward impression, later for a study of eternal spiritual principles. Or one might be taught by dreams and then

by interior revelation. Thus one might come to live consciously in both worlds at once and be able to speak with authority concerning the spiritual world. The test for the rest of us whose spiritual eyes have not been opened would then be: the application of such knowledge of spiritual influx and correspondence as we possess, the appeal to reason, the study of the spiritual meaning of the Bible, and reference to the experiences through which the divine providence has guided us to the present hour.

Thus in time one would come to understand the difficulties of spirit-communication, what to expect and what should not be expected, and why it is that so little information is vouchsafed us by communicating experiences. One would never voluntarily close the door to any friend in the spiritual world, while on the other hand one would be decidedly on the alert to avoid any illusion or self-deception. In a natural sort of way we would then come to live with our loved ones in thought and think of them as progressing with us, just as we now think of friends in the flesh who are more or less enlightened. Granted even the best information about the spiritual world which books containing communications may give us, we would still desire direct evidence of our own. If our friends have any message for us, in the divine providence, they are likely to come to us directly. Our part is to know their presence. This we can surely learn from experience if we so desire. One would not exchange a direct message from a loved one for volumes and volumes of spirit-messages. The direct message may be very brief but of wonderful reality and authority. These lines would not be printed here if I did not believe conclusively in the real presence of those who come to enlighten us or help us when such friendly guidance is needed. I might question the existence of angels as real beings if experience had not proved to me that they are real. I am unable to convey the tests of reality to another. But in these days when one may speak more freely it would be wrong to withhold a conviction on which so very much depends.

Probably for most of us the question is purely personal. If, for example, a dear friend has passed into the future life and I wish to keep in spiritual

touch with him, I naturally avoid not only grief but any other emotion which might cloud the mental horizon. I think of him as living in accordance with the best that life had taught him here. He is doubtless occupied in serving others even more actively than when here. There is no more reason now than formerly when he was busily occupied on earth for intruding upon him or calling upon him. I surely do not wish to hold him back in development in any way, nor to be in any way annoying. But we were in inner affinity while he was here, there was spiritual give and take between us, and there is no reason to believe that this relationship has been interrupted. He will probably develop more rapidly and wisely than I, for he is much more free. But it does not follow that he is likely to lose touch with me. Indeed, he is probably taking far more interest in my pursuits than formerly, and is likely to follow me in spirit in all that I do. Inasmuch as I know this friend so well, there is no reason why I should close any door that opens in his direction. The fact that I am open to such a one as he means that I take little interest in other and less developed spirits whose presence might not be helpful. In short, my relationship to men and women in the life beyond is naturally such as my life indicates in the present social world. If I possess high standards here, I am no less protected by high standards in my social relationships with those who are "there," in the future life.

Moreover, there are very definite clues in my possession. If I sit down to write a business letter to a stranger, I have no particular inner impression. But when I write to a friend I am more or less in inner touch with that friend. My friend may consciously or unconsciously receive an impression from my mind, and may forthwith sit down to write a letter to me. A comparison of our letters may show that we have expressed the same thoughts to some extent in these letters which "crossed." Or, again, I am conversing with a group of friends and answering their questions. Our mutual presence creates an "atmosphere." We feel akin in spirit. Now this one and now that one voices the mutual spirit. We constitute a friendly spiritual group. It is conceivable that if one passes from our sight, the inner relationships will

continue, and that this friend in the spirit may sometimes be present with the same group and may become consciously present to the one who is most interiorly receptive. The communion will now be wholly in the realm of thought, whereas it was formerly dependent in part on the spoken word.

In so far as we have become aware of this inner relationship with our friends, and have caught their thoughts or shared our own thoughts with them even though no word was spoken, our attitude naturally invites this higher form of relationship. We are not inclined toward mediumship. We have not been prompted to try automatic writing. We take little interest in spiritistic experiences. But we do believe in the giving and receiving of thoughts.

What would be some of the evidences? In the first place, if my experience has shown me how difficult it is to avoid projecting my own thoughts and if I have concluded that it is well for the most part to go about my affairs as usual, while leaving an inner door open, my mind is relatively quiescent, I am not actively seeking communications even from my friends. If I believe that it is right and normal to feel the presence of friends who have gone, even to receive a word or two from them, I am ready to receive what may come without being disturbed, without looking upon the experience as strange or uncanny. Inasmuch as I am not reaching out to draw my friends to me, I need not fear that I shall create their presence as it were out of my imagination. Moreover, if my knowledge of guidance has taught me that leadings are vouchsafed when we need them, not through any interference with our wills, I may expect that any guiding presence which may come will be harmonious with the divine purpose for my life. Under these conditions any such experience is likely to bear its own evidence with it. I may have no reason to doubt or question.

In other words, a message intended for my good, a warning that keeps me from danger, a leading that aids me in my work, is in line with the divine providence and has that peculiar authority which indicates its high origin. I am led to distinguish between an impression or intuition in general and a

message from a friend in the other life, because experience itself reveals the difference. The former is apt to be impersonal, as in the case of a premonition. The latter usually comes in the form of words. I recognize the friend either because I knew his "atmosphere," his quality, when he was in this life, or because he gives me his name. I do not ask him to give me proofs, for I take no active part. Receiving what he tells me, I make as good use of it as I can. In the long run I find that these messages have a value which no analysis or scepticism could take away.

Such in fine is the conviction born in us side by side with a healthy scepticism which protects the mind from undesirable psychical experiences. One could no more question the reality of these friendly presences than one could doubt the divine providence, for they have been vouchsafed for a purpose. We need these personal evidences. We never could be quite satisfied with the mere account of another's experiences. We must learn for ourselves that the spiritual world is near, that angels are real beings, and that direct guidances come to the soul in need. Granted such evidences, one may go into a war-zone or anywhere else with the faith that the guidances will always be forthcoming if needed. Thus when I had passed through the dangers of an ocean voyage when the submarines were rampant, had been in London during an air-raid, and had been led through the dangers of other air-raids in Soissons and finally found myself in the region behind the Champagne front where I was to stay for many months, I had one of those unmistakable impressions which no scrutiny could think away: that I had been guided safely through to my destination and might then be left to attend to my work.

If then I permit these higher presences to come by their own law, nothing that they bring me will unfit me for life in the natural world. Making no effort to penetrate the unseen world before my time, the future will be disclosed to me only so far as it is wise. If entire months pass when no messages or guidances come, I may infer that I am to continue about my affairs as usual. Then when I start on a new venture, such as an expedition to France in war-

time, if guidances come unsought I am impressed beyond all words by their reality and their power. And I may at any time enter "the secret place" and ask for guidance, since this asking or prayer is perfectly compatible with the conviction which past experience has generated within me. Consequently, when I contemplate a journey to Paris during the time when the dangers are greater, I give more heed than usual to the kind of receptivity most likely to yield the guidance, howbeit I make no effort to summon any spirit or angel to tell me what to do. When the impression is negative, and I foresee the fall of Soissons, the marching of the Germans toward Paris, and the more doubtful weeks following, I know that this foresight may be given me if, as I believe, even the events of a war are foreseen in the spiritual world. The impression and foresight strengthen my belief in the active presence of the spiritual world, and I am the better able to understand how the soldiers have their visions at the front or when they pass from the body.

Thin indeed is the veil between, even for those of us who are unwounded. Near at hand indeed is the threshold between the natural and the spiritual. So near is it that one may enter either gate as one might open one's eyes and look out over the smiling fields, after an interval when the eyes were closed. So near, so very near, in fact, is it that when the friend who is nearest and dearest passes from my sight I am aware of no separation from him, and not once in all the years that have gone have I ever been able to think of him as "dead."

Indeed, it would be sacrilegious to refer to him as "dead." For was not his going a beautiful transition *in life*, when he had outgrown all correspondence here? Was I not forewarned that he was about to go, lest I should try to hold him back? Did not that intimation of his transition bring with it a sense of sustaining life such that I could not think of death but only of his blessed release after years and years of triumphant struggle in a body scarcely strong enough for his spirit? And did there not come an awareness of the divine presence which translated all mere theory into reality for me, so that for the first time I seemed deeply and truly to live with God? What more

natural, therefore, than that a new chapter should open, and a new work begin, a work shared with the loved one who has gone, and who is now so much more able to help me?

To those of us who stand on this side of the threshold the experience of death may indeed be a new birth. For if we have caught the new vision of death in anything like the fulness of its reality it should bring a great quickening sense of life. What we mean by the new birth, by common consent, is change out of our selfishness, and what better chance for this than through the triumph over grief is ever likely to come? If we lose self that we may find it then, we ought always to be able to lose it. For as weak as one may be in the moment's utter desolation, there is present the strength of the "everlasting arms."

For the moment in trying to give what one can, one may seem to be giving all. One's earthly life may apparently be slipping away. For, more intimately related to the loved one who is passing, one may be drawn more into the future life than into the natural world. But then comes the period of readjustment. In retrospect one sees that just this struggle was needed that one may know from experience and once and for all that the glorious teaching is true, that death is a "step in life." Henceforth one's word will never more be spoken as mere theory. Henceforth the spiritual world will seem ever near.

Yet just because death is thus shown to be a mere incident, one is led to see that the new birth may take place as well at one time as another, that it is in fact a gradual growth within us from the time we begin to recognize the true source of our power. Why not learn the same lesson from the great war too? Why not let it be a new birth for all of us whose loved ones have gone, that we may not only live with them in spirit but carry a new sense of life into the world? Would that one could give this impelling impetus to every aching heart "over there" and over here!

Would that we might all seek the guidances of the Spirit, that in the divine wisdom we might be led by the direct way in all these matters! Yet

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the side-issues have their lessons to teach. We need not discount the efforts of those who have sought to prove immortality and establish spirit-return on a scientific basis. The time had come in the development of the race for explorations in these fields. There is much that is real and genuine in the psychical realm. But now it is also permitted to enter into knowledge of the higher region. It is possible to receive the evidences that pertain to both worlds at once. To some it is given to know the threshold that exists between. Our part is to choose the gate we will enter. He who accepts the gateway leading into the higher pathway of the spiritual life will find himself guided according to his needs, in the divine wisdom.





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## XI. The Spiritual Values

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"**H**ERE I am, bolstered up in my bed roll, the only warm, dry place in France, with three sweaters, my helmet and wristers on, and a good American cigar between my teeth, ready for the night. I'd like to put a curse on the man who coined 'Sunny France' and the one who in the movies and papers at home conveys the impression that we are all comfortable and on a jolly lark over here. I'm living in a nail factory, two miles from a village; no heat at all...and all day in the slush and wet, learning how to kill, with everything suggesting pain, suffering and a long-drawn-out struggle—and the awful longing that comes to me when my thoughts turn homeward."

Thus writes a young American officer whose graphic description of life "over there" any of us who have been there could verify. He continues, "I open with a dreary picture, don't I? Well, I've been out in the slush, mud and snow all day, feet wet and a typical New England March day all about, topped with no mail on arriving home...But I'm not always so. I cheat circumstances with my Palgrave, and on the bright days marching and maneuvering over the hills, I'm watching the crows, listening to the cry of a hound in the nearby wood, or the sweet song of birds, paying no attention to the stern errand we are on."

Continuing to describe the strange mingling of the enjoyment of nature with the performance of the task at hand, this writer, who to an unusual degree expresses the power of the spirit to rise above adverse circumstance, then speaks of the deepest phase of his life. "I am having a wonderful spiritual experience," he says. "My imaginative temperament, my love of simple, peaceful things, quiet, home and friends, make this life hard to bear; but my experience with nature, philosophy, and reasoning with problems has likewise fortunately enabled me to meet it all squarely and be a gainer in the years to follow. The unmindful, the careless of thought, the adventurous, and there are many of them, probably don't suffer the thoughts I do, but I still think they miss much. The experience they gain is only the physical and material. I believe man can be spiritually the master of any circumstances in which he may be placed, if he has faith and 'an unflinching trust' in a life hereafter...You may judge that I have to tend my mental comfort as much as my physical."

Again, it is an English soldier who gives us a glimpse of the inner life in its attitude of triumph. "For forty-eight hours no food, no drink, under a burning sun, choked with dust, harried by shell, and marching, marching, till even the pursuing Germans gave it up, and at Vitry-le-François the Allies fell in their tracks and slept for three hours—horse, foot and guns—while the exhausted pursuers slept behind them. Then came the trumpet call, and each man sprang to his arms to find himself made new. One man said, 'I felt as if I had just come out of the sea after a swim. Fit! Just grand! I never felt so fit in my life, and every man of us the same.'"

Thus, too, a French officer bears witness to the triumph of the spirit. "An example of resignation. Last evening, on my rounds, I saw a splendid type, very straight, looking tranquilly over the parapet without appearing to notice either the wind or the rain. It was my Breton friend, La Botte. I spoke a few words to him and asked him if he were not cold or sleepy. 'Oh, no, my lieutenant. I am accustomed to misery. Is it not beautiful?'"

Another writes: "We were exhausted to the limit...The features were drawn, the eyes driven in...But the soul was intact. There was not the least expression of discontent, no groaning, no complaint. We knew that our presence was necessary (at Verdun) and we asked nothing more, and if it had been necessary to march still further despite our heaviness, no one would have hesitated."

Still another in a more desperate situation says: "From the first explosion I sincerely believed that my last hour had come and I prepared for it...At the fourth explosion I felt greatly surprised that I was still living. At the fifth I turned towards my English neighbor. He had just pulled out a cigarette and was lighting it very calmly. His coolness set the example for me. I was saved. From that time on I awaited tranquilly, almost with curiosity, the successive explosions."

"To conquer fear, that is the nobility of man," says another soldier of the ranks. One confesses that at each juncture or new situation in which the danger is more menacing it is necessary to make a fresh effort. "The most difficult enemy to conquer is not opposite in the German trench but in each one of us." Fear is by common confession contagious, but so, too, is courage. The officer, although struggling within his soul to conquer fear, is strengthened by the realization that he must set the example of hardihood to his men. And he in turn is frequently heartened by the splendid way in which his men respond. Thus an officer confesses: "If perchance I have been able to give to my men the example of a courage which was not natural to me I owe it to Sergeant Roger. When I felt my heart trembling within my breast, when I was tempted to burrow in some hole, closing my eyes and stopping my ears in order neither to see nor to hear, I had only to call to mind the narrow trenches of Louvière, and Roger smoking his pipe as he smiled over the shells, to smile also and regain possession of my inward calm...He little suspects, that little taciturn peasant, that his thought remains alive among us and that it comforts us in our hours of agony. Here indeed is a striking illustration of human responsibility. Not one of our acts, not

even the most indifferent but has its illimitable reverberation...and which does not contribute to the elevation or the abasement of the souls of our brothers."

"One is not on earth to grow fat and settle down to a little life of tranquillity," says another soldier philosophically, "but to realize an ideal even at the cost of suffering." Still more philosophically, one of these disciples of the spirit speaks even of death as an idea for the civilian alone to contemplate. He finds that the war has produced such a change in human conceptions, such a reversal of moral values, that "death no longer appears under the aspect which it once bore." It is no longer an object of terror, but "the affirmation of the ideal." The soldier has accepted in advance whatever the war may bring, death with the rest, and "death is the crown." He leaves to the civilian the one thing that is certain in the world, having nothing to do with it, having assigned it to its proper place, having recognized its true value, which is slight indeed in comparison with the rest. "Idealism is not dead. Never has it flowered more beautifully."

That is to say, true idealism is not of the sort so abundant before the war, the idealism of mere theory which analyzed the world away into something ethereal, or made itself blind to the facts which the pessimists know so well. True idealism is in vital touch with the whole of life. It ignores nothing. It conceals nothing. It looks at the darkest facts and contemplates the worst that may come. It admits the hardships, and knows how very far indeed is the actual life of men in the war-zone from the glowing romance it is thought to be by some of the friends at home. It is active all the while amidst dull prose, as opposed to the mere poetry of heroism which they take it to be who have seen only the distant glamor. But despite all the misery and the dull routine, the suffering and the deprivations, it keeps the vision.

This victorious attitude is seen, for example, in the custom of writing home chiefly what is pleasant or interesting and saying as little as possible about the hardships and the dreadful sights. Whatever one may feel at the time by way of impatience, complaint, bitterness, or anxiety, is surely transitory,

so the soldier-boy reasons. Long before the letter reaches home, the complaining mood will have passed. Why then should one write anything that is distressing? Why not write what is always true, that one is ready for anything that may come, "out to win"? If one has kept the faith, why not say so, remembering that the friends at home need heartening too? Surely, this is the example set by the wounded of every land, as they lie in the hospital, making as little as possible of their pain: what these men are thinking of is not how they feel but of what is going on in the front-lines where they hope to be in a few days or weeks. Their very eagerness to contribute their part lifts them above the present, above bodily feeling and pain.

The essential, so many assure us who have written on the war, is to have vision. Or, as a French writer puts it, "one thing is alone necessary: to believe, believe, that is to say, love, suffer, die. This is the faith which elevates men and makes the world better. The essential is to have an ideal and to be consecrated to it. The object of faith may vary. That is a minor matter, provided this faith lead to noble devotion, if it sustain permanent human friendships... Faith helps us to live the war, so that we never lose sight, in the troubled sky, of the guiding star... Faith: this word is the secret of victory, of national permanence. Faith in an ideal which may require of us the greatest sacrifice, this is the Gospel."

For purposes of the war it seems to matter little what happens to be the particular content of a man's faith, its terms, history, or the ceremonials attached to it. What signifies is his devotion to it. If he lives according to it he will find it almost identical in practical results with the faith of his neighbor from another country. This result if traced back to its sources in the Bible would no doubt prove harmonious with the original Christianity, in contrast with all sectarian interpretations. The test in each instance would be the life a man leads, "the fruits of the spirit." Thus we may see plainly why the attempts to preach a sectarian gospel to the "doughboys" were mostly failures. As some one has wisely remarked, "the doughboy had more to teach these preachers than the ministers had to give the doughboy." The soldier cares

little for a sermon when life is speaking to his heart. The psychology on which most of our sermons are founded is put out of date by this intimacy with the heart of life. If the doughboy returns home caring less for organized religion, it is because he cares more for the realities that can never perish.

Some of us might prefer to say that it is a question of the differences between the affirmative attitude and the negative. All through the Christian ages the leaders of thought have been dwelling on the gentler virtues, on humility, lovingkindness, mercy in such a way that their emphasis on self-abnegation has amounted to a eulogy of weakness. Meanwhile, the young have contrasted this praise bestowed on the contrite heart, and the milder virtues generally, with the vigor of manly self-assertion in the world, and they have preferred worldliness to virtue. The great war was in a sense a protest against the milder virtues. While we could not share the opinions of the German leader of thought who participated so vigorously in this reaction, we saw the force of Nietzsche's argument. We realized that even in America, the land of freedom and affirmation, we had lagged behind in the adoption of the positive attitude. The war waged on us by Germany challenged us to produce a unity as strong as Germany's own. Germany believed herself invincible. We were unable to work with the Allies to prove the contrary until we had thrown off the last of the negative idealisms by which we were beset. Even our pacifism was negative, despite the protest against war implied in it. Our conscientious objectors were mostly negative too. We decided at last to make the venture, to press through to success, whatever the protests.

Now, the devotee of the milder virtues never likes to be classified among the non-producers of the world. The pacifist feels hurt when he finds himself relegated to the same category as the pro-German or the revolutionist. But in war-time we see clearly a truth that is always apparent to the discerning, namely, that he who is not for us is against us. There is no such being as a neutral. One is either with the destructive forces or with the constructive, that is, if one have any life at all. What masquerades as mildness or even as

virtue is too often receptivity to destructive forces. When the government is selecting men for the army or navy it must not only eliminate the physically unfit, the neurasthenic and the feeble-minded, but all who cannot be persuaded to take the affirmative. The result is a highly selected assemblage of men. Well may we give heed to them when they indicate what manner of faith has survived in their souls, after the rude contacts of the war-zone.

The new idealism, therefore, is in every way affirmative. But are there not faults in every department of the organizations that have fostered war? Yes, most certainly, and some of these shortcomings must be inquired into when adverse criticism is permissible. Have not the leaders failed? Assuredly, and the ones we praise at last are those who have survived despite the vicissitudes of time. But the point is that the main end has been accomplished despite all the failures and shortcomings. In attaining this end we have learned how to succeed in any undertaking, we are in sight of the true philosophy of life.

In our humility we have been inclined to dwell on the truth that man is a "receptacle of life." Convinced that spiritually speaking man has no power of his own, we have been content with intellectual repetitions of our faith. But we have been unable to suppress our wonderment that with all the supposed virtue in the world we have made so little headway. We have almost forgotten that man cannot be a receptacle unless he reacts. We have forgotten that God needs us as much as we need Him. Scarcely have we dared to be true to the great saying that the province of man is to act as if all power were in his keeping, while remembering that all of us are "members one of another." Nor have we proved by our conduct that all power is in the concrete. It has seemed to us that true doctrine suffices, that faith is enough. Meanwhile our faith in the world has frequently given the lie to our religious beliefs.

Now, the soldier is surrounded by so much that is negative, that is destructive, that unless he rises to the occasion there will be no place for him among living fighters. His test begins before he leaves the first camp or training ground. Where everybody is "making up his mind" the process



is easier. Even the one who has hitherto deemed himself a coward is encouraged to be truly a man. It is no longer a question of the youthful statement, "I will try." Everybody must. The war is exacting. Necessity shows the way. To his amazement man finds that when he must he can. He is not only able to triumph over impatience aroused by delays, over poor food, wet feet, cold sleeping quarters, damp trenches, and a thousand other annoyances; but he can in large measure win a victory over his inner selfhood, become more objective, more truly social. Why should he stop here? Why not permit the spirit to be in every way triumphant over circumstances? Why not carry his affirmative attitude over into religion? By so doing he may learn to draw at will upon spiritual resources, turning to these first instead of depending on material aids to secure calmness and self-control. He may acquire a philosophy of the affirmative attitude, become acquainted with its elements, and see how it comes into being.

"It is only faith in God that keeps me here," so an elderly Frenchman said to me who was a volunteer in philanthropic service at the front. He had been both soldier and priest in the far past, and he told me the inner history of his life in struggling away from the priesthood into Protestantism. Personally, he said, he lived only for his wife and children. He greatly preferred to be with them. But he had come to feel himself one with his nation in its misery, because he had faith in God. His place therefore was where men were suffering. His Christianity was affirmative, productive. There was something his hands could find to do even though too old to fight. How very far indeed was his attitude from that of the fanatical conscientious objector who, supposedly standing up for the rights of English liberty, is so self-assertive that he refuses to obey the least order from any one in military authority!

I found that nothing so deeply touched the French heart, in the case of either soldier or civilian, as the fact that we Americans had gone to France as volunteers. "*Vous êtes volontaire!*" was the exclamation of grateful surprise. "You have left your home and kindred to come way across the sea out of

friendship for France, when you need not have come?" The thing seems incredible in a land where military service has long been obligatory.

However much we may have been bound and under obligation, the noteworthy element in the affirmative attitude is what man contributes voluntarily, in France as elsewhere. We borrowed some of our ideas of democracy from the French. France had helped us in our revolution against tyranny. Her own ideas of democracy had been won by throwing off the tyrant's yoke. We were returning in the same spirit of freedom. We had admired from the first the staunch idealism of the national will that said, "They shall not pass." "Lafayette, here we are," was our own answering word. The great generals have from time to time voiced the national determination in a sentence, as when General Gouraud said before the attack of July 14, "No one will retreat a step." It was the French soldier's unwillingness to retreat when everything suggested it that saved the day for him.

It is not then our origins that signify or avail. It is not the conditions along the way. It is not the mere process of life, as we sometimes wearily plod on towards success. Nor is it even our knowledge of life's processes, our knowledge of heredity and environment. It is the end that signifies, the goal to be won despite all failures, the purpose worthy of summoning our energies into fulness of expression. The affirmative attitude corrects our weaknesses, overcomes friction, gives us certainty, impetus. It enables us to keep the vision, to live above the process, above details, the routine, the drudgery. This is the triumph of the spirit in us. Hence we come to understand the meaning of Emerson's splendid saying, "The soul makes circumstance." In a war-zone the spirit is so hard-pressed that it must make circumstance.

"Every life is beautiful and precious when well employed," writes an officer. "It is not imposed events, not the frame which forms the value of an existence, but the soul which reacts and adapts itself to exterior conditions. Life is to be measured by man's capacity; circumstances in themselves signify nothing, we ourselves give them color." This from one who has constantly been under fire in one of the worst periods of the war is deeply significant.

“Men are greater than we thought, and the soul has triumphed over the body to a degree undreamed of.” Thus writes an English chaplain, Thomas Tiplady, in one of the most beautiful books on the war. “The courage is not brute courage. The body trembles and is afraid. It is pushed on through the curtain of fire by the soul within. I have spoken with many heroes, but never one who was without fear. The strongest-nerved and stoutest-hearted men in the army tremble as they cross No Man’s Land through a barrage of shells, but they force themselves on at the leisurely pace ordered beforehand, and take the enemy trenches or die. It is a fact of immense spiritual significance and hope. Men faint away, but do not run away. They force themselves through the inferno of fire as Livingstone forced his weakened body through the fever-haunted swamps of Africa, and perhaps faint away as he did into the arms of death. This spiritual courage is the doom of war...While men were little better than animals the ordeal of battle sufficed, but now that the soul has won such complete ascendancy over the body it is inadequate and excessively costly...Men are feeling the need of something bigger than war for their energy and valor, and they will find it in the battle against poverty, suffering, ignorance, and sin.”

Another writer who voices the English spirit in its best response to the war, Coningsby Dawson, says, “You learn to feel that there is only one thing that counts in life, and only one thing you can take out of it—the spirit you have developed in encountering its difficulties. Your body is nothing; it can be smashed in a minute. How frail it is you never realize until you have seen men smashed. So you learn to tolerate the body, to despise death, and to place all your reliance on courage—which, when it is found at its best, is the power to endure for the sake of others.”

There are two respects then in which the life of men at the front shows profound enrichment, on the intuitive side of their natures and in the region of their energies. The human spirit is larger than we ordinarily realize. It reaches far beyond the confines of our passing thoughts and sentiments, our questionings and tribulations. It is seen at its best in the believing attitude,

in touch with higher realities than those of physical sensation. Hence it is that contact with the great reality brings half-concealed beliefs into view, puts a man in possession of his real convictions. But the human spirit is also stronger than we ordinarily realize. Just because it is in touch with higher power than that of the physical senses it has control over the flesh. What is needed is an obstacle sufficiently strong to call the spirit into fulness of power. Such obstacles are offered without limit at the front. Therefore man can come to see that what really avails is the power of the spirit.

What is true of man at the front is plainly true of man all along the line of life, that is, potentially, in ideal. The battle against armed men is only one phase of the total warfare against ignorance, suffering and sin. The evils are no doubt better understood when enlarged upon the great arena of a world-war. They are more likely to be condemned by the world. But they are merely parts of the warfare we have with us all the while. The man whom war has made worthy of something higher may therefore find it ready at hand. The spirit may learn to triumph over other circumstances and hardships as over those of the war-zone.

It is more important to note that these spiritual triumphs imply an affirmative attitude much larger in scope and more powerful than that of the will or the understanding alone. We had the affirmationism of the intellect before the war. There were people in abundance to assure us that it was a question of the right creed or the right thought. There were others who deemed it a question of the will, as if one had merely to assert oneself and take possession of anything one might want. But the human spirit when energizing to the full is actuated by the idea as well as by will. Man both lives the thing out and thinks it out. Sometimes the need comes first, he reasons and responds. Again, he finds himself obeying almost automatically, and later he grasps the law or meaning of his experience. For most of those who were deeply touched by the spiritual realities of life at the front, life or experience seems to have come first, and after that the wisdom.

Here is the real romance of the war, the triumph of the spirit over circumstance. Many at home have felt that there was a romance. They had thought of their dear ones as progressing more rapidly than they could, even with all the saving and the sacrificing, the buying of bonds, and the eager patriotism. There was little romance in the actual conditions at the front. There were temptations. There were moral lapses. There were compromises with evils. In a sense they at home may regard their loved ones as fortunate if there was no change for the worse. Yet more truly speaking no one could touch that great reality and return the same, even though the meaning of it all should not be clearly seen for years. And for those who had the power to tell what the romance was the meaning was so great and wonderful that it touched the whole of life.

The soul and its circumstance—that is the heart of life. There is deep, intimate connection between the human need and the divine strength disclosing itself to meet the need. The human spirit in the flood-tide of its energy is not acting in its own mere selfhood. Man is unwilling to make such a venture for himself alone. He is there fighting for something nobler than any interest of his own. He is there for the sake of his comrades, for his family, his country, his God. Thus it is not only his courage which must be seen in the larger light of this triumph of the spirit over circumstance, but every moral and spiritual quality that is in him. His spiritual triumph lives on to inspire his fellows even if his earthly life is laid down in sacrifice. The world is richer because of the life he has lived.

It matters not, therefore, whether large numbers have caught this vision or not; it is true as an ideal for all. But no one could visit the hospitals and mingle with the ranks sympathetically without seeing that very many had at least felt the quickening spirit, whether or not they could give intellectual expression to it. There is every reason why we should separate the human reaction and the spiritual values from the bare, hard facts of the war with all its horrors and terrors; and help our fellowmen to catch the vision. For in the vision there is light and hope for our whole journey through to the end

when there shall be no more war. The human spirit is living the present life to learn just this great lesson of the soul's supremacy. The outward conflict is no longer necessary when the inward law is seen. The great war came to awaken the souls of men.

We are assured of the reality of spiritual experiences during the war for two reasons. We have men with us still who bear evidences that the spirit in them has triumphed over the flesh, that their hearts have been touched, that they have come home changed men; and we have the testimony of those who have in some degree caught the new vision of death. With these clues in mind, we may sympathetically complete the whole story. For intuitively we know that many who have left our sight triumphed over circumstances in large measure, despite all the terrors and the horrors of the battlefield. Death for them probably was not a struggle. It may not even have come as a shock, although produced by the bursting of a shell. Unconsciousness or gentle sleep undoubtedly protected them. And when they awoke it was to find themselves under freer conditions to which they became accustomed with the joy of those who have won welcome release.

If we could follow the lives of those who have "gone on before" we would surely see that the triumphant spirit which carried them through their experiences in the war-zone is now the basis and starting-point of their new life. They have new conditions to learn, new circumstances to triumph over. Possibly they were somewhat bewildered at first. But gradually they doubtless found themselves, and learned that it was still a question of the soul and its environment.

Mingling with us and observing our ways, our absorption in externals, they would surely say so to us above all else: "Do not live for the things that perish. Do not judge by appearances. Lift your thoughts to the skies and live in blessed memory with us who have gained our freedom. We have found reality. We have found the one source of power. Open your minds and hearts that you may grow in responsiveness to the divine love and wisdom. Keep close to us and live with us. Do not mourn. Do not grieve. Do not think

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of us as dead. We were never so thoroughly alive. Do not think of us as far from you. We were never so near. Do not in any way shut us out. Triumph with us. Rejoice with us. Fulfil your life on earth. Then in good season come to live with us here in this inexpressibly beautiful world. Never forget that spirit is the only real power."

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## XII. Among the Wounded

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“IF THE people at home could see these sights, they would all come over here,” remarked a doughboy to me, as we stood on the railway platform at Troyes watching train-loads of our wounded men coming from the front. This was in June, several weeks before the tide turned that brought us to the armistice. The Huns had been advancing towards the Marne, and conditions looked very threatening then. Not only were train-loads of French and American wounded passing through but still longer trains of refugees, while upon all the highways leading from the Marne country the refugees young and old were streaming, too. It would have been difficult to tell which was the more distressing sight, that of the young wounded men, some of whom might soon be returning to the front from the hospitals, or that of the aged men and women driven from their homes and suffering every hardship, and possibly making their last journey on earth.

The soldier-boy was perfectly right. Had the people at home witnessed those sights they would have gone to the assistance of the sufferers even more rapidly than they did in the triumphant summer months before the armistice. So too would it have been if the people at home could have visited the hospitals where thousands and thousands were lying in mortal agony. So too would it have been if they could have seen the wreckage



and the ruin in the towns and villages, on the battlefields, in the trenches, in the factories, on the farms and railways, all up and down the front and far back of it in France and across the whole of Belgium, not to mention Serbia and the other lands. One thing leads to another in the war-country. One hardly knows where the terrible thing stops. All these ruins and sufferings are intimately related. They affect the whole of life. No one can ever be the same again who has felt their power. But how difficult it was to awaken our friends "over here!" How difficult it is still and always will be to convey an idea of the great reality of this dreadful war which people lived through!

Yet in a measure every one who has met the returning soldier-boys and has mingled with the wounded, has caught the contrast. It seems almost out of order to write enthusiastically about the affirmative attitude, telling how the men at the front showed the supremacy of the spirit over the flesh, while there remain hundreds of thousands who were weakened, maimed for life, or otherwise brought into a state where it seems impossible to live up to the moral lessons of the war. The darker side of the picture was indeed the more impressive in the war-countries. The sight of the terribly wounded, the shell-shocked, the permanently maimed and weakened, was well-nigh overwhelming for those of us who are tender-hearted. We had to school ourselves to meet those sad sights that we might continue fit for service. All ordinary sufferings or those we had read about in histories seemed small in comparison. It was difficult indeed to find inner resources, to gain sufficient contrast to learn how to meet whatever might yet come; for of course life was without pleasure, and the war was ever before the mind each day and hour.

Lest we should be over-confident in our adherence to the affirmative attitude, it is well to look with open eyes at the darker side. Never before in all history have there been so many wounded and in such terrible ways. For neither the gas-attack nor liquid fire had ever been employed before. The machine-gun fire had never been so terrible or so deadly. The airplane had not been used to bomb supply-trains and blow men into ruined fragments

of human nature. Never before had any enemy been so fiendish as to drop bombs upon hospitals, thus adding terror to terror. The whole process of slaughter had become more frightful and with it all the attendant ills.

Long indeed will the wounded and terribly maimed be among us, mutely telling us by their presence what war is. There are literally millions of them in the war-countries. Not even all the skill of modern surgery in cutting and patching can keep the sad evidences from our eyes. Nor can we forget when new trades have been taught to the blind, to the men who have lost their arms, their feet or legs; when everything is done that human ingenuity and kindness may do to alleviate their sufferings. The whole world suffered together and the whole world will continue to suffer. And there were diseases and other evils that left their impress too. Apparently the miseries were great enough and far-reaching enough to touch the life of every dweller on our fair earth, sooner or later.

It is hard indeed to see the compensations for such misery. The facts are terrible realities that will remain in history. The evils can never be blotted out. We will never come to regard them as good. They will remain as facts to be reckoned with by all who shall know our earth-life as it is, seeing life face to face and "seeing it whole." We must find our way through to the light despite the darkness which we can neither deny nor dispel. The opportunity is ours to keep the faith despite the events which in themselves are without compensation.

It is still more difficult for some of the parents and sweethearts, the kind friends who would serve, and in a measure for all of us to settle the social questions that arise when we consider the seriously wounded. For the parents have their wounded boys to care for, and the sweethearts may not feel that it is right to marry those who are maimed for life. Not readily can we point out the way to the triumph of the spirit over the flesh when the flesh is so weakened and so maimed. The affirmative attitude is for the physically strong, so it will be said. Some of the fathers and mothers whose sons were killed outright are better able to keep the faith than those whose

children are comparatively helpless. It is hardly sufficient compensation, that their boys have fulfilled their part in finishing the great war. The personal loss still seems beyond all reward.

Yet in the war-countries all these matters are regarded in much the same light. These miseries have come all the way along. Like the death which has "become familiar," they are all parts of the war which we "live," parts of the great price which the nations have paid. They testify to the horrors and the barbarism. They speak with emphatic if with lowered voices against war in all its phases. The people in the war-lands who have kept the faith have maintained it despite all these tests. They began the work of caring for the wounded the moment the war began and have carried it on apace with the rest. All over these lands one sees signs of their devotion to the unfortunate. For many years to come these countries will be eloquent testimonials to the true life of charity, as surely as they will stand before the world to testify against war. "No man liveth unto himself." No one can be understood alone. Nor can the man who is wounded see the compensations for his suffering apart from his fellows.

There is no compensation for war in the destructive sense. It is simply hell, and these poor maimed bodies we see all about us in the war-lands have been sacrificed. But then we long ago learned that there is no compensation for sin, none for selfishness, none for any of the evils that bring human woe upon us. War enormously emphasizes and objectifies the evils which men have brought down upon their heads. It brings these out into the objective that we may see them for the contemptible things they are. We have been so easy-going as a race that we have seemed to need such an awakening. The innocent suffer with the guilty when the race is brought into such an upheaval as the great war. We may all learn the great lesson if we will. We may all work to prevent further wars.

In the war-lands, the people have been compelled to take up the next duty and push bravely on, whether they could see compensations or not. Nothing short of this brave responsiveness is permissible when the help of

every person in the whole broad land is needed. One's sufferings are great, to be sure, but those of one's neighbor may be greater. Every household has suffered more or less, and there are many war-lands in the same plight. There are many that must almost be rebuilt from the foundation. Everybody must lend a hand in the long hard work of reconstruction. There is little time for thought. There is little time even for emotion. Generally speaking, the emotions are restrained where there is suffering on all sides. The duties are divided around as well as possible and every one works steadily at the task to which he has been assigned. Of course the social situation is different. Of course the problems of social life, marriage and the home have changed. But then all these matters belong with the great reality which has touched the world to its foundation.

To be true to the vision which the war has given us is to hold to the affirmative attitude in all directions. The same philosophy that has helped people in the devastated lands will help us here too. We in America have suffered but slightly in comparison. War has merely touched the surfaces of our national life. It did not last long enough to affect us as the European countries were affected. It called only a fraction of us into the front lines. Our towns and cities have not been bombed or shelled. We know little of the terror that flies by night over the darkened streets. Our factories are intact. Our farms have not been destroyed. Possibly there will be a solution of some of our problems if we remember what Europe has suffered, if we realize how great the need still is for our service.

Thus my shell-shocked comrade who brought me a vision of life by telling how near death he had come when four soldiers were blown to pieces by his side, also taught me by his fortitude in bearing pain how all sufferers might keep the faith. He could have left France and come home, for his weakness warranted an honorable discharge from further war-service. But no, incapacitated for further work in the front lines and still too weak to be on his feet long at a time, he asked leave to work in some other branch of

the service till the division to which he was attached should be relieved of duty in France. One met this same spirit everywhere "over there."

It is plain that we must regard the problems relating to the wounded as instances of the whole problem of the war. For they cannot be understood by themselves. What we need is a philosophy of the whole. The same faith which helps us in other fields will help us here. It is a question of understanding the particular needs in the case of the given individual and then of finding a wise way to meet these needs.

For example, consider the emotional problems. Dr. M. Allen Starr says, in *Harper's Magazine*, that "modern warfare subjects the soldier to a form of emotional strain previously unknown. In former wars there has been an equal degree of hardship, an equal risk of danger to life. In this war there has developed a peculiarly exhausting and long-continued nervous stress due to trench fighting, and to novel methods of warfare. It has been recognized by every one that anxiety and care, distress of mind or conscience, and grief are potent factors in impairing health and causing a nervous breakdown. But these have been regarded as temporary conditions which time can remove. In this war the emotional strain is continuous, there is no intermission. It keeps up night and day for months. After the wrench of leaving home and family, and after months of active training, trying months with much discomfort and annoyance, the soldier is sent to the front...He stands for hours on the watch in wet and mud, in the midst of terrific noise, in constant danger, with shells bursting about him, his comrades falling, or blown to pieces, or buried alive. There is no sleep; meals—such as they are—are snatched in the intervals of fighting. All is confusion, constant vigilance, and there is no rest."

To make vivid this emotional strain, Dr. Starr quotes the description of a soldier as follows: "The shelling was awful. Before I had been in the trench three minutes, a bit of shrapnel made a clean cut in my breeches...The sights were awful, dead men all over the place, some half buried by shells. The ground and trenches had all been flattened out by artillery fire, so there was hardly any shelter. I told the men to scratch themselves in with their

intrenching tools, but it was simply a case of looking death in the face and waiting to be hit. Never for a moment did I expect to get out alive, as the shrapnel rattled all day long on my helmet, and of course the Boches might have counter-attacked at any time. Many men got buried and had to be dug out. It was dreadful to see men's nerves give way, and a man of forty whimpering like a child crying his soul out. Very catching this disease, too, so I had to send him back. I never got into a worse hell than I did that day, and of course the sights next one made eating impossible. When night came nerves got even worse, and there was hardly a man who was not shivering like a leaf. That day and night was a nightmare. It is the only time I ever felt the sweat of fear, but then it dropped off me in one continuous stream..."

At first thought, such emotional states seem unconquerable. Worse still are the actual cases of shell-shock. When one learns that 20 per cent of the casualties among the men are ascribed to shell-shock the power of the nervous and emotional reaction upon the organism is brought home to the mind with great force.

Yet investigation discloses the interesting and promising fact that in the treatment of shell-shock cases in the field and base hospitals definite and successful use is made of the affirmative attitude by the attendant physicians. The first great hope thrown out is that the patient will recover and will be able to return to duty at the front. This the soldier is eager to do. He may be in a negative attitude. He may have heard about shell-shock as something very terrible and incurable. His whole attitude about it may change when he learns that large numbers of men have been cured and sent back to front-line duty.

Out of 100 cases of shell-shock, perhaps 65 will be sent back to the lines in three days. These 65 men were perhaps exhausted after all the hardships and nervous strains they had endured. They were weak from lack of food. They were in extreme fatigue from constant fighting. When first brought to the field hospital they perhaps danced about and in other ways acted strangely. Apparently little could be done for them. But meanwhile they

rapidly improved, favorable features or promising conditions were sought by the physicians and attendants. And these favoring conditions were increased by wise treatment so that after the three days of rest the men were able to resume their places in the firing line.

Of the remaining 35, perhaps 20 would return to duty after a period of treatment and rest during 10 days. The favoring conditions in such cases were the changed surroundings of a hospital further back from the front, diversions of various kinds, other occupations than those of warfare, good nutrition and wise psychotherapy. Some of the men needed, for example, to be steadily encouraged, that they might regain normal mental activity and get possession of their nerves. In more serious cases the will had to be aroused and taught to train the muscles anew. The treatment was of course still more prolonged in the case of the remaining 15 out of the hundred, and possibly one out of the 15 was invalided home as wholly unfit for further war service. In the home-country the severe cases called for re-education during prolonged treatment. Thus some of the men had to be taught to walk or to perform some easy work. Those who were unfitted for war service were of course reassured when they realized that they were once for all relieved of the horrors and terrors of the war. It is reported that many of the men in France who were still suffering from shocks were immediately restored when the armistice came. The relief experienced by the good news indicated of course that the emotional tension and nervous strain had had much to do with the suffering, caused in part, but in part only, by the actual explosion of shells.

It was noticeable in many cases formerly under treatment that while the nervous reactions virtually ceased after a time, the mind was always on the *qui vive* for sights and sounds. Thus the shell-shock mechanism would be set free by the sudden noise of a locomotive, the bursting of an automobile tire, or any kind of explosion. For the time being the former patient may lose control of his organism and may display symptoms apparently indicating insanity, a state of intense excitement or "trembling like a leaf." Again, mental

torpor and depression may be the temporary results. It is necessary of course gradually to train the mind to guard against these nervous reactions. The treatment consists in the restoration of confidence, the recovery of inner control and the affirmative attitude. One observer reports that "in all cases the mental suggestion of constant hope and recovery is very important—hence the necessity of treating these patients in special hospitals—not among surgical cases where they may not be understood, and may be ridiculed because of these odd symptoms, but in places where every means...is applied with skill and sympathy. It is not wise to send them home to anxious relatives, where a recounting or exaggeration of symptoms only excites interest, and where there is little stimulus to recovery."

Every specific instance of suffering from wounds, shell-shock or other injuries, should receive careful attention in order that every one concerned may know how to help the sufferer back into an attitude towards life as nearly normal as possible. Hence there is a problem for the friends at home as well as for the physician and his attendants. A direct clue is doubtless found in the hopeful attitude of the typical wounded man in any hospital: he is eager to leave the hospital as soon as possible and return to the front. Therefore he makes as little reference as possible to his wounds. Like Clemenceau, shot by an anarchist, he says, "*Ce n'est rien*" "It is nothing." Whatever the nature of the injury, those who aid the sufferer make all they can of every favoring symptom.

The problem in many instances consists in persuading the patient to adopt a different attitude towards every phase of the experience connected with his injury. Here is a sergeant, for example, who is suddenly called on to take the place of a captain and lead a much larger number of men over the top than he has ever commanded before. Only a few out of the company return alive, let us say. Inasmuch as the sergeant was commanding the men he feels a certain self-condemnation afterwards when, suffering from shell-shock, he is taken to the rear, temporarily affected by loss of memory concerning some of the recent events while morbidly dwelling on others. He is in a way



like a victim of divided personality and must be aided in the process of larger self-recovery, must be put in command of himself again.

To a degree the needs in such a case are much like those of innumerable others in civilian life. For example, take the problem of re-education in instances of attempted suicide, extreme self-condemnation, morbid conscientiousness, and the state of mind of the repentant sinner who sees no hope. To raise the question, what is the normal attitude towards life for such a person? is to be reminded that there is no permanent cure save through knowledge of the self as a whole. Very few of us have undertaken such a fundamental inquiry. We have not asked, "What shall make us whole?" We have not listened to that voice of authority which says: "Thy faith hath made thee whole." Our religion ordinarily has not ministered to the whole individual. If we have learned the victorious faith through profound study of people in need in civilian life, we should be able to apply the same philosophy to the sufferer from war-injuries in all their forms.

In the case of men severely wounded or maimed for life, one would naturally ask, What is the wise attitude under the given conditions? Some of these conditions can never be overcome. Others may gradually be mastered through patient re-education. In what respects can the spirit be encouraged to rise above the adverse conditions? How far can the soul "create circumstance"? How far may the beauty of a life of faith atone for ugliness or deformity?

Plainly, very much depends upon the attitude and intelligence of those who befriend the almost helpless victim. Much too depends upon the attitude of the man himself, whatever his physical condition. Whatever he took into the war by way of mental equipment was a help or a hindrance. To what extent was he morally prepared? Did he respond spiritually to the life at the front? Or did he bear across the seas a set of unfavorable expectations, like those that foster the mental causes of shell-shock? Was there a high degree of mental control? Did his working faith in life resolve itself into a religion of courage?

While it could not be said that a man's injuries exactly correspond to his moral and mental development, since in war the innocent suffer with the guilty and are subject to many contingencies, it is true that the subsequent state of the soul depends to a large extent upon the previous mental history. The after-effects are at least spiritual opportunities. They may one and all be regarded as incentives to action. The thoughtful mind may make the best use of every favoring tendency.

From the larger point of view every one who has participated in the war, whether wounded or shell-shocked or not, needs to pass through mental reconstruction. Here is the vigorous young American, for example, who fought at Chateau-Thierry and who boldly informs you that he was one of those who "saved Paris and turned the tide of war." Unmindful of the service of any number of regiments besides his own and of any number of important actions besides that of Chateau-Thierry, he is in danger of undue self-assertion and may recount his brilliant exploits during the rest of his life. When he returns home his friends may unthinkingly do their utmost to spoil him. Thus his egotism may grow by what it feeds on. But here is another hero whose exploits were equally splendid but who checks his egotism at the beginning and passes through a period of mental reconstruction even before he reaches the home-land. From one point of view the unwounded have a moral need as urgent as of that of the wounded. In every instance the question is, What is the normal attitude towards the war and the experiences it brought? What is the most rational course for the mind to follow in its readjustment?

One of the best results of the war, we have noted above, was the tendency to lift the mind above self, out of subjectivity into the larger social world of the war-zone, the world of brotherhood and comradeship. One felt this larger mindedness in regard to the hardships of trench life, in the hospitals, everywhere among the men who experienced an inner quickening. One felt a larger, nobler sympathy in the case of nurses, physicians, chaplains, Red Cross workers. The result upon the responsive individual was a tendency

to adopt a wise attitude to meet the conditions and needs at hand. Where so many men and women were giving their best and working together, the mind was helped forward into this nobler attitude. Some of us no doubt lost the impetus when the armistice came and we realized that the greater task was accomplished. All the more reason why, under the less favoring conditions of life at home, we should acquire the philosophy implied in this nobility of spirit.

We may put this philosophy somewhat as follows. Here we are in this wonderful process of experience which we call "life." We had nothing to say regarding the conditions into which we were born. We took on tendencies by heredity which we would be rather glad not to possess. Our education was hardly as intelligent as it might have been. Our environment was not by any means what we would have chosen. By the mere fact that we were born into this world at a certain stage of humanity's development we were made subject to the woes and sufferings of the race, including those of the war. But we are souls, spirits, heirs of the kingdom, "made in the image and likeness of God." Each of us has a work to do. For each there is a purpose. The soul needs an environment to test its powers and call them into constructive use. Waking up to moral self-consciousness rather late, we nevertheless find that we have already made some headway, we have a measure of self-knowledge, inner control, centrality of character. Our beliefs and attitudes have played us false to some extent, but through our mistakes and follies we have begun to learn the law of sowing and reaping. If we have suffered defeats because of our negative attitude, we may now turn about and learn how to succeed. It is normal to be affirmative, to expect success, even moral and spiritual triumph, and full mastery of the flesh.

Meanwhile, the warfare between the destructive and the constructive forces has brought us to the present point. We were not responsible for the conflict in the beginning. We have been wonderfully sustained by the divine love, held in equilibrium through the divine providence so that never at any time was the soul in danger of destruction. This divine guidance and

sustaining care will continue with us. If we realize our follies we may ask to have them overcome. If we see the consequences of the evils that are in us, we may pray to have these evils removed. We are by no means alone. There is salvation through kinship with those who are aspiring. There is guidance for us in every hour of need.

Hitherto the enemy has been rather better organized than we who have sometimes called ourselves Christians. The enemy began a long time ago to make ready to realize his inordinate ambition. In this he was extremely clever. Surpassing the efforts of nations deeming themselves superior, he tried to educate every man, woman and child to be efficient. He made more headway in overcoming ignorance and poverty, and in abolishing slums, according to his standards, than we who claimed to be Christians. All his powers and instrumentalities were centralized in one capital. He possessed remarkable unity of spirit. The whole world over his agents and his kindred worked together. His system on the whole had many merits. The enemy was very vigilant while some of us were dreaming.

Awakened to reality on a memorable day, we found that willy nilly every soul of us was involved in the enormous conflict set free at the command of those who had willed it. Never before had civilized peoples apparently possessed so little power of choice. We had to make war whether we believed in it or not. We were compelled to suffer with the world. Many of the world's best men were slain. The resulting social changes early began to be so great that we were overwhelmed by their magnitude. But what alternative was left for a self-respecting individual save to turn about, forget self and work? What nobler examples of service were ever shown the world than amidst just these hardships? Possibly the course of events in times of peace might have yielded such virtue. But apparently the soul is greatest when men suffer most.

We have borne away from the war-zone and we have with us still enough of all this resulting misery to teach us one and all the great lesson—if we care to learn it, if we have the will to live by the wisdom which war-experience has

taught us. We cannot escape the attendant consequences, whether we learn the lesson and profit by it or not. The world surely needed to be taught a fundamental lesson. We needed to learn how to work together as brothers, not in rivalry, not in enmity. We needed to learn how to organize the world for justice. The war has given us a great impetus: shall we profit by it?

It is a hard saying, no doubt, this that the war came to awaken us and teach us a great moral lesson. Few of us may be ready yet to live by the spiritual law. We would perhaps like to lapse into the old ways. Lest we forget, we have the ruined countries before us. Lest we forget, we have starving peoples to care for and to feed. Lest we forget, we have the maimed and wounded even in our own home-land, where people suffered so lightly after all. It is hardly a question of "compensation." It is hardly a question of your personal problems and mine. What of the world? What of the problems left over and pressing upon us with such insistence that we can hardly tell wither the world is tending? Is there any solution for your difficulties and mine save by relating our problems with the lessons of the war?

The question of the wounded is no more difficult after all than the problem of human life. Since God "really lives," since the spiritual world is near, since man is a spirit and the divine providence for him has his socially spiritual welfare in view, "the formation of a heaven from the human race," why should we ever expect to find any solutions or compensations as long as we dwell on surfaces and judge by the appearance? Looked at from without, the situation may be utterly dark. Regarded from within, it can never be so. The true vision always springs from within. It is a question of the soul and its environment. This environment includes not only nature and the events which men shape in the natural world, but the social sphere, and this in turn is partly in the spiritual world and links us with our moral kindred. This environment includes "the secret place" of the soul. What then is the soul in this its larger, truer sense? What is normal life? What shall we do to become normal, to be made "every whit whole"?

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According to the philosophy of this book, to be normal is to live the spiritual life in awareness that we are dwellers in the spiritual world. Hence the affirmative attitude is the one we have a right to adopt and to look for in our fellows. The affirmative attitude invites power for every human need. That power may not enable us to change all the outward circumstances we would like to change. It may find us with bodies maimed for life. But no circumstance can keep the spiritual influx of life from us if we will to have it come, if we look upward and become receptive. There is guidance for us in any possible situation. And the soul shall never lose its reward.



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### XIII. New Light on Salvation

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**T**HERE IS a well-known and very ancient saying to the effect that “fear made the gods.” It is no doubt true in part. Many people still accept a religious creed through fear of what may follow unbelief. Take away the fear of future punishment in an actual place called hell, and you undermine fears without number. There are multitudes who hold to certain religious beliefs because of a suspicion that they may be true. Extremely few abide by their faith because they have come to grasp the spiritual principles on which true faith is founded. Fear naturally occupies a place in the soldier’s mind when he sails forth into a submarine-infested zone, when he is in danger of being bombed at night, and when he passes through the baptism of fire. Fear naturally enters the minds and hearts of the loved ones at home who have consecrated their sons to service in behalf of the country. We almost involuntarily raise the old issues anew, wondering what the truth about our human salvation may be after all. The question is indeed highly important for those who seek light on life and death “over there.”

Meanwhile, despite the persistence of our fears, the world has been steadily losing hold of the former reasons for salvation, and it is well to see why this has been so. Once the whole scene of our earthly life seemed dark and evil, the flesh was despised and nearly all mundane interests were



condemned with it. But we have so far changed our attitude that scarcely any one is zealous to escape from natural existence as supposedly detrimental to salvation. We now say that our emancipation from sin must come from some wiser way of meeting, not avoiding, the world. Once it seemed possible to obtain release from earthly woes by fleeing to the cloister or the lonely woodland retreat. Now we discount salvation for self alone. Formerly, we looked solely to the Church and assigned a special place to the priest as the only heaven-appointed lover of righteousness. But times have so changed that we look also to manifold means of social service. Salvation has become a social question. It is no longer conferred as the exclusive privilege of a certain class or school. It must include the so-called common people, with their crying needs and larger social interests. In war-time it rises above sectarian differences, the Catholic priest ministers to the dying Protestant and the Protestant clergyman carries the last words of faith to the dying Roman Catholic.

Again, it was long customary to make light of human nature, as if man were inherently evil. This view lingered long after the old idea of "the fall of man" was given up. It has appealed strongly to the orthodox Christian because this view affords a splendid contrast to the conception of the atonement and "the glory of God," as if man in his sin had merely come into being to show by contrast the value of the divine goodness. Nowadays, however, we find great beauty and nobility in human life, and we look for the goodness of God as manifested through the essentially human. Every returning soldier and sailor is welcomed as a hero. We dwell on the nobility of his service for his country. Modern thought seems to support the newer view, for it fails to find any faculty in man radically evil or corrupt in itself. All our powers have developed together, so we now see. All our powers have value in their respective places. All human beings are in the throes of progress side by side. What affects one in a measure affects all. During the war we all suffered and wrought together. Now we all share in the social issues which have come

to the fore since the armistice. What is needed is social enlightenment, not individual salvation.

Once it was said that God made man "good," then retired, and that it was man who introduced disorder. This explanation did not carry far. It threw the blame upon God, who had somehow made such a faulty being as man. We now realize that disorder, like ignorance, is incidental to human advancement. We explain it in part at least on the ground that while in process man sees as "in a glass darkly." We add to this charitable consideration the important truth that man is morally free and needs alternatives, contrasts, the struggles which experience brings. No longer condemning man outright, we do not expect more of him than his growing enlightenment makes possible.

In what sense then is it still justifiable to speak of salvation? Why do we still teach that no man can be saved without the Lord? Why is no fact more sure in man's inner history than the earnest outcry of the heart for salvation? Why do men reach out for help when they encounter the greater dangers of war-time, when they face death? There must be a profound reason why all reforms begin with this outcry. Our age differs from others only so far as we now insist that salvation shall be social.

Since the demand for salvation is universal, the resource must surely be universal. Since it is the Lord who saves to-day, it has always been the Lord in His love and wisdom who has saved, even prior to revelation and the incarnation. The disclosures of history are secondary to the eternal fact: what is true of salvation must be true of human life.

Unless God were immediate to man, there could be no spiritual progress at any time. God is not only the starting-point of thought, or the basis of revelation as an historical fact. His presence yields the only true clue to the interpretation of events as they pass to-day. Without the love which flows from the divine heart, no mortal could have been saved from the hell of hate into which it was possible for men to sink in their darkness. But it is equally true that only the divine love can free the race from the animosities and lusts of a terrible war today. Hence we begin with the thought of God as resident

in "the secret place" of the soul, carrying forward to completion the work of creating the race into an actual image and likeness of heaven. Man was born into that image and likeness, ideally speaking. The whole course of his life is guided with the ideal of heavenly goodness in view. This is the telling fact concerning man, not the fact of his darkness and his sin.

Not in the uttermost hell of selfishness does any man exist in real isolation from the divine love. There is no "lost soul," if by the word "lost" you mean one who is cut off by virtue of his internal nature, by divine decree, or for the sake of punishment. It is the nature of divine love to abide with man wherever he is, whatever he does. The very being of man is founded in the divine nature, despite all appearances to the contrary.

It is no less true, however, that man has needed varying evidences of the divine presence according to the measure of his separateness from God. Hence the provision for his welfare all along the line of the spiritual life, and the indications to-day that salvation must be social. Salvation comes about on the human side through conscious departure from selfishness, willing responsiveness to the divine love. Hence salvation is not forced on any one. The way of life is, briefly speaking, such that no man can avoid being eventually led where he may choose the heavenly life, if he so will. Thus it is that amidst the throes of a great war which apparently threatened heaven itself we have been led nearer the point where all may see that only through complete social salvation can true relief come to the race. The individual has been lifted out of his isolation. America has been called out of isolation into union with the world. All lands alike face the new social issues, the new menace.

Again it was once apparently an easy matter to maintain that "probation ends with death." The way was indeed simple while all that was necessary to be saved was to accept the "true doctrine." This idea involved a kind of aristocracy of the future life. But with the coming of a democratic age it no longer seemed charitable to consign all save those doctrinally privileged to hell. At present it is the profiteer, the maker of destructive militarism,

malicious propagandism and the sly schemes of the “red hand” whom we consign to that country. We now place so much emphasis on love to the neighbor that we estimate a man’s prospects by his manner of living and loving. We know that it is a man’s prevailing love that really shapes his future, that men seek their kind here and hereafter according to their “ruling passion.”

The whole scheme of salvation has been enlarged to include the spiritual world and the opportunities it affords. We know that the Bible does not teach “eternal punishment,” but only “age-lasting condemnation” (so the Greek reads). That is, there is a period of consciousness sufficiently long to bring all men into the possibilities of repentance. In the light of the disclosures made to them in the world of spirits, many may will to reform who have turned a deaf ear to all spiritual appeals in this world. But there may be those who will turn aside, whatever the opportunities brought before them, just as the war has shown us a whole people apparently untouched by any appeal to humanity, a people who preferred their own ruling passion in all its frightfulness. The proud spirit that will not even acknowledge defeat on the battlefield will of course continue to reap as it has sown. The moral reaction befits the one whose self-will invites it. None of us would deny the consequences of a hell of moral self-condemnation to those whose conduct needs it. It is plainly not a question of death. For death may be relatively incidental, it may not be productive of any change at all. We have given up the idea that it determines a man’s salvation.

As for choices made in this world—we realize more and more keenly, as our knowledge of the actual conditions of human society grows, that few men have opportunity in this brief round of experiences to make anything like a final choice. Hence we look forward to increased opportunities in the future life. We emphasize the divine love and what it can do for man, rather than the alleged sternness of the divine judgment. Hell has ceased to be a fixity, as if it were a condition imposed on man. We now see that it has the force of conscience. We deem it unescapable in the sense in which

conscience pursues us until we learn its lessons, frankly facing our deeds, facing ourselves, contemplating the moral law as a law for all. Hence we hold that in the divine love all men will be given the rightful benefit of the reactions of conscience. If there are men who resolutely refuse to face themselves, their deeds, and the moral law—surely these will have abundant opportunity in the future life to suffer the consequences of the hell which they have chosen for themselves while here on earth.

Looking at the matter optimistically, when it is a question of the repentant sinner, we now declare that no man ever sins with his entire nature. Sin is due to division within the self. It is assertion of one portion of man's nature over against the rest and against God. Man may seem for the time being to be wholly and solely a "miserable sinner." Well may he seem so to himself when brought to judgment. He may seem a "lost soul" to those who look on. But in the inward light it is seen that man sins with his external consciousness, not with his heart, in "the secret place." He asserts himself in the public place of his nature, not in "the tabernacle of the Most High." Always in the heart there is a place untainted. Always in the tabernacle the Father is accessible. Ever in "the secret place" the voice of the Holy Spirit may be heard. Salvation in the permanent sense begins with the profound discovery that there is a part of one's nature never touched either by one's sin or by the evils of the world. In fine, salvation is that quickening of our whole nature which lets us know our real selfhood as children of God. Salvation has always been needed because men have always passed along this pathway from self-assertion into the conflicts attendant upon it. It will always be needed so long as there shall be war between constructive and destructive forces.

The world has been steadily led nearer this position by the investigation of human environments. The more deeply and intimately we know people in the light of their struggles with heredity and environment, the more reason for charity. To put oneself sympathetically into another's place is to realize why the other does what we see him doing, influenced as he is. Our condemnations have been based on what people might have done if they

had been more enlightened, with stronger wills; had they been differently placed. True charity begins with a sense of the divine love which can conquer where all the odds appear against the sufferer.

The emphasis is shifting from condemnation to the effort to give every man a chance. Few of us are competent as yet to say what a fair chance is. Since a moral choice is possible only through freedom, we are trying to learn what freedom is. Most of us are captured before our time by this or that system of education, aristocracy, militarism, anarchism, or other device put upon us in the name of authority. Surely, there were few free peoples when the great war began. The war has left us with the realization that life is often a process of shifting from one form of despotism to another. Some day there may be democracy.

The starting point in our study of salvation has come to be: quest for knowledge of the life that now is, with all its tendencies, its problems, and its aspirations; for knowledge of life without illusion, without prejudice. For a long time to come, the progress of the world towards salvation must still be growth in such knowledge, just as in the inner life the first necessity is, coming to judgment, facing things as they are, admitting mistakes and failures, acknowledging sins, and looking beyond all these to their causes. The next step is growth in a much higher kind of knowledge, that is, knowledge of the influences working from the spiritual world into the natural to change things in accordance with the divine standard. For salvation, in brief, is by response to the divine life in line with what is taking place to-day. No appeal to the past can save us from the Teutonic "Hymn of Hate," or show why the world is inflicted with such hatred. The solution for to-day must be in terms for to-day. We must look in the vital current of things in the world for signs of the working of that Love which shall master all hate. We must turn from study of the mere evils of the war to see what new signs of love and brotherhood are discoverable among the rank and file of the Allies. Then let us enlarge our beliefs to meet the new vision of death.

Some of us are almost overwhelmed at times when we contemplate the misery and ruin wrought by organized hate in its efforts to subdue the world. Plainly, the enemy was far more clever, alert, and effectively organized than we were until we faced disaster and were compelled to drop our differences and work together as brothers. Some of us have spent too much time talking and arguing to persuade people who do not wish to believe. We have discoursed *about* sin, salvation, and the future life, instead of asking what may be done now and proceeding at once to do it. To become more efficient than the enemy, we must put our work for the race on a basis as practical as that of the magnificent military organization that brought us to the armistice. Well may we forego sectarian differences in our eagerness to live at last by the saving love which touches the hearts of men.

The example set us in the Gospels is surely practical. Jesus was directly concerned with those who needed most to be touched by the divine love. He chose disciples from among the lowly. He sat at meat with publican and sinner, and was charitable to one who had "loved much," also to those most despised by the authorities of the day. He uttered words of boundless good cheer and comfort to those who were endeavoring to "endure unto the end," that they might be "saved." He also set forth general principles since construed into a theology or plan of salvation, but His own emphasis was where our dying soldiers have placed it, on "the life." The doctrine followed the life. It was the churchman who put matters the other way round and taught salvation by faith alone. Christ became the greatest influence the world has known because of the divine love which went forth unstintedly, in intimate touch with human hearts. The implied ideal of salvation was at every point social, a gospel for the entire race, rich and poor. The emphasis was on the fulness of life, on vital love to God and man. The sinner was made "whole," called to be his truer, larger self, with the division in his nature overcome. He was encouraged to energize to the full. So indeed have some energized who met the baptism of fire.

We are steadily working back to this position in our day. We see that salvation comes, not by faith alone, not by works alone, or by both together, as an individual enterprise simply; but by the fulness of the life of service as "members one of another," quickened by the influences of the spiritual world. It does not follow that the plans for social regeneration now before the world precisely correspond with the divine ideal. But all these yearnings for fellowship, brotherhood, social freedom, may be taken as signs. The war has shown us how intimately we all belong together, how impossible is any peace which is not for all who have felt these yearnings. We have been made to suffer together that we may become free together.

Yet if our age is proving anew that we are intimately "members one of another," hence that salvation must be for all, it is also showing more plainly that salvation begins with each human heart. Once it seemed possible for men to be saved in groups, as if the action of a group relieved the individual of his need for facing the issues of his personal life. Now we realize that there can be no true group-salvation save so far as each member of it acknowledges his fault and turns to his Lord. The Grand Man of the new social order will be constituted of those who, each in his inmost heart, have felt the touch of the divine love, have realized that this love was of personal significance, and have done their part to live the fulness of life. This is indeed the wonderful truth of the new social order: that the gospel for the individual is the gospel for the race, and the wisdom for the race is for each man.

We may then put the matter affirmatively, overlooking no talent, and neither the inner life nor the outer, neither the individual nor society. Whatever exists has place, and what man produces springs from his nature, the nature wherewith he was endowed. The fault does not lie in any power or capacity. The emphasis belongs on the appropriate use or function; not on the mistake, failure, or misuse. The emphasis belongs, not on darkness, but on light; not upon the death on the cross, but upon the life of the Lord in the hearts of men. There is but one Efficiency. There are not two world-powers. Man is being led through the conflict of forces out of darkness



into light. The scheme of it all sprang from the divine wisdom, and it is ever quickened by the divine love. Salvation was not an after-thought, as if man did not develop as anticipated. The Lord knew what was in man, and what must be provided for. The power behind our salvation is nothing less than the great God of this universe working out the fulness of His purposes.

Therefore the individual may say with the psalmist, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him." He may lead me through the dark valley of the shadow, but even there will He help me to "endure unto the end." And we as a people may say, "Though all the world be at war, yet shall the salvation of the race be attained." For God abides with us even when the enemy sings his "Hymn of Hate." He will not take sides at the bidding of any one in authority, or permit any moral reaction that is not deserved. No protestations will save a land where hate is rife from the consequences of hatred, envy, or malice. No nation can escape the results of its deeds, even though outwardly it is too proud to admit defeat. The war upon the evils for which it stands does not end when the guns are no longer being operated. There is a law over all these things, and that law decrees, "Thus far shalt thou go and no farther." Salvation is according to law. It is by love, impartial, true, just. No evasions have the least effect. Each nation's hell will last as long as each nation's deeds require. We may look forward to the future life with entire confidence. The future will grow out of the present for every one of us, leading without a break to the results of our prevailing love. Our part is to endure in faith unto the end, even though all the way be dark.

We may well be affirmative in our attitude too. We may believe in people, encouraging them to live in fulness that which they can do best in the world. We need to spread the good news of this untouched place in the soul, so near the divine that sin cannot penetrate there. There is no room for exclusiveness. Merely to know the law or to possess the right doctrine, is only to take the first step. It is not knowledge alone that saves, as important as it may be to possess the truth which sets men free. It is love. It is the life. God so loved the world of human beings called into life to manifest His

image and His likeness that He remained in fatherly nearness to all, gave of His life and power, became immediate to the race through the incarnated Word. It is impossible to know what salvation means apart from the infinite tenderness of the divine love in this immediacy to humanity. Salvation means wholeness, the fulness of life in the Grand Man. Man the individual is being saved for use, for co-operation. Man the citizen of earth is being saved for citizenship in heaven.

Our inquiry has only begun when we investigate man's natural and social environment on earth, to determine if possible how far he is responsible, how far he is a victim of heredity and environment. Man's real environment includes the spiritual world with all the influences to which he is subject. There are groups of beings like himself in relation to all that is active within him. He does not even fight alone. He is held between the constructive and the destructive forces. If he will, he may be brought to judgment in terms of these his larger relationships. If he will, the process of regeneration shall begin. If aware of his larger environment, he will naturally wish that process to be far-reaching.

We were looking for an easier road to salvation before the war came. We even believed in salvation by peace alone. Now we want justice. We thought that mere treaties would suffice. Now we want deeds, power organized in the concrete. We tried to reform or revolutionize the world by abolishing a whole class in human society. There are still many who cherish this strange plan. But on the whole we wish to see all men and all classes placed where they may work and live best.

Evidently, there are ruins enough in the war-lands, wounded enough, miserable sufferers enough to keep the dreadful thing called war before us long enough so that we may learn our lesson. The lesson has been enforced with tremendous emphasis this time. There can be no compensations for all these sufferings which the wounded and maimed, the homeless and starving must endure, save through world-regeneration. We can no more understand the problem of the wounded alone than any other problem the

war has brought us. Back of all other considerations is the problem of human selfishness and the hope that there is a way out of it.

Of one thing the war has made us doubly sure: there is indeed a law in things. Despite all the evils wrought by the Huns, despite the threatening situation in the spring of 1918, the tide turned; it was literally a question of going thus far and no farther. Justice shall reign, we therefore say. We hardly know what social justice is, but we know that it is written into the moral structure of things and we know that we want it. Thus our fears have been silenced. Fear may have made "the gods," but it did not lead men to love the Lord and to be hungry for salvation.

The new vision of life which the war has disclosed has lifted us above our fears for the welfare of the individual. We scarcely know how many of our sons have passed through the baptism of fire and beheld something spiritual through it. We may be inclined to idealize and to make a hero of every man at the front, unmindful of the fact that war may make egotists as well as heroes. We may be inclined to do much romancing. But it is also true that we may fall short of the reality of the new vision, and may lapse into our old attitude of unrighteous judgment. To catch the vision is not only to give up the localism of belief which once led us to entertain fears concerning man's future state, together with the whole theological scheme which went with it, but to realize what this enlargement of soul is on the part of our sons who have energized to the full. The new vision lifts us out of our grief. It takes from us the whole idea of death which once prevailed. Salvation has become a question of man's whole spiritual nature, as a dweller in the spiritual world. The change in the center of our intellectual equilibrium is so marked that it will take us a generation to think out all the consequences attendant upon it.

The change in emphasis from the evil in man's nature to the goodness that is in him, in the untouched place of the soul where the Lord dwells, does not, however, carry with it any right to ignore or make light of the actual condition of the world. The affirmative attitude applies to the best that is in

man, it relates to his ideal possibilities. It enables us to use those powers of love and wisdom bestowed upon us by heavenly influences through which we may be set free. But the new light on salvation also makes us aware that the individual is morally free. It puts the responsibility upon the individual. It is no longer possible to shift the burden by mere belief in the atoning sacrifice. The difference is that we no longer condemn human nature outright, or unheard. We insist that there shall be discrimination. We point out that man must know himself. But this deeper self-knowledge also shows us that never by his unaided efforts alone shall man be saved. Salvation is no less truly of the Lord. The great hope lies in the discovery of the ineffable nearness of heaven, of the spiritual world, of the eternal Lord of life and death. Man in his true affirmative attitude loves God and his fellowmen, and is as ready to serve them as the soldier is to die for his country. He becomes stronger through this attitude because aware that the power he uses is not his own but is the divine goodness in him.

It is interesting to note that while we have been discovering this new light on salvation we have also been indulging in more widespread and severe condemnation. The war has brought us to moral judgment. We have seen the evils which it has disclosed and we have not been slow in naming them. Thus the war is already fulfilling its moral purpose. Some of us have been exceedingly zealous lest the Central Powers should not suffer as they deserve. When Germany made overtures we pointed to the ruins. We shall point to them and to our wounded for a generation to come. We were not aware that human greed, hate, self-love could be so intense, so very evil, so destructive. Now we know what selfishness really is. Even those who complacently declared that "whatever is, is right," or "all is good, there is no evil," have had an opportunity to come to their senses. Mere optimism is now as valueless as a treaty. We want no more blindness or ungrounded idealism.

But this is as it should be. The more truly we realize that there is a straight and narrow way the less inclined are we to compromise. It would be absurd

to smooth the whole matter over by affirming that we should pardon the enemy because he knew not what he did. The value of the war would be lost if we should temporize. But the advantage is that illusions have been dispelled. We now see what is before us. There is great hope for us just because we stoutly refuse to close our eyes and let the enemy go on as before. Moreover, the war has shown us how powerful are the forces that can be summoned to fight on the constructive side. We never believed in the righteousness of a cause with half as much reason. Never have we had such good reasons for believing in God.

If then we really have learned our lesson at last, we know that the real warfare is within, that in the inner world the new light is shining. It may not be pleasing at first to discover that it is by "living the life" that salvation shall come. We might like to return to the old ways. Lest we forget we have the other, brighter side of the war before us, we have our real heroes, we have the blessed memory of those who were slain who in very truth "lived the life." Death wears a new aspect for us. It does indeed approach "with a face of radiant beauty." It sheds a new light upon the world. The old fears have gone and with them the idea that death determines a man's salvation. We have more reason than ever for believing that life is a continuous progress for those whose experience on earth brought them to a prevailing love that is heavenly. We may indeed be affirmative concerning those who have "chosen the better part." Earthly life does in very truth afford an opportunity to make the great choice, and our loved ones who made the choice are "saved" even though their death was not under the auspices of the Church.

The teachings of the new age have certainly led us to revise our ideas concerning the churches. Just as the simple poilu learned to worship in spirit by himself at the front, when there was no priest or chaplain near, so any number in war-time found their own pathways to the spiritual life. Why not then say that just as every man is a spiritual world in himself, so is every man a church in whom the true Lord dwells? We may then go farther and say that the spiritual world was brought nearer the souls of men during the war, and

thus that they came nearer the everlasting church. Thus too some have been led into the real church who have felt the quickening presence of those who have passed into the future life. To meet the experience of another's death in such a way that it means a new birth is to enter that church.

The new light on salvation is in deepest truth just this new vision of death, this light which discloses to us the pathway of the soul as a continuity, a progress in life. We need not wait for what is commonly called a conversion. We need not wait for the churches to do what we believe is their part. We need not put the spiritual teachings of the world afar from us as if they were too great for us to realize. Whatever the teachings of the society amidst which we have grown up, we may turn directly to the spiritual world here and now. To any of us at any time the new light may come. For it is shining in the world. It is streaming forth from the spiritual world into the natural. Each of us bears a witness within his soul.

Better still, we are never alone. We belong with a group. We are moving along with those who are akin. We need never be separated from those whom we spiritually love. We may help them and they will help us. There is no circumstance which can stand between. It is love that avails. It is the real state of the soul with each of us that signifies. The Lord knows our hearts as truly in one circumstance as another. Not even war with all the swiftness of the destructive forces it wields can make any difference. Always the real causality is spiritual. Always the Living Christ is at hand. He it is whom we worship when we worship "in spirit and in truth." He is the Eternal Saviour who has taught us "the way, the truth, and the life," in the concrete, in "ultimates."

It is not the death, not the sacrifice, that signifies, but the life that exalts, quickens, completes. The life includes the victory over death, hence it is the resurrection and the guiding power for all who attain the new vision. But life is affirmative, primary. Death is not decisive but secondary. The resurrection is of the spirit, out of all bondage, out of selfishness. The passion of the cross is a moment in the glorification. It was not death alone that had to

be conquered but all the hells of self-love and hate that would have made the incarnation of no effect had they possessed the power. Salvation was thereby offered us in all the magnitude of its heavenly completeness, in the inner life and the outer, in the spiritual world and the natural, in man and in society. It is in this larger, more glorious sense that the Lord is the Redeemer of the world. Without the Living Lord not a man of us was ever saved. Yet no one of us is so far from Him that we may not be quickened in the inner recesses of the soul, if we will. All of us may love one another as He loves us. In the beginning with each of us was the Word. That Word is "written in all our members." By it we are made "members one of another," made "in the image and after the likeness of God."

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## XIV. Religion at the Front

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**T**HE SCENE is in one of our barracks behind the Champagne front. It is Sunday evening in April. At one end of the barrack there is a group of American negroes gathered around the piano. The men have been singing hymns and listening to the Scriptures and a prayer, and now their leader is addressing them on a topic chosen from the Gospels which he thinks is appropriate for men about to take their places in the trenches for the first time. At the other end of the barrack, groups of French soldiers are seated about the tables, reading, writing, playing games, or exchanging English and French words with Americans who are not interested to attend the religious meeting.

The scene is typical. No one is under compulsion. The religious meeting is the first evidence during the day that this is Sunday. We tried to arrange a religious service for the negroes during the forenoon, but military plans interfered. Sunday scarcely existed in the war-zone. Sometimes it was one of the fiercest fighting days. We almost forgot at times that it had come around once more. We gave the men every opportunity for the expression of their religious natures, but we had no right to insist on any ideas or modes of worship of our own. Our barrack was for friendship, for the soldiers of all the Allies. As an American soldier has said, "War has taught men that it is only



the human being that counts...After having been face to face with death...a man learns something about the true values of human life." Whatever is human in the larger sense had free expression among us. Religion was one form which that expression selected. It would have been contrary to the plan by which we were commissioned under the auspices of the Franco-American Union to direct the religious activities in the interests of any special form of religion. Meanwhile there were chaplains representing the various faiths among units to which they were attached.

The soldier quoted above, Henry Sheahan, in *A Voluntary Poilu*, declares that a "new religion has arisen in the trenches, a faith more akin to Mahomet than to Christ. It is a fatalism of action. The soldier finds his salvation in the belief that nothing will happen to him until his hour comes, and the logical corollary of this belief, that it does no good to worry, is his rock of ages. It is a curious thing to see *poilus*—peasants, artisans, scholars—completely in the grip of this philosophy. There has been a certain return to the Church of Rome, for which several reasons exist, the greatest being that the war has made men turn to spiritual things. Only an animal could be confronted with the pageant of heroism, the glory of sacrifice, and the presence of death, and not be moved to a contemplation of the fountain-head of these sublime mysteries...The great mass of the nation has felt this spiritual force, but because the mass of the nation was Catholic, nothing has changed."

Doubtless these observations on the part of an American serving with the French are correct so far as many of the men were concerned. The soldier stopped in the half-way house of fatalism because he had not yet learned a better mode of belief in which to clothe his thought. But his spontaneous expression of the religious life was worthy of an illuminating idea of the human spirit as a free being. The new vision of death among the French surely looked far beyond fatalism. The conduct of the *poilu* implied a nobler ideal than "fatalism of action."

If we may judge by such books as *The Cross at the Front*, the English Tommy possessed a very real faith in Christ, despite his reaction against

the traditions of the Church. For Tommy, Christ was undoubtedly the true Saviour who sets men free, whose teaching on earth voiced the heart of the genuinely religious man. Thus far, the literature of the trenches produced by English writers contains the most spiritual response which the war has called forth. Doubtless the American soldier also took his clue from the ideals of liberty rather than from the standards of stoic acceptance of life as it comes. We may infer his religion from his action.

Philip Gibbs, war correspondent, in an address on the great qualities of the men who went to the war, declared that it was "not as a rule by great generalship, but by the courage and faith of the simple soldier and the battalion officers that this war was won. Courage may seem to you a simple thing," he said, but "it was not simple to our men. In modern warfare courage does not mean the absence of fear. It means the power to control fear so that a man can carry on with his job even though death is staring at him across the road. And that is what our men did."

That is to say, courage implies what we have called the affirmative attitude. The religion of courage corrects and fulfills the "fatalism of action." It expresses the largeness of spirit in the presence of the great reality to which we have referred above. It is in every way a positive religion and implies emphasis on the goodness of man, on the qualities that make for moral success. Its objects are: one's country, one's home and family, one's fellowmen and one's God. Civilization is threatened for the time being by a very wily, well-organized enemy. One must beat the enemy at his own game at any cost. Thus the American soldier dashed forward where older soldiers of other nations would have hesitated to go.

It would be difficult, perhaps impossible, to learn to what extent the war quickened the religious spirit in the American soldier. There were evidences of interest in religious questions aboard the transports on the voyage to Europe. This interest naturally came to us all, sailing as we were into the danger zone, about to meet the greatest of wars face to face, mayhap to meet death. There were spontaneous expressions of the religious spirit in

the camps and trenches, and requests for religious meetings. But the average man took more interest in games and books, in music and entertainments. It was a question whether meetings organized in behalf of the older types of theology for the purpose of interesting the doughboy were really successful. Some of us who were friends to the soldier believed far more in the spontaneous expression of the religious spirit than in any effort to reach the soldier's mind in doctrinal terms.

The reason for this indifference to organized religion is found no doubt in the fact that ours has ceased to be a doctrinal age. We have come to believe that it is conduct that avails. We have not by any means lost faith in the Christian life. The heart of the soldier can be trusted to express that life in his own way. If he wishes to be entertained, not to be instructed, it is because he has outgrown the old-time methods of giving religious instruction. If he shows less interest in religious meetings on the voyage home than he manifested on the voyage to the war-country, it is not because he is any less spiritual at heart. To discover his religious nature, you must be his friend in a genuinely human way, bearing in mind a larger definition of religion than that commonly obtaining in our churches.

When it is deemed necessary to begin religious exercises on Sunday with an entertainment, announcing that there will be a moving picture show after the address, which will not be more than twenty minutes in length, and that the "show will be worth waiting for," the observer realizes that conventionalized religion has lost its power. If the religious leader is one who has not "made good" in his church at home, his experience in the war-zone is doubtless extremely valuable from the point of view of his own education; but he will be better able to lead the men in the next war than in this. Success in conducting meetings at home is no guarantee that one will be able successfully to manage a hut in the war-zone. Nor is one deemed doctrinally "sound" necessarily practical. What is needed in a war-country is efficiency. Perhaps we have not asked ourselves in all seriousness what spiritual efficiency is.

Does it spring from fidelity to doctrine? If so, what is true doctrine, in a day which has witnessed widespread reaction in favor of the direct simplicity of the Gospel? If not, is it ability to conform to the methods of religious institutions? But we are sceptical in regard to institutionalism. Possibly the methods are outgrown. Does it spring from ability to save souls? But who is able to save the soul nowadays? Shall we proceed according to the old ideas of sin and salvation? Does it spring from knowledge of books? We are more doubtful than ever before. Is it in the keeping of the one who is self-consciously endeavoring to "keep up the morale of the soldier"? It would be interesting to hear from the men themselves on this point.

Doubtless, we would all agree that it is partly a question of method. In what sense shall we understand the advice to be "all things to all men, that we may by all means win some"? Does this art of adaptation to men imply compromise? Should we lower our standards? Should we smoke and drink and gamble for the sake of getting next to the men? Should we drop to a lower level in thought, language, and life? Far inferior indeed does this seem to the religion of courage. The fact that war is a serious interruption of many of our nobler activities is no reason for regarding man as a smoking animal. The soldier will of course smoke his leisure away if that is what he is invited to do—in the name of religion. He is not likely to stop card-playing for money until his superiors in rank cease gambling. Compromise is a confession of failure. The soldier knows a compromiser when he meets him. He will accept your gifts and enjoy the hospitality of your material surroundings. But he thinks for himself when you try to steal in upon him with your protestations concerning religion.

Doubtless every effort made to comfort and care for the soldier in war-time is highly commendable. There is more real religion in some of these efforts than in many of the activities of the churches at home. But when it is a question of religion at the front in the profounder sense of the term, what if we disregard advertised religion and search the heart of the soldier in sympathetic imagination, putting fact with fact, trying to learn what valiant

religion truly is? What if we start with the newer views of the human spirit, whether or not they seem to confirm our creeds?

Surely, our soldiers well knew that many religious beliefs are outgrown. Their implied religion of courage puts the test of spirituality on conduct. Consequently, they have little interest in sermons to which people listen with pleased attention and commend as "beautiful," meanwhile continuing to live as before. The soldier wants to know what you propose to do. If you do not show by your conduct, he prefers the movies to your discourse, and for the best of reasons.

The religion of courage leads a man to face whatever stands before him, or lies concealed to entrap him, with determination not to be daunted. It is constructive religion, and is out to win against all the forces of destruction the enemy can gather. It does not concern itself with subtle analyses of motives and sins, but drives forward to engage the enemy while there is yet time. It is large-minded, out here in the open places of the world. It has passed far beyond the old-time subjectivities. It has overcome the former seriousness, too, and may be discerned in the jokes of the British soldier as surely as in the quiet remarks of the French private who, refusing to waste his mental energy in returning hate for hate, merely classifies the Bodies anew as *cochons* and then proceeds with his work. It is direct, energetic, practical, with a practicality that enlists man's deeper selfhood and has no time for the surfaces of life.

But this religion is no less truly a religion of beauty, as we saw above when studying the new vision of death and noting the new idealism implied in the soldier's triumphant manner of rising above circumstances. The marvel of it is that human beings can pass through the baptism of fire and yet keep their spirits so free. We may account for this triumph in part, no doubt, by the fact that war, which tests everything in life, shows the futility of most things in contrast with the spiritual use we make of them. The poetry of life survives the most dreadful test it could ever undergo, in the bald and brutal prose of existence at the front.

The religion of courage shows conclusively that the human spirit consists chiefly of will or love, and is only secondarily intellectual. It shows that what we are really influenced by is what we love, the love that is in fact the very "life of man." It is love that sets the emotions and feelings free. It is love that enlists our powers of service, our zeal for liberty, our promptings to brotherhood. When our love-natures energize to the full, there is "something doing." The nobler instincts are set free. Our half-concealed beliefs are brought to the surface. We throw off conventionalities, religious creeds, and other intellectual incrustations, and come forth as men. We dare to face death. We are prepared indeed to triumph over death, to enter into the new vision. The proper province of the intellect is to follow after, to gather up the implications of our conduct and reshape our beliefs to fit the larger facts.

True religious efficiency implies the fact that man is a spiritual being with inner powers relating him to the spiritual world and fitting him to receive the divine love. Man's larger life at the front calls for such a conception of his nature. His belief in God as a reality, in immortality as a sure fact, implies it. If this is the truth concerning him, why not take our start from this, thinking from within outward, and regarding the body with its brain as the soul's physical instrument? We might then readjust all the facts concerning his nature, putting first things first, and assigning the outer life to its place. We might then be able to give intuition its due place. The true province of the intellect might at last become plain.

The resulting religion would be something like this: Life is for the benefit of the soul. Our experience is along a pathway which when followed intelligently proves to lead from lower to higher, out of conflicts into victory, out of bondage into freedom, from selfishness to service. The conflict is between forces not understood, those drawing us down into self, into the negative or destructive, and those tending upward into union with God, into the positive or affirmative. The meaning of the conflict is that we shall come to judgment, learn the true source of power, give expression to our love-

nature in the fulness of life, realize the divine ideal. The conflict finds us active amidst varied tendencies. We cannot carry them all through to completion. We must choose, concentrate, be direct and practical. The result should be a prevailing love, a dominant purpose, an end worth pursuing. The best way to think of the human spirit is in terms of *the dominant purpose* which enlists the prevailing love to the full. In the larger, nobler sense the human spirit by recognizing that its power is from God thereby realizes the divine purpose.

Every service prompted by love to the neighbor, in turn, springs out of the realization that amidst the conflict of tendencies and forces not understood every brother needs a helping hand. He serves best who most gladly responds to the divine creative life working through him, loving others into fuller being. He does not dictate. He does not coerce or even try to influence in a merely personal way. He does not impose his own beliefs upon others. He does not try to make others like himself. He reverences the spirit in others. He encourages each son of spirit to achieve his type, to be the true child of God his heavenly Father would have him become.

The practice of this religion of the spirit calls upon us to do a large amount of observing, listening, sympathizing, that we may see whither the life is tending in those whom we may help. It leads us to listen for the inward voice, to await the shining of the inward light, to seek the divine providence in all events and all men. We are reminded that man as a spirit is far more than a receptacle of life, that the relation of God to him is *dynamic*; hence that receptivity calls for action, influx calls for efflux or expression. We are reminded that to receive more we must give more, hence that true service is largely a giving.

To receive and to give, in this understanding of the relationship between God and man, means that each of us is capable of turning to the direct sources of the spiritual life within and above. It means that we may verify the everlasting realities of religion by experience. For it shows that primarily experience of life comes first in order, and that belief grows out of life. Hence we realize anew that men came originally to believe in God because God

exists, came to believe in the soul because they were souls, came to believe in the future life because they were immortal spirits from the beginning.

Especially, this insight means that death is merely a "step in life," hence that the way of escape from our sorrows is to yield ourselves to the consciousness of life, realizing for a fact that we are spirits in the spiritual world now. We need to ascend as high as this in our thought if we shall be true to the new vision of death which has come to some of our soldiers.

To be spiritually efficient is to be able to put ourselves back into the original relationship of man to God, that we may draw upon first-hand sources, that we may go forth with power, that we may serve our fellows as God would have us serve. The original Christianity was of this dynamic sort. It did not stop with faith. It did not rest content with good works. It had a creative effect upon the human spirit.

To place the emphasis on the first-hand sources in the spiritual world around us is not of course to ignore the Bible, but to accept it in very truth as the Lord's Book of Life. It is not to substitute any belief of our own for Christianity as a social religion. Nor is it to neglect the Church. But, plainly, the war is part of the new age, and there are truths for us to learn if we would bring our churches up to the new standard. We must begin by observing and learning. If we begin by preaching doctrines we shall find that people in the churches will emulate the doughboy, will prefer the moving picture to the discourse. Life speaks to us through the soldier. Let us observe and listen.

Religion at the front had little to offer to the one who expected to shape matters in conventional ways. To those of us who went there to learn, it had much to teach. For despite all the hardship and the roaring, all the suffering and the dying, it taught a certain idealism, showed that there must be a union between will and understanding, a unity of heart and head. If we could work in comradeship in civilian life to achieve ends as our soldiers fought to conquer the Germans, we could in very truth reform the world. For their conduct involved the form of all true success.



How did this religion of courage lead us to think of God? As Father, Lord, Saviour, in the hearts of men, in the homes, on the battlefield, with the fighters for justice. It brought Him nearer in spirit. It drew us to Him as love. It disclosed His wisdom anew. It brought to the surface a conviction almost destroyed by the scepticism that prevailed before the war, that is, the doubt whether there is a divine purpose in things. It turned us away from mere notions of cosmic energy or creative evolution without a principle of immutability, and from all thought of God as impersonal force, to God as Creator, as concretely personal in the spirits of men and in the supreme Person of the Gospels.

Coningsby Dawson expresses the same thought of God in relation to the religion of courage when he says, "God as we see Him! And do we see Him? I think so, but not always consciously. He moves among us in the forms of our brother men. We see Him most evidently when danger is threatening worst and courage is at its highest. We don't often recognize Him out loud. Our chaps don't assert that they're His fellow-campaigners. They're too humble-minded and inarticulate for that. They're where they are because they want to do their 'bit,'—their duty. A carefully disguised instinct of honor brought them there. 'Doing their bit' in Bible language means laying down their lives for their friends. After all, they're not so far from Nazareth."

The same writer indicates other elements of the religion of courage when he says that the war is waged because of a conviction that the right is on our side, because of our loved ones at home, and in a certain spirit of triumph over circumstances. "We stick it out," he says, "by believing that we're in the right—to believe you're in the right makes a lot of difference. You glance across No Man's Land and say, 'Those blighters are wrong; I am right.' If you believe that with all the strength of your soul and mind, you can stand anything. To allow yourself to be beaten would be to own that you weren't right...You learn to feel that there is only one thing that counts in life, and only one thing you can take out of it—the spirit you have developed in encountering its difficulties."

Lieutenant Dawson admits that if he had been asked at the front whether there was any religion in the trenches, he would have replied, "Certainly not." But after being out of the fighting for a while he realized that there was religion there, a "religion of heroism" which he believes will dominate the world. Probably most of us who have tried to think the matter out to the end would agree with him. There was so much that was apparently hostile to religion, so much suffering, so much hardship, and so much dropping down to a lower level of conduct, that it would have seemed absurd to characterize life as in any way religious. Then too the attempts to introduce religion amidst compromises fell so far short of reality that, as one American soldier put it, "we left our religion in Paris when we went to the front."

Yet in retrospect we know that religion was there, that is, in the souls of officers and privates doing their duty to the full, in the chaplains encountering every danger and hardship to minister to the men, rescue the wounded, or bury the dead; in the "angels of mercy" serving among the wounded in the hospitals at constant risk from bomb and shell; in the ambulance drivers, the cooks, the engineers, and numberless others who did their part as best they knew and with full courage. We know that there was religion because the war at its best on our side was a moral protest which enlisted our wills to the full not only to do our "bit" but if possible more. We know there was religion because when unity of military command was attained spiritual power was organized with material power to make this "a war to end war." We know there was religion because of the faith dying men showed in the soul and the life after death. We know it because the very war itself in the deepest sense was a new vision beyond death into the realities of the real spiritual world.

By contrast with the religion of courage we see why the Christianity of the organizations was a compromise and the religion of many of our churches at home pathetically weak. We have allowed our forces to be scattered in the Christian world ever since the Protestant Reformation with its over-emphasis on the individual, his private faith, his particular creed, his

effort to save himself through mere liberalism or by his intellect. We have temporized with the enemy ever since the Biblical critics who judge by the letter began to assault the Scriptures with weapons "made in Germany." We have yielded too much to physical science, in the externality of our age, to schemes for external social reform. We have turned away from the old doctrines without seeking a sufficient substitute in good works. Nearly every Protestant sect has been divided into a liberal and a conservative wing, and then the divisions have been subdivided. To attract the child of the age we have adopted the devices of the age until we have lost the courage of our convictions. Some of our religious workers have changed their occupation because we failed to pay the brain-worker as well as we now pay the manual laborer—because of labor unions, unrest, and strikes—and so the economic question has become the great issue. On the other hand, we have sometimes contributed so generously to enterprises organized in the Christian name that any one whose attitude had been weakened by modern conflicts could find occupation at the expense of public charity.

Meanwhile, by implication at least, there is in the minds and hearts of men who have been "over there" this new religion of courage, this return to the original Christianity. The new faith gives a man the right to believe what his heart tells him is true concerning the soul, the future life, heaven, the angels, Christ, our heavenly Father, in the face of all the intellectual attacks the world can muster. By giving him the courage to meet the worst enemy the world has ever seen, it has given the soldier the courage of his convictions. He has been doing a man's work in the trenches, and now he is ready for a man's religion. Thus as of old it is life that takes the lead. The part of the intellect is to follow reverently after.

Courage is defined as "the power to control fear so that a man can carry on with his job even though death is staring at him across the road." Fear is a representative emotion, standing in this definition for every mental state that interferes with success. The positive element is "control." The religion of heroism implies self-mastery. This in turn is constructive. It enlists all our

powers, even those condemned by theologians and moral reformers. War is on and there is no time left for invidious distinctions and hair-splitting terminology. It is not a question of classification, lest we should attribute to "natural religion" virtues which rightfully belong to "revealed religion." We are not now disputing over the origin of sin. There's work to be done. The Boches are over there behind their parapets and we propose to rout them to the last man. Each man is "on the job." We are "carrying on." There is a unity within the human spirit in every way worthy of the remarkable unity of command under Marshal Foch, the unity that will be forever glorious in human history.

The religion of courage has the strength of "the one in the many," and cannot be understood unless we grasp that variety in unity. The man who is energizing to the full has achieved a union of forces, qualities or characteristics. He is a man of purpose. There is no mere armistice in the warfare of his soul. There is victory for the sake of justice, for love of those whom the heart holds dearest, for freedom. All lesser feelings are transcended. One cannot afford to be otherwise than cool, strong in faith, firm in affirmation that the right shall triumph. Even the enemy within oneself is utilized, just as the nation opens prison doors and gives the criminal a chance to "make good" as a fighter for his country. The soul is "saved" at last. The new birth has taken place.

We know as a result of this higher self-integration what forces make for it, what ones are destructive. Let honesty henceforth be not merely the "best policy" but a virtue which we have the courage to practise even in the business world where it is least recognized. Let sincerity come to its own not only in social circles but in frank utterance of what we really believe, in contrast to the creeds we have outgrown. Let us tell the truth about war and everything that needs to be remedied. Let us seek out the best men for the places to be filled in public life, passing beyond mere politics and self-interest. Facing squarely and thoughtfully whatever there is within us to be conquered, for example, doubt, hypocrisy, jealousy, envy, suspiciousness,

hate, bitterness, let us searchingly inquire into the forces to be met in our social life, and go "out to win."

We shall miss the meaning of this religion of courage if we try to simplify it instead of recognizing that like the bodily mechanism it is a many in one. The brotherhood attained by the armies at the front did not mean that nations were to cease to exist. Nationalism in the better sense was intensified by the war. Each man came to love his own country, his language, his standards, the better. It was not the brotherhood of class-consciousness. It increased our love for the democracy yet to be, the democracy in which both the producers and the consumers, both the head-workers and the hand-workers shall have their due places. The war was not won by money, not by food, but by men; and men differ enormously in type, in capacity, in intelligence, in their occupations, their views, their affections, their loyalties. The soldiers of the ranks won the war, but so did the generals, so did the military system, so did the commander whose genius enabled him to carry out the triumphant campaign of 1918.

War is hell because it springs on the part of those who precipitate it from lust of power, from selfishness, the desire to impose one's own way on another, to master and enslave another. When hard-pressed the enemy rapidly degenerates and resorts to every conceivable device. Finally, he tries treachery in its worst form, and even starts a revolution calculated to deceive the elect. But alone at last, without a friend in the whole wide world, we see him as he is in all his barbaric subtlety and cruelty. He is in deepest truth self-destructive. His own engines are turned upon him. His forces are slaughtered with his own guns.

We have nothing to fear, therefore, in the invisible world. We have looked not only into hell but through to the end and to the divine providence whose will, "Thus far shalt thou go and no farther," underlies the moral integrity of the universe. The religion of courage gives us the right to believe in the divine providence once more, in contrast with the destructive criticism of science, the denial of a world-plan, the neglect of the wisdom testified to

by all creation. We know for a truth now that the spiritual interpretation of the war is the true one. The war was not checked by the divine providence. It was permitted that the evils which had been slowly gathering for a generation and more should be brought out to the surface and exposed for what they were—the lust of power, the greed for wealth, the will to impose a certain selfish scheme of government on other nations. The war was allowed to run its course until the worst motives were seen, the treachery, the hate, the malice, the inhumanity, the utter barbarism. But the war was also permitted to go thus far that it might call into concrete power and into successfully efficient unity the moral resources of the nations standing for the right. Thus we were led to see that in its higher phases it was a spiritual protest, that it was spiritual power which saved the day. With the cessation of outward hostilities, we realized how very great indeed had become the material power of the Allies, yet how great too was their power to refrain when further warfare with guns would have meant sheer annihilation for the enemy, a gloating, fiendish war of merely external triumph. Hence we came to realize, as we might not have realized had the war been continued for the mere sake of destruction, that in very truth it had been fought by our brave soldiers with their spirits, that it expressed the religion of heroism. Consequently, we are spared the mere self-exaltation of those who take great credit to themselves. We are humiliated in the truer, deeper sense. We see that a Power “not ourselves” has indeed been “making for righteousness,” that the war came to its climax in God’s own way, not in ours. We have a right to proclaim our victorious faith. We are right in maintaining the affirmative attitude. With good reason we herald abroad the religion of courage which our soldiers lived and by living proved. But we are no less sure that the divine providence was over all, that because the war was a spiritual protest it was won by powers more than human. With good reason do we turn from the mere war with weapons to the vision beyond the armistice, to the changed situation when the soul of the Allied soldier stands forth in the clear light of victory. For the spiritual victory will live on. We shall see what

the soldier gained for the world by putting his spiritual consciousness into the conflict and making it a war to end war, or at least to point the way through to the end. We may speak with confidence hereafter concerning the law of the divine providence in warfare, both without and within. We may identify our real enemies. We know the real slacker, the one who fails to come out of theory into practice, out of the abstract into the concrete, out of the negative into the positive. We know what true courage is. We know why right makes might. We know the human spirit in the light of its wondrous, far-reaching resources. We may say with utmost confidence, Those "blighters" were indeed wrong. We were right. We made the venture of faith and we won. We have not only beaten the enemy on his own ground, with all his own weapons and in sure knowledge of all his tricks, but in facing him we have faced all the hidden forces lined up with him. We have in fact stood in the trenches of the spiritual world and beheld the supremacy of the spiritual over the natural. We did not seek out these trenches at random. We went thither with a purpose. There was a wisdom in our going and in our coming. God was present with us in His wisdom and in His love.

The religion of courage is the religion of guidance, justice, faith, love, light. The soldier dares to trust even when all the way seems dark. He does not fight through hatred of the enemy half so much as through love for his kindred. He is willing to test his faith to the utmost. He strikes a blow for justice when there seems to be no justice in the whole world. The spirit leads him to rise above circumstances. What he feels and responds to as guidance in the inner life is the divine providence when seen in the outer life of his true social relations. By doing his "bit" faithfully he is made one with his fellows and realizes the divine will. All the events of his spiritual life belong together. He in turn belongs with his group as a member belongs in an organism, as a branch with its vine. The same wisdom that has led him into the trenches and out, will guide him here or in that greater world "over there" to which he may have been called, Over here and over there are one in that wisdom. Over here and over there are one in the spirit.

END

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