

*Chapter 2* 

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## Properties of Life On the Inner-Planes

**I**N considering the next life it should not be overlooked that we now, while still functioning on the low-velocity physical plane, have also the form in which we shall function immediately after so-called death. It is not that we are lacking an astral form that we know so little about the next interior plane; but because our attention is so persistently directed outward to enable our consciousness to register what is happening in the low-velocity physical universe.

And there are those, not necessarily vicious, but yet uninterested in anything higher than physical gratification of some kind, who have so fixed their attention by an intense and permanent desire for some physical thing or condition, that even after they have lost their physical bodies they can register only impressions associated with the physical plane. They perceive the astral forms of physical things without knowing they are not the actual physical forms. They do not even know they have died. They are called earth-bound souls.

Because our astral bodies, even while we still live on the physical plane, exist on the astral plane, entities, or spirits, as they are more commonly called, residing on the astral plane can see us if they can adjust to the same basic vibratory level. And, because thoughts are readily perceived on the astral plane, such spirits have no difficulty in knowing what we are thinking about. Just as on the physical plane all those within earshot can hear what we say, so on the astral plane all those within our vibratory vicinity, as it were, can feel what we think. Thought communion is as common a property of astral life as vocal communion is common to physical life.

To those who conceive life to be, not an opportunity for progression, but a residence first on the physical plane, where joy or sorrow may come either to the wicked or the just, and then a transition to another plane where the good enjoy perpetual happiness and the wicked suffer for their crimes, it is difficult to believe that many persons who have led rather self-centered yet really not wicked lives may be earth-bound for a century or two before being released from their self-induced hypnotic state. And it is difficult for them to conceive of some brave boy, whose body was blown to bits by a shell while in intense action in war, continuing his fight for a time without knowing that he had died.

But the wind bloweth alike upon the just and the unjust. Ignorance is punished on the physical plane, and no less so on the next. The laws of nature

are inexorable, and if violated, even with no malice in the heart, they exact an unmitigated penalty.

When we apply ourselves strenuously to some routine task until somewhat exhausted, especially if this task requires the concentration of our mental energies; after ceasing it, if we shut our eyes, we have the vision before us of its performance. Then when we go to sleep that night, all night long perhaps, we roll and toss, and in our dreams do nothing but this task, over and over again. Through our preoccupation with it we have mentally attached ourselves to this task and its environment. We have created a thought-form in which we live. Our physical body has ceased the task, but our astral form, on the inner-plane, is still performing it. A spirit, moving near us, would witness us still drearily and monotonously repeating the performance over and over.

Of course we are freed from this astral condition by the returning vitality and the new interests of the following day. But had we passed from the physical body while so dominated by a thought-form, it would probably have been longer than one day before we should have awakened to the reality of our new condition; and for a short time, at least, as a disembodied soul in the astral world, we should have known nothing of our surroundings except the performance of this task.

In that case, presently someone would have come along and seen what we were doing, and would quickly have awakened us to the new reality. Likewise the brave soldier who is snuffed out with a suddenness that gives no time for adjustment: He may go on fighting the fight, held by the emotional intensity of the thought-form he has created. After a time, if not contacted by some helper, he may wander over the forsaken battlefield until taken in charge by one of those on the inner-plane whose work it is to waken such persons. Or, after some wandering about, he may fall asleep and awaken refreshed, and begin of his own accord to recognize where he is and the nature of his surroundings. Even a hypnotized person, if he is put to sleep without suggestions to the contrary, will in time sleep it off and awaken of his own accord.

## Thought-Forms

Just at this point it is very necessary to make plain one of the chief attributes of the inner-plane, an attribute of astral existence that is quite as common a property of it as weight is of existence on the outer-plane. For want of a better term we may call it the thought-form property.

On the physical plane the low-velocity particles tend to fill in a replica of the astral form of anything. This astral form may change with great rapidity, and unless there is an unusual amount of electromagnetic energy present to bring about an instantaneous change in the physical shape, the physical change lags behind the astral change, and before it has responded to this change, still another astral change takes place. Because outer-plane life has such low velocities it is far less sensitive than the high velocity inner-plane levels of existence.

But on the high-velocity levels, such as those of the astral and spiritual worlds, substance and form are vastly more sensitive and responsive. They change instantly under the impact of thought. Thus, to think a thing intently, is to build it up out of astral substance. It then exists on the astral plane for a period determined by the amount of vitality supplied to it in the thinking. When the energy expended in its creation ceases to hold it together as a definite form, it dissipates, leaving only the scar, or impression, of its presence as an astral record.

We possess astral bodies while still in the flesh, and we still possess astral

bodies when we leave the world of flesh; and in both regions we formulate thoughts. And any such thought, if visualized strongly and vitalized with emotional energy, molds the astral substance into the image thus held. This is a thought-form; and its endurance and power to affect its environment depend upon the energy it contains and the directive force imparted to it by the thinker. But whether thought by someone on the physical plane, or by someone who no longer has a physical body, if it has been clearly formulated and energized it exists as an actuality on the astral plane, endowed with those properties thus given it. A house thus conceived is a real, substantial house on the astral; quite as solid, and perhaps even more durable, and as useful for home or office, as a similar building of wood or stone on the physical plane.

If I were called upon to mention the most striking difference between the world where we dwell after so-called death and the world where we now sojourn, I should unhesitatingly say that the thing which has made the most forceful impression on me is the immediate responsiveness of the next world to thought.

On the outer-plane, we first think of a house, then think of placing each piece of building material in its proper position; this thinking being slowly and laboriously followed by appropriate physical action. And, if we so desire, immediately after death we can build a house in this same laborious fashion. But when we learn how to use our thoughts, because of the responsiveness of inner-plane substance to thought-power, we can visualize such a house, and bring it into existence in all its details.

It is said it took twenty years for 100,000 slaves to build the Great Pyramid. But with spur railroads, hoists, cranes, blasting powder and modern machinery a duplicate of this pyramid could be built in a few months by a smaller number of competent men. The result obtained might be practically the same, but the method employed and the time consumed would be very different. And things built on the inner-plane by concentrated thought are quite as substantial as the same things built there by the slower process, and are quite as effective and lasting as similar things built on the outer-plane by the more laborious method of thinking first and then acting mechanically.

Things that are built on the physical plane may be directly in line with human progress and assist Nature's changes, or they may be athwart the general plan of world progress. That is, they may be built in such a manner as to harmonize with the trend of events, or they may be built in such a manner as to resist inevitable movement.

Those who build on the ever-shifting sands are the subject of innumerable Sunday sermons. To build on the side of an active volcano is to court disaster. To endeavor to farm on lands inundated almost every spring by flood water is to invite crop failure. Even, I believe, as Gandhi with such good intentions is advising the population of India, to discard machinery and return to making everything by hand in a world where machinery has now come to stay, is to place oneself at a terrible disadvantage. Man on earth must keep step with world progress, and the soul on any plane must move with the tides of evolution, and not against them, if it is to survive.

There is a Deific plan, and the universe, the astral world as well as the physical world and the spiritual world, is all marching forward toward the realization of this plan. Whatever is of value in working out this plan, of utility in building this evolutionary structure thrives and is successful. But whatever opposes this plan is an obstacle toward greater perfection, and as of no value in the universal construction must perish. If it obstructs the highway

### Thought-Built Regions

leading the soul to universal perception and absolute consciousness, it is subject to condemnation proceedings. It is removed to give place to something more advantageous to cosmic society.

And thus it is that on the astral plane there are thought-created environments that correspond to the universal constructive plan. That is, they represent truth, because they conform to nature. But also on the astral plane, especially on those levels which in basic vibratory rate are close to the vibratory levels common to the physical world, there are other thought-created environments that have a very real existence that do not correspond to truth as truth is perceived from a study of various higher levels. These thought-created environments are real in the sense that they have an actual existence where they are located. Where they exist their buildings, their trees, their modes of locomotion, and the creatures other than human beings that inhabit them, are as solid and consistent as are the environments of earth. But if they do not conform, to nature, do not fit in with how nature operates when viewed from a variety of other and higher levels, they must be considered as erroneous creations.

People living on the earth become tremendously earnest and emotional about some idea or condition. Thinking so strongly about it, and vitalizing it with emotional energy, they create this visualized thing on the astral plane. On the astral plane it possesses all the attributes they have given it. It is real, and in proportion to the energy given to it is influential and enduring. Anyone on the physical plane who can extend his consciousness to the level where it exists can see it and examine it. Anyone on the astral plane, who no longer has a physical body, who can tune to the frequency of its level, can perceive it and can influence it, or may be influenced by it. It has an actual existence. But it may not represent a true conception of things. It may be built entirely upon error. It is a thought-form creation; and a thought-form creation may represent truth or error, and in either case be real and tangible. But those who have advanced in their studies as well as in their emotional development and understand the laws and conditions that govern these inner levels, perceive a thought-form for what it is. They know it is but a creation that in time will dissipate and disappear.

The wisest of those yet on earth comprehend only a small portion of the facts regarding our physical world. New discoveries are made almost every day, some of which violently upset old notions. How foolish, therefore, to believe the moment one passes to the next interior phase of existence he must know all about that plane, and even about worlds still more interior. When one passes to the inner world, unless he has started his education concerning it while still in the physical and under competent guidance, he knows about as much regarding it as a babe does when first born into physical life. If he is wide awake, and desirous of doing so, he learns something each new short period; but it takes time and effort to learn much about this new life.

After a time, as he learns more and more, and advances spiritually, he gains the ability to move to higher basic vibratory levels. Later still, in the course of advancement, he is able to traverse across different levels and observe what is going on in each such different region. He gets a better idea of after-death life then; and learns how to distinguish between the thought constructions that coincide with nature and the universal purpose, and those thought-built regions that are as artificial as a stage play of physical life.

The stage play is real, as a play, and it may, or may not, accurately represent something in the world of affairs. People have had enough experience

with affairs outside the theater not to think the theater play is outside experience. But if a visitor from another planet were to come to earth and enter a theater he most likely would take the stage play as the true condition of the world. So also those who arrive in the next world without having had experience enough with its different phases to discriminate. If they find themselves amid an environment of artificial thought-forms they consider, until later they are better informed, that this kind of an environment is the common one of the next life.

On the physical plane men now build mechanical robots that are capable of doing a marvelous variety of human work. They do just what they are constructed to do, but possess no other ability or intelligence. So, likewise, thought-forms are created by those still in the flesh, and are sent out by them with a definite object in view. They work to accomplish this particular purpose with all the semblance of intelligence. In fact, they have been endowed with intelligence regarding the accomplishment of the thing at hand. How such thought creations act to accomplish things on the physical plane, and how they may influence the course of human lives, is explained in detail in Course 18, *Imponderable Forces*.

The vital point I here wish to emphasize is that such a robot can be created by thought-power to possess a particular kind of intelligence and activity. And the concentrated thought of many people holding the same mental image can create on the astral plane a whole environment of any particular kind, peopled by such robots. These thought-form robots have no souls, no more so than have the mechanical robots of the physical plane. But they act with apparent intelligence and perform the functions with which they have been endowed by the imaginations of their creators.

Thus a complete heaven, according to the old Christian plan, with streets of gold, with precious jewels, with a great white throne, and angels around it playing on harps, and even Jehovah sitting on this magnificent chair as an earthly king might sit, can be created by the thought power of a group of devotees. And Jehovah, thus created, will talk like a human being, and render judgments such as this obsolete conception demands; and the angels will flap their wings as they fly, because they have been patterned in the mind somewhat after the manner of birds of flight. But these birdlike angels and this man-like Jehovah will be but robots, created by thought power, and carry out what they are expected to do as intelligently as a mechanical robot on earth does its work faithfully.

Also a complete hell, with its smell of sulphur, and its imps, and a devil with a pitchfork and spear-like tail working amid flames, can be created by the same means. If there is a body of people who believe in just such a region, and they visualize it frequently, and have strong feelings about it that vitalize it with emotional energy such a region in all its details and denizens becomes fashioned on the astral plane. By that thought-form property of the astral region the place is built up and given reality. It actually exists, as much as a similar place built of material substance by physical means on the physical plane and peopled with mechanical robots constructed to perform a definite function.

Not only do these regions and their robot population exist, but they continue to persist until the vitality imparted to them by thought processes and emotional attitudes dissipates. Then they dissolve and leave only their impression as an astral record.

## Heaven and Hell

But because such artificial and erroneous environments have been built does not make it necessary for people who are on the astral plane to live in them. If a person has held such an image in his mind with great faith, at the death of the physical body this faith is a force, acting through the law of affinity, to attract him to some astral, but artificially created environment of a nature corresponding to this faith, on the astral plane. Not only does the astral plane consist of a great number of strata of life and existence, each such basic level being separated from adjacent basic levels by a band of vibratory rates which sustain little life, but each such level as provides for abundant life through its vibratory strength is comparable to one of the vibratory frequencies commonly used by radio stations to act as the carrier waves for broadcasting their programs.

These carrier waves of a given number of kilocycles do not convey information or themselves produce intelligible sound when picked up by a receiving set. Yet using any one of them as a carrier wave, a broadcasting station can transmit, through wave modulation, an infinite variety of programs. The same program, for instance, which is transmitted over a vibratory level of 550 kilocycles can also be transmitted with equal success over a vibratory level of 1500 kilocycles.

This means that on any single basic vibratory level the variety of radio programs is infinite, and that on a single basic vibratory level of the astral world an infinite number of conditions and life-forms can exist, including such artificially created environments as we are considering. These life-forms and environments also have their vibratory rates, even as the radio carrier wave is modulated by incidental vibrations. And as the factors of a radio program which is being received are not separated from each other by space, but by time intervals, so the distance between the various objects on a given level of the inner-plane cannot be measured in terms of distance such as is used on the physical plane: for such space on the inner-plane has no significance. Nor do we, as a rule, while listening to a radio program, know how close or how distant in terms of space the performers are to one another. And on the inner-plane the distance of things from each other on the same basic vibratory level is measured by difference in vibration, difference in modulation on that basic vibratory level.

This means that on any given level of the astral plane things having a similar modulating vibratory rate are close together, and things having dissimilar modulating rates are far apart. When an individual thinks concentratedly about a certain condition or person, this tends to adjust his incidental, or modulating rate, to the environment or person thought about, which means he moves to that vicinity. And if this vicinity about which he thinks so earnestly is a thought-built artificial environment, he nevertheless moves into it, even as he would move into a more natural environment if his preconceptions did not hold his consciousness so focused that he cannot perceive anything but what corresponds to them.

Thus if his faith is strongly that of the Mohammedans, the environment to which the law of affinity attracts him is that constructed by the thought-forms of Mohammed's followers. If he strongly enough expects to find the nirvana of Hindu belief, he will move into such a place of effortless lack of consciousness. Whatever his faith or belief, if strong, will attract him, due to its vibratory modulations, to such a region as most nearly corresponds to his ideals.

This is not the same thing as the earth-bound soul who cannot free him-

self from some strong desire of earth, nor is it the same as the soldier who for a time, until awakened, lives in his own mental images. It is not the same because there is greater freedom and a wider consciousness of conditions. Instead of being bound to a consciousness of some limited environment, or bound, for a time, to the thought-forms of his own creation, the individual realizes he has passed from the physical plane, and moves about freely within a region of the next-life plane. But, until someone, or something, is able to get information through to him that there are other regions quite different from the one in which he finds himself, he lives in, and is conscious of, only this environment which has been constructed by the thought-images of those who hold a belief similar to his own.

If a visitor from some other planet were to awaken in the center of some large office building he might move about in it for a long time without knowing anything about the traffic of the streets, about manufacturing plants, about parks and places of amusement, or about homes and gardens. If, at the same time, he had the fixed idea before he went to sleep that there could be nothing on earth except the inside of an office building, he no doubt would reject every attempt of others to tell him about different conditions.

The same person who can believe the earth was created in six calendar days and has been in existence only some 6,000 years, in spite of every evidence to the contrary; if he were as firmly convinced that the inside of an office building was the all of earth-life, could not be convinced by those contacted there that there was another kind of existence outside of this building. He would tell anyone mentioning the subject that such an idea was sheer nonsense.

So also those who pass to the next life with strong faith they will find a certain condition are limited to some such condition. Yet the environment they enter is real; for it has been built by the collective thought power of those of similar faith. But it is not the all of the next-life environment. It is as significant a section of the next plane as some single office building, or some single farm, is significant as compared to the whole world. Yet so long as the individual confines himself to this single environment all his reports to his friends left on earth will describe nothing more than is there found.

In time, short or long, depending on how fixed his faith is, someone from another region will be able to gain his attention sufficiently to explain to him that there are a vast number of other regions of an entirely different character. His views may be so narrow that he will deem this visitor some deceiving imp direct from hell attempting to lead him astray. Or he may become sufficiently interested to desire to investigate. He may take a short trip with this guide, to see what there is outside the domain where he now is living. Then begins his real education; and if he still sends reports to friends yet on earth they will perceive his views are changing, and that he describes the after-life as different than what he stated it to be at first.

Of course, not having traveled on the astral plane before physical death, his first trips of exploration, even augmented by explanations from his guide, give him no very extensive comprehension of what the next life is like. Ordinarily one must live some fifty years on the physical plane, and be very studious besides, to get a fairly comprehensive general knowledge of what is known about the physical world. And although the astral senses, and the facility of astral thinking, are much superior to their physical counterparts, yet the regions of the astral are so immense and varied in nature that any comprehensive, though but general, knowledge of it can only be gained at the expense of

much time and energy. Therefore, without the advantages of a first-rate education after reaching the astral plane, we cannot expect an individual to make very accurate reports concerning It.

We who are yet in the physical body, with proper training also can explore the inner-plane. There is more than one way that this can be done. The electromagnetic energies may so completely be withdrawn from the physical that there is no apparent life left in it, and the material form assume the cataleptic state while the consciousness is centered exclusively in the astral form as it travels about the astral world. But such astral travel, and extensive investigation through Feeling ESP, have rather serious drawbacks. And the information gained is no more comprehensive or reliable than can be acquired through extension of consciousness in the use of the safer Transition Technique of Intellectual ESP.

One should no more expect to be able to conduct such inner-plane explorations without special training than he should expect to be able to solve mathematical problems with no previous training in handling figures. For handling certain jobs on earth it is usually considered essential that the applicant shall have a high school education. And if he must undergo training for some 12 years on earth to fit himself to start special training for a profession, or before starting in business, or before applying for a job, he should not expect to be able to direct his consciousness and his energies effectively on the inner-plane without considerable training also.

Yet the kind of training required for safe inner-plane exploration is not mysterious. Nor does it necessitate more arduous mental effort than is used in getting a high school education. And in it there are only five essential subjects.

While it is not necessary to withdraw the electromagnetic energies from the body, such as those do who travel astrally while in the cataleptic state or near cataleptic state, it is necessary that there shall be abundant electromagnetic energies present of a frequency suitable for supporting the extended consciousness. Even for cerebral thinking, suitable electrical energies must be present. But for extending consciousness on the inner-plane there must be energies of higher frequency available to draw upon. Therefore there should be training in proper electrification.

The consciousness cannot concentrate on inner-plane things while the thoughts are engaged with a multitude of everyday problems, or is centered with what is going on in the outer world. To be able to hold the consciousness on the inner-plane without distraction there should be training in inhibiting cerebral thinking.

Yet a person may inhibit cerebral thinking without gaining information about the inner-plane. Most of us habitually do this when we go to sleep. But to gain information through the Transition Technique, consciousness is not completely lost. And to handle this phase of the matter there should be training in attaining inner-plane consciousness.

When some degree of inner-plane consciousness is recognized, if there is to be exploration, the consciousness must move to the region to be explored. And to do this with facility there should be training in inner-plane activity.

Information gained on the inner-plane, or experiences undergone there, reside in the unconscious mind as memory, and may never be recognized by objective consciousness. To bring these memories of exploration on the inner-plane through, there should be training in the objective recognition of inner-plane experiences.

In such explorations we may view natural conditions, or we may go



through artificially constructed environment; for there are natural conditions on the astral just as on earth there remain a few environments that have not been changed by the hand of man. Our impression of this inner region will largely depend upon the particular place we visit. And these places are far more varied than those on earth because there is another dimension; that is, there are vertical layers, as well as surface extensions. There are vibratory levels, and each station, one above another in vibratory rate, corresponds to a new world of existence far vaster in expanse than that of the physical world, and with more details and contrasts.

We must also always take into consideration the censorship tendency of the objective mind through which such information comes. Yet most of the reports of those who travel in their astral bodies while still in the flesh, of those who visit the next plane through extension of consciousness while still occupying physical bodies, and of those who have left physical life and dwell on that plane, I believe are substantially correct as far as they go. That is, I consider most of these descriptions to be rather accurate recitals of what really exists on the astral plane. They may be descriptions of situations built up by erroneous thought-forms, they may be descriptions of situations built up by correct thought-forms, or they may be descriptions of situations as they naturally exist without being tampered with by the thought-building processes of man.

But, of course, any description of that region is limited. The descriptions of those who have visited but a single environment will be confined to it, and the descriptions of those who have made more extensive explorations will cover a vaster realm. Yet the description of one who has been in only one environment may quite contradict the description of someone else who has been only in another environment; as much so as the description of Coney Island on Sunday in summer differs from a description of a Klondike mining camp in winter. Nevertheless, both descriptions may be rather faithfully portrayed.

I have already mentioned that all activities are tremendously heightened, and all sensitiveness immeasurably intensified, in life and existence on the astral plane. Yet even on the earth plane, where we go and what we do is the direct result of desire. We act in a certain way only because there are no desires, conscious or unconscious, that are stronger to move us in some other manner. Furthermore, because we have astral bodies also while occupying the flesh, the thought-cells within these astral bodies that have been organized by experiences and thoughts attract to us by their activities in response to their desires, while still on earth, and again after we have left the earth plane, an environment corresponding in nature and in harmony or discord to these thought-cells. That is, whether on the physical plane or after so-called death, the organization of our finer form, which in expression becomes our character, attracts experiences to us that have a similar quality.

A desire, on either plane, strives to release energy. And if such energy release is sufficiently powerful the whole form may go into action. Because the astral form responds with much greater alacrity to the desire stimulation of thought, it is sometimes called the desire body. Any desire, or any change in the vibratory rates of the astral body, brings results more speedily and more pronounced in the astral world than it does in the physical world.

This quick response of the astral form is manifest in two distinct ways: Any pronounced change in the general vibratory rate of the finer body moves

## **Influence of Desires**

the body to a plane, or level, corresponding to this basic frequency. That is, the body of the individual moves vertically, as we may call it for want of a better word, to the basic astral or spiritual level corresponding to his dominant spirituality and refinement; for refinement and spirituality are a matter of higher vibratory rates as distinct from lower vibratory rates, of thought and form, and consequently of soul and character.

In this vertical movement there are certain gaps, chasms, or abysses, between vibratory rates where there is no clearly defined existence. Just as when turning the dial of the radio from one station to another, a region of wavelengths may be crossed, over which nothing is broadcast; so in passing from one basic vibratory level to another in the next life, there may be a chasm in which there is no life, or such life is distorted and blurred.

In the lower regions where some souls find themselves soon after physical death, certain chasms not infrequently are bridged by those with knowledge of such construction, so that these slowly progressing souls may not have to wander in the darkness of these great gaps, but may be led across on secure footing. But where the basic vibratory rate is changed more abruptly, the individual simply moves from one plane to the next, the appearance being that of aerial travel. That is, the body seems to rise or sink into a new world. Yet whatever world he thus passes into, is as solid, tangible, real and vital as the physical world. Yes, it is more vital, because on the inner levels above the very lowest the activity and the throbbing, pulsating, insistent manifestations of life are far more vigorous and intense than anything with which we are familiar in this lethargic world of matter.

But in addition to this world-level which is determined by the dominant vibratory rate of the astral form as surely as turning the dial of a radio determines which broadcasting station is tuned in on, the desires of the individual move him with great rapidity, within whatever world to which his dominant rates assign him, to a region where they can find expression. That is, a strong desire on the earth may take a very long time to move the individual into the environment where it can satisfy itself. But on the inner levels of life, such a desire tends to find an environment suitable for its expression very quickly.

I do not mean that all one must do to be a great character, or to be very wise, or to perform some noble work, is merely to wish it strongly. But I do mean that wishing strongly to do the thing much more quickly brings the opportunity to try to do it. The environment more readily responds to the desires; and if one wishes strongly to be a great character, very soon opportunities are attracted that if grasped start one on the road to building a great character. Or if one desires ardently to be very wise, this desire, without much delay, attracts a teacher who is able to explain things, and a guide who is willing to act as pilot in journeys here and there by which the range of information can be extended. Or if one wishes to do a certain noble work; one is attracted to those who are making similar endeavor, and is aided to get started doing it.

But, of course, if the nature of one's desires are too low to find expression on this level, and they are maintained, they lower the dominant vibratory rate of the form, and the individual drops to a lower world. If they are vicious and evil enough, he may have to go into the so-called hells to be able to express them; but if they are higher than the level on which he resides, they raise the tone of his essential vibratory rate to a point that causes him to ascend to a higher world where such expression is possible.

It will be seen, therefore, that even as they are the most important things on the physical plane, so also are man's thoughts, desires and ambitions the

determining factors of his condition both in the life immediately following physical dissolution, and in the life of still higher spiritual realms.

Although thought has so much building power, and the form and conditions are so responsive to it on these inner levels, these levels must not, in any sense, be considered vague or less real than the physical. If one travels to China, there are different conditions than obtain in America; but life there is no less real. Or if one takes a trip through the less known regions of Africa, conditions that seem most bizarre must be met; but even though strange, there is nothing vague about them to those who live there. Nor, outside of there being levels of existence to which things are attracted instead of gravitation, distance determined by resonance instead of by our earthly conception of space, a different order of time, ability to look down world-lines and witness the past and probable future of things as well as the present, and the amazing potency of thought—all of which are consistent with the principle of relativity when higher-than-light velocities are reached—does life seem strange to one passing from the physical to those after-death lands.

I am sure the five mentioned common properties of astral life are no more difficult to get used to, and on that plane no more difficult to understand, than many of the inventions that those of my generation have had to accustom themselves to on the physical plane. Either a markedly new device, or markedly new property of substance, such as the radiant energy of radium, makes necessary some effort of the human mind for a proper adjustment. Matter was mostly opaque until the X-ray and radium were discovered. These came as distinct shocks to our conception of things. Yet we now take them as a matter of course; just as a little later, in the next life, we will take thought-form construction and desire power transportation also as not unusual. And it will then seem strange that we could have once thought life was confined to a single level, instead of being composed of different levels of vibratory strata.

On each of these strata that are not distant from the earth we find scenery that in appearance differs little from that of the physical world. There we find mountains, and lakes, and waterfalls, and forests, and flowers, and birds and mammals, just as we find them here now.

To be sure, the colors are more brilliant, with that intensity of color and shade with which those are familiar who have made even a little progress through using colored discs in the development of clairvoyance. These colors, as anyone who has ever seen them even for a moment knows, are not merely the complementary colors of the one looked at. They are far more intense and beautiful than any shade possible to be seen with the physical eye. And very many people, at one time or another, have at least glimpsed these astral colors, or have heard the astral chimes. The notes of birds, and the music of the inner-plane, as suggested by the quality of these astral chimes, is of a clearness and beauty of tone that is quite indescribable. So, in the sense that they may be far more beautiful and attractive, the colors and tones of the next life are different from those to which we are accustomed; but the difference is in quality, and we recognize them as otherwise the same as those with which in earth-life we are familiar.

Birds and trees and flowers exist on the levels closer to earth; and on levels high enough these are replaced by a vegetation and bright, starry-eyed creatures of pure quality, higher in intelligence, with greater spiritual affinity, that perform the functions on these more interior levels that birds and trees and flowers do in the more external worlds.

## Scenery

Some of the buildings, of course, are different in structure; and some of the mechanical devices are based on properties pertaining to the inner-plane. But take it all in all, whether we descend to the hell-like regions below, where vice is the rampant feature and the general environment is hideous in every respect, or ascend to the higher regions, even as far as we are able to peer into the upper spiritual spheres, or as revealed to us by those who there dwell; in none of these regions do we find things or conditions so vastly remote from what we can experience on earth.

It is true that while on earth the population mixes rather freely together without regard to the innate viciousness of some and the essential spirituality of others; yet even on earth we do not visit night-clubs and gangster dens to find virtue, nor do we attend lectures on altruism in the hope of apprehending hoodlums and crooks. This contrast, caused by the segregation of those of similar basic vibratory rates and similar desires is, however, much more pronounced on the inner-plane.

If we visit the hells, the only virtuous persons we find there are those with missionary intent. And if we ascend across the levels to a high region of spirituality, we find an entire absence of the base, wicked and self-centered. These cannot move to such a level because their vibratory rates are too coarse.

In the world where we live after passing from the physical, very quickly we shall feel at home. Some of those who looked older, we shall find now look rather young, and some of those who looked so young as to be immature we shall find had time to grow to adulthood. But if we knew them on earth we shall have no difficulty in recognizing them when we meet them on the next plane. Nor will their characters have changed except as people's characters also are wont to change through deterioration or growth in the physical world.

### **Our Loved Ones**

Those who loved us, will still love us; and those who opposed us on earth, unless they have gained in wisdom, will still have a tendency to oppose us. But if they belong to a different vibratory level than we, they will be unable to affect us; and in any event, if we are to advance in this realm, we will compose and adjust our differences in the work for a more important common cause. Loved ones, also, may occupy a different vibratory level; but if the love is strong and persistent, it finds a way for the one above to visit and encourage the one below, and for the one below to build such a character that he can move to the higher level.

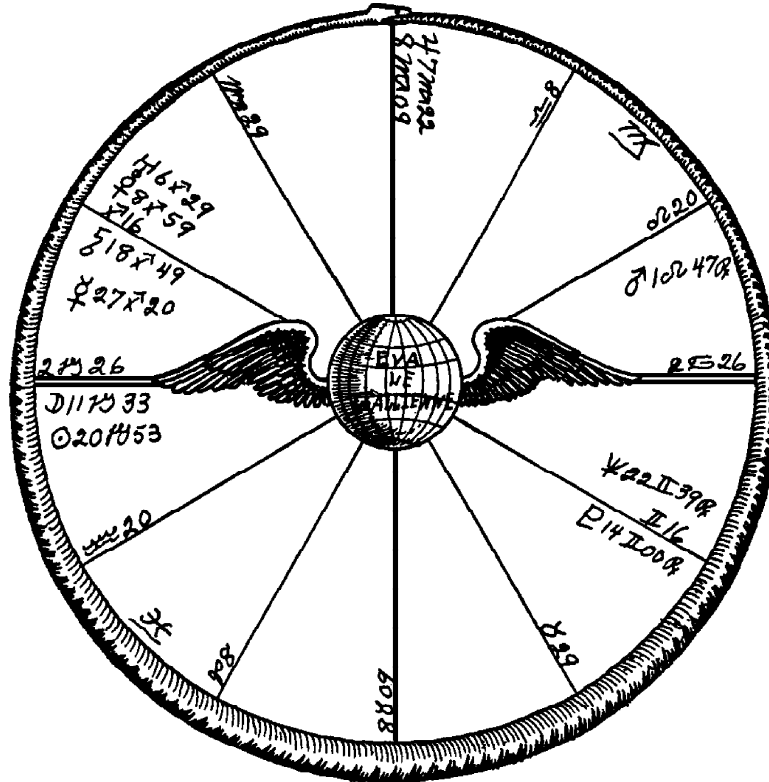
To be sure, certain affectional tangles present peculiar problems in the after life. The wife who has had several husbands through the death of some, and the husband who has had several wives. And matters of injury to others, and of responsibility for leading some into downward paths. It takes time, and conferences, and the advice of wise teachers from still higher regions, to begin to straighten all these things out. But because, when more highly evolved, the affections by that evolvment readjust themselves on a truer basis, at a certain height of attainment each is united to his rightful mate.

Other ties of earth, also, carry their responsibilities into the next life. Those we contact and influence on the earth-plane may present a debt that calls for readjustment. We may feel that the best way to right a wrong is to do something helpful for the same individual in the after-life. That we may feel right within ourselves, of course we must pay our debts. The record of our lives is before us, and we act both as judge and jury. Often the best method of rectifying some mistake is directly through the person who suffered most by it.

Such direct squaring of accounts, however, is not always possible. And in such cases they can be liquidated by the more indirect method of effort expended in helping any other person who in particular needs our assistance.

The next life is not some weird, strange place. With a few improvements, life is lived there very much as it is lived now on earth. Because they think more clearly and comprehensively, feel more intently, and act with greater speed, people there are much more alive than on this plane where everything is retarded by slow-moving matter. People in the next life know more than they do here, they do more than they do here without suffering fatigue, and they have greater delights and experience keener enjoyments.

A savage usually resists strenuously the effort to civilize him. But once civilized, and in a civilized community, he finds it far preferable to his former state. Those in the next life can do practically anything that those on earth can do, and many enjoyable things those on earth cannot do. Is it any wonder, then, that those who are above the lower levels of the astral life almost never express a desire to return to this rather sordid life of earth?



EVA LE GALLIENNE

January 11, 1899, 7:00 a.m. 0W. 51:30 N.

Data given in her autobiography.

1903, separation of father and mother: Mars semi-square Pluto r.

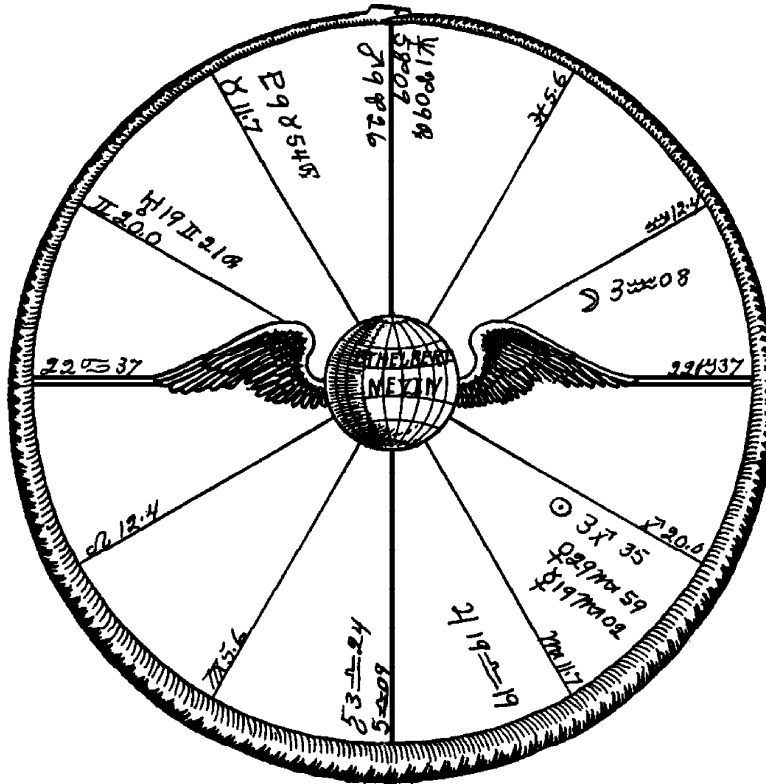
1906, saw Bernhardt act, and resolved to become an actress: Venus opposition Pluto r.

1907, heartbroken when separated from nurse: Sun sesqui-square Pluto r.

1914, Wm. Faversham offered her part in tour of America, but mother thought her too young: Sun sextile Uranus r.

1915, friends launched her on successful stage career: Sun sextile Uranus p.

1926, won gold medal for achievements, and as founder and director, on October 25 opened Civic Repertory Theatre in New York: it ran six seasons.



ETHELBERT NEVIN

November 25, 1862, 8:00 p.m. 80W. 40:30N.

Data from Life of Ethelbert Nevin, by Vance Thompson.

- 1872, wrote first musical composition: Venus trine Mars p.
- 1874, published first musical composition: Mercury sesqui-square Jupiter p.
- 1877, took lessons from best teachers in Europe: Sun conjunction Venus p.
- 1879, strife with father over choice of career: Mercury trine Mars p.
- 1880, father consented to let him be musician: Venus sextile Jupiter p.
- 1881, published Apple Blossom, The Lovers, The Milk Maid: Sun sextile Jupiter p.
- 1888, January 5, married happily and composed many songs: Sun sextile Venus. r.

