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THE IDEA OF GOD IN THE BIBLE

MEDIUMISTIC MINISTRATIONS OF THE PROPHETS

By H. ERNEST HUNT

IT has been said that God made man in His own image, and that man has been returning the compliment ever since. In this there is certainly an element of truth, for we see that the savage recognises the powers of Nature outside himself, and proceeds to personify these. Some of these forces are kindly, and these he concludes are the work of beneficent deities or spirits, and others are harmful. These are obviously the demonstrations of some spiteful or angry god who must therefore be propitiated. So he gradually gets a gallery of gods whom he pictures and regards according to what he expects to get from them.

But when we come to the God, or gods, of the Old Testament we are forced to realise that terms are not always to be taken at face value, and one word may have many different meanings and usages varying with times and peoples. The word "god" in the Bible by no means carries the interpretation which some people put upon it. For example, there is first the Elohist conception and then the Jehovist. In the former, the Elohim, the seven creative or planetary spirits, said, "Let us make man in our image"; but Jehovah, or Jahveh, was the specific God of the Israelites, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. As such he only claimed to be a tribal deity, and not the God of white men and black, or the creator of the universe.

In the pages of the Old Testament we come across many other gods—Baal, Chemosh, Dagon, Ashtoreth Queen of heaven, and so on; each with their own rites and Prophets. But the worship of these various gods led to moral degeneration and a standard of conduct hopelessly at variance with the demands of evolutionary progress. Hence the Israelites were given the rigid code of the Ten Commandments, which in themselves are the

essential moral basis for any stable society, and they were prohibited from following after these other gods. In this way arose those emphatic prohibitions against witchcraft and familiar spirits and so forth, which are to-day used as ammunition to fire at Spiritualists—quite regardless of the fact that the worship of Jehovah was carried out clearly upon lines of mediumship and spirit guidance.

The principle of mediumship was firmly established in the ministrations of the various Prophets. They consulted the Lord, and the answer was given forth: "Thus saith the Lord," or "the Word of the Lord came unto me, saying —." This is a formula which we may recognise as implying that the communication was from God, the gods, or the spirits: in other words, it was a psychic communication. If we read the Bible carefully, we can see a great many signs which directly confirm this idea. We see Saul being "turned into another man" and then prophesying, which is only to say that he went under control and spoke. We see Moses transfigured so that the skin of his face shone, and then we hear the sound of the trumpet and the voice speaks. Certain of the elders of Israel came before Ezekiel and sat, and then "the word of the Lord came unto him, saying —." Why did the elders "sit," if not as a preliminary to the spirit coming upon Ezekiel? David goes to enquire of the Lord, saying, Shall I go out and smite these Philistines? And the Lord said unto David, Go.

There were many means of communication: sometimes it was the "open vision" of clairvoyance, and sometimes the voice in the ear, or behind the listener. Sometimes it came by divination, or by the flashing of the Urim and Thummim. The ordinary person was dependent upon the services of a Medium, for he could by no means receive the message himself. Jehoshaphat said, "Is there not here a prophet of the Lord that we may enquire of the Lord by him?" And one of the King's servants said, "Here is Elisha." Again, the counsel of Ahitophel was as if a man had enquired "at the oracle of God." Micah, we read, had "an house of gods", and made an ephod,

THE IDEA OF GOD IN THE BIBLE

(Continued from previous page)

and teraphim (an image for divination), and consecrated one of his sons, who became his priest. Thus it was that the Prophets gave forth their spirit communications, and interpreted the behests of the invisible.

When we realise that these Prophets were Mediums, then we can apply our knowledge of mediumship to the point and find out much. The mere fact that a communication comes from the other side is, we know, no guarantee of its divine origin; indeed far otherwise. "As there be gods many and lords many," says St. Paul, so there are communications of all types, some worthy, and others distinctly less so. Therefore it is incumbent upon us to "try the spirits and see whether they be of God." Moreover, mediumship shows us that, quite apart from the origin of the message, there arise also the twin questions of its transmission and interpretation.

The Prophets were men and women first and Prophets afterwards; and, although the influence of the subconscious was not recognised in those unsophisticated days, nevertheless it existed. One of the standard difficulties to-day is to be assured that the mediumistic channel of communication is comparatively clear. In almost all conscious and light-trance work its influence is apt to creep in; but in deep-trance it is least in evidence. We think in pictures, not in words; and the messages that are projected down to us from beyond are mostly in pictorial form, or thought-impressions. These must be translated by the Medium, and necessarily in the mental content and vocabulary available: hence while the substance of the message may be correct enough, it may seem strangely foreign as to its expression. W. T. Stead termed this colouration a kind of stained-glass effect, with the pure light streaming through and taking on a corresponding tinge.

THE PROFESSION OF PROPHET

The profession of Prophet was a paid one, and therefore there were vested interests; no doubt also there was competition, and almost inevitably the consideration of remuneration by results. We must assume, therefore, that difficulties such as we experience to-day in the practice of mediumship were not unknown. We further realise, from our knowledge of psycho-analysis, how easy it is for repressed and suppressed wishes to dramatise themselves and appear in disguised form, interpolated perhaps into a perfectly genuine message. "How can I be sure whether or not it comes from my sub-conscious?" is one of the questions which as yet we are unable to answer with any certainty. So we turn to Jeremiah and observe that Prophet saying, after one of his communications had verified itself by coming to pass, "Then I knew that this was the word of the Lord." By implication, before it eventuated, he was unable to be sure as to how far his own ideas had insinuated themselves into his prophecy.

Those who thus colour or distort the correctness of their messages were termed false Prophets; and, speaking of these, Jeremiah observes: "They make you vain: they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord." Ezekiel corroborates him in this, using almost the identical words and ending up by saying: "Woe unto the foolish Prophets that follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing." We are perfectly aware to-day of some who thus "follow their own spirit," and that spirit is their own subconscious: the times have changed and the terminology with them, but the essential facts of the situation remain the same.

We can now see that, quite apart from the "gods many and lords many," there were obvious faults and failures in transmission, and we can impute some of the angers and jealousies, to say nothing of the vituperations and cruelties, to the Prophet's subconscious rather than to the source of his inspiration. Even to-day, many things are

ascribed to lying spirits in ignorance of the extraordinary facility of the subconscious for unlimited fabrication. On this view, then, we need to read the Bible with great discrimination rather than with wholehearted acceptance. Therefore also the idea of God must be accepted in its due setting, and appraised according to the knowledge and perception of the period, always with a due appreciation of the limitations of the human Prophets through whom came these intimations from the unseen.

But without ambiguity we can trace the progressive nature of the revelation of God, from the God of Moses who chose the Israelites "to be a special people unto Himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth," on to the God of the Psalmist who can say "O, Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in Me is thine help." Then again we read in Jeremiah the nobler exposition of a greater God declaring "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment and righteousness, in the earth; for in these things I delight." Finally, Micah the Prophet is able to affirm: "And what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" Surely, this God is not far removed from the loving Father of the New Testament?

The present day has so enlarged our view of the universe in which we live that the human brain is taxed to find even a glimmer of comprehension of its vastness. So also is our conception of the God of this limitless cosmos as greatly enlarged and our own humility correspondingly increased. Then necessarily we fall back upon some exposition which our puny senses can comprehend, and we look to the Jesus of the New Testament as the embodiment of the Christ-spirit, the ruler of our universe. "No man hath seen God at any time," but all down the ages we have been vouchsafed glimpses according to the measure of our understanding: and lest we should be in any doubt as to the characteristics of Him to whom we should ascribe all honour and glory, we have in a more modern world His exemplar, whose Gospel was love, whose Way was love, and who Himself was love incarnate. And God is Love.

THE AMERICAN S.P.R. "JOURNAL"

The July issue of the *Journal* of the American S.P.R. contains no allusion to the results of the investigation of the Walter fingerprints in the Margery phenomena; and we can only hope that the further proofs promised will gain in volume and force by the delay and set the question finally at rest.

Amongst the contents is Part XVII of *Le Livre des Revenants*, is a record of the sittings at which Mrs. Ernest Bigelow is the main-spring, and where striking evidences of identity are gathered from a multitude of communicators who on earth were people of little note, unknown and undistinguished. The present section of the record contains an account of deceased persons who communicated, giving their names and other particulars about themselves. To this is appended a list of the verifications gained by inquiries made on behalf of the circle in the localities mentioned by the "Revenants" and the corroborations are often striking. A similar inquiry, by the way, was conducted by the now defunct Spiritual Institution at Southampton Row, London, some fifty years ago, but the results, although occasionally successful, were nothing like so complete and impressive as Mrs. Bigelow's experiments. But in those days faculties for inquiry were far less perfect than is the case to-day.

THE OLDEST MISSIONARY SOCIETY

By the REV. G. MAURICE ELLIOTT, Rector of Over Wallop, Hants.

THE Epistle to the Hebrews tells us that Messengers or Missionaries are sent forth from high heaven to low earth "to do service" to us all. The author calls them "liturgical spirits" which means "heavenly guides who are specially fitted for such service."

The Greek word for "send forth" is a present participle, meaning that these Missionaries are ever being sent forth; it is their regular duty through all the ages.

And we do well to remember that the gift of the Spirit does not in any way diminish the value of the loving counsel and powerful protection of leaders and teachers who are with us in the flesh; still less does it diminish the effective ministry of those in the spirit who are sent forth.

We are well aware of the difficulty of assigning a place to angelic-ministry in view of the ministry of the Holy Spirit. But we are fully persuaded that, however great the difficulty may be, revelation forbids us to dismiss the fact of angelic-ministry.

The Church *insists* that all her members shall face the fact. To this end she confronts them with a Collect and a Hymn—the plain terms of which cannot be misunderstood. In the Collect for S. Michael and All Angels the Church bids us pray as follows:—

"O Everlasting God, Who hast ordained and constituted the services of Angels and men in a wonderful order: Mercifully grant that, as thy holy Angels always do thee service in heaven, so by thy appointment they may succour and defend us on earth; through Jesus Christ our Lord."

And in Hymn 424 (A. & M.) the Church teaches her members that Guides from heaven are sent forth by God to watch over us and to stay with us.

They come to watch around us here,
To soothe our sorrow, calm our fear:
Ye heavenly guides, speed not away,
God willeth you with us to stay.

Nothing could be plainer, more helpful, or more beautiful. And the Church should in no way be unprepared for the discovery that to-day, as in S. John's day, when a person happens to be "in the spirit" (which means "out of the body"; cf. Greek) he may hear and see a "heavenly guide" and hear him say "I am a fellow-servant with thee: Worship God."

Yet if anyone, even a church member, were to declare that such an experience had been his, there are still very few in the Church who would be disposed to believe him. The word "disposed" is used advisedly, because the teaching of the Church on the subject should quite naturally dispose her to expect to hear of such experiences. And since it has pleased the Godhead to employ "heavenly guides"—as He employs missionaries, evangelists, prophets, preachers, and teachers—it is not only to our loss, but surely also at our peril, that we neglect so great a ministry.

Some of us have for many years contended that what is known as Spiritualism is the penalty which the Church is having to pay for her neglect of one of her own doctrines. By "penalty" is meant that the Church has not only lost a large number of would-be members, but she has had to witness those outside her borders, who have believed her neglected doctrine, having experiences which she herself ought to have and would have if she believed her own doctrine.

Too often we have been told that S. John's experience was altogether unique and different in kind from anything that ordinary mortals may expect. And we have been told it by those who must, at least, have read the teaching of Jesus. Yet His teaching on the subject of the "powers and privileges of believers" is wholly opposed to the idea

that S. John's experience was so unique as to be different in kind from any that we can have to-day. Rather does He declare that all His followers will have remarkable "psychic" (I would prefer to use the word "spiritual") experiences—some of which will be the same in kind, though very likely differing in degree, from S. John's classic experience. Beethoven's master-music does not differ in kind, but in degree, from that of other musicians.

The Church will one day find it necessary to face the fact that the oldest missionary society is that "ordained and constituted" by God Himself for the purpose of "sending forth" His "heavenly guides" to succour and defend His children on earth. And when she has faced the fact and believed it, she will then begin to enquire how these guides set to work, whether they are ever seen, heard, and spoken to, and she will not only be "disposed" to listen to those who have matriculated in the doctrine of angels, and to those who have gained their M.A. and D.D. in the subject, but will earnestly desire to be instructed by them. Meanwhile, the Church *insists* that her members shall *believe* all that the Collect and Hymn have to teach. The children may obey their Mother sooner than she expects!

MARK TWAIN'S "MIRACLE"

WRITING in the *Manchester City News* some time ago Raymond Forster recalls the following story of how Mark Twain, the famous American humourist, performed a "miracle."

"Two or three years ago," Mark Twain wrote, "I was lying in bed, idly musing, one morning—it was March 2—when suddenly a red-hot new idea came whistling down into my camp. This idea was that the time was ripe for a certain book—a book which ought to be written at once—about the Nevada silver mines. The 'Great Bonanza' was a new wonder then, and everybody was talking about it. It seemed to me that the person best qualified to write this book was Mr. William H. Wright, a journalist of Virginia, by whose side I had scribbled many months when I was a reporter there. He might be alive still; he might be dead; I could not tell; but I would write him anyway. I began by merely suggesting that he make such a book, but my interest grew as I went on, and I ventured to map out what I thought ought to be the plan of the work. I even dealt with details and suggested the order and sequence which they should follow.

"That letter was not posted, as it happened, but on March 9 the postman brought three or four letters, and among them a thick one whose superscription was in a hand which seemed dimly familiar to me. I could not 'place' it at first, but presently I succeeded. Then I said to a visiting relative who was present: 'Now I will do a miracle. I will tell you everything this letter contains—date, signature and all—without breaking the seal. It is from a Mr. Wright, of Virginia, and is dated March 2—seven days ago. Mr. Wright proposes to make a book about the silver mines and the Great Bonanza and asks what I, as a friend, think of the idea. He says his subjects are to be so and so, their order and sequence so and so, and he will close with a history of the chief feature of the book, the Great Bonanza.' I opened the letter and showed that I had stated the date and the contents correctly. Mr. Wright's letter simply contained what my own letter, written on the same date, contained, and mine still lay in its pigeon hole, where it had been lying during the seven days since it was written."

This story was duly authenticated (says Mr. Forster) and no reasonable explanation—other than that of telepathy—has ever been advanced.

FOREIGN NOTES

THOUGHTS ON TELEPATHIC PHENOMENA

M. ERNEST BOZZANO has recently been engaged in making a profound analytical study of authentic records of telepathic phenomena, and in an article in the *Revue Métapsychique* (May-June) he gives an account of the conclusions at which he has so far arrived.

To begin with, he clears the ground by classifying the phenomena under four headings:

(1) The first he names, "Phenomena of Thought Transmission." In these cases, the agent concentrates on the idea or the image to be transmitted, and definite psycho-physical vibrations are passed from brain to brain. "Astounding results are obtained where the agent places his hand . . . in contact with the occipital centres of the recipient; less brilliant ones if he merely holds the hands of the latter; still more feeble are they when the two participants are placed some distance apart and back to back . . . until at an ever-increasing distance, no effects at all are observed, decreasing in accordance with the ratio of the inverse square of the distance."

(2) "Telepathy Proper." This second category comprises the greater part of the phenomena in question; and they are almost always spontaneous. It is concerned with communications between two widely-distant mentalities; there has as a rule been no intention of transmission. "The transmission of the idea or of the image takes place via the subconscious—not as the result of thought concentration on the part of the agent; which amounts to saying that the psychic transmission is not from brain to brain, but from mentality to mentality. This is why it is entirely independent of distance."

"Thought Transmission depends upon psycho-physical vibrations emitted by the brain, whereas in the second case, the phenomena are of a purely psychic or spiritual character."

There is, however, one feature in this connection which M. Bozzano considers not yet fully explained. He says:

"In telepathic phenomena, it is generally the phantom of the agent which appears to the recipient; which is directly opposed to what occurs in thought transmission and in thought photography. In the two latter cases, it has been proved that the act of concentrating thought on a person or an object causes an objective projection of the fluidic form of that person or object, which can on occasion even be photographed. And now we see that telepathic phenomena produce diametrically opposite results; that is to say, if I think intensively, and with affection, of some one at a distance, the result is not a thought-form representing the far-off person I have visualised, but the thought-form that represents me, and which appears to the person of whom I have been thinking. . . . It would be logical to conclude that the dynamic powers of thought would build up a fluid image of the one of whom I am thinking; it appears ridiculously illogical that these faculties should on the contrary produce the fluidic projection of myself of whom I was not thinking at all."

M. Bozzano suggests that: "In the meta-etheric, or spiritual domain, the subconscious possesses dynamic faculties analogous to those of pure thought in the cerebral domain. . . . The creative action of thought constitutes a simple automatism inherent in the organ of thought; whereas in the second case, the same action depends on the subconscious will of the telepathic agent. He objectifies his own image to the percipient in order, by the only means at his disposal, to announce to him symbolically that he has died or is about to die."

(3) To his third sub-division, M. Bozzano has given the term devised originally by Hyslop, viz., "telemnasia." Here the agent is at the same time the percipient, in that

he derives his information from the subconscious of persons at a distance, who are unaware of what he is doing; it is a question mostly of experiments with Mediums and sensitives.

(4) There are those instances in which the percipient becomes aware of situations or of objects where he could not possibly have derived this knowledge from any subconscious mind. Telepathy therefore does not enter into the question at all.

The writer thinks that much may be learned by dividing the bewildering mass of accumulating evidence into these distinct categories; and he exhorts experimenters to modify their methods. "They should," he says, "select for agents and percipients not merely persons of goodwill, but approved Mediums and sensitives, who should be mutually known to each other. The best results of all would be produced by means of natural or hypnotic trance." Another indispensable factor is, of course, the *rapport psychique* between the participants. Of this he writes: "The marvellous analogy of wireless helps to explain to us the mystery of the psychic rapport, which is based upon the following fact, viz., that every individual is continually emitting radiations exclusively peculiar to himself; radiations which can be subconsciously perceived by sensitives and Mediums, who are thus able to locate a far-off individual producing the radiations in question."

THE LATE ALDERMAN D. J. DAVIS

When I read in the newspapers of the death of Alderman Davis, I did not at first realise that he was the same Mr. Davis whom many years ago I had met at a Spiritualist Church at which he gave the address. I remember how much I was impressed by his simple sincerity and his sympathy with the poor amongst whom he worked. The newspapers naturally said little or nothing of his Spiritualism. Later I learned of his long career in Spiritualism and his labours as a social reformer, and it was gratifying to see that at his funeral service at East London Cemetery on the 25th ulto. his fine record of service to humanity was fully recognised. He began as a pit boy and made his way by sheer strength of character to a position of honour—he became Mayor of West Ham in 1920—and in spite of the unpopular causes he espoused, won the respect and affection of thousands in Spiritualism and outside of it. D.G.

A SPIRITUALIST'S WILL. Under the will of the late Mrs. A. M. Collins, of Torquay, the Spiritualist Church there receives £400 to reduce its debt. The will also directs the establishment of a Fund to help the poorer Spiritualists in Torquay, an unusual provision being that those who receive help are required to pay back one halfpenny in each shilling for the upkeep of the Church.

CORDIAL sympathy will be felt with Mrs. Philip Champion de Crespigny in the loss of her brother, Captain E. M. Cooper Key, C.B., M.V.O., R.N. (retired), Gentleman Usher to the King, who, after a brilliant career, passed away a few days ago, as recorded in the Press.

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UNSEEN INFLUENCES

STRANGE STORY OF AN EMBROIDERED CLOTH

By E. B. GIBBES

A RATHER surprising instance of how unseen influences seem to be drawn towards material objects which they have left behind is recorded in the following incident.

Some years ago I paid a friendly visit to Mrs. Hester Dowden but not for purposes of a definite sitting. However, she suggested doing a few pages of automatic writing. Almost at the moment she put her hand to paper the following curious communication was written:—

"Why have you kept me waiting? I have been waiting a long time to speak to you. You have my cloth, you must give it back to me. It should have been wrapped round my body."

These remarks conveyed nothing to us. Mrs. Dowden said she had a piece of cloth that had once been wrapped round a mummy. She produced it and placed it on the paper. Resting her hand on it she asked if this were the cloth to which allusion was made. Immediately her hand wrote, "No, no, that is not my cloth. It is another cloth. You have no right to it. You must make a big fire and burn it. It is mine, it should be ashes as I am and you soon will be."

This individual seemed a cheery companion. I remarked that if this piece of cloth were not hers, we did not know to what she referred. At once the reply came; written very violently, "No, it is not hers, it is *yours*."

"Oh, mine? Well I can't think what you are alluding to," I replied. "Tell us where you came from?"

"China."

I replied that I did not know anything about a piece of cloth and asked this inspiring communicator what it was like. She then described some material with a yellow-gold background, which was much embroidered and almost covered with work. "You must give it back," she wrote.

I repeated that I had nothing of the kind in my possession so could not do so. She reiterated that I had, and that I was to make a fire and burn it so that she and it would be re-united. The telephone bell rang at this point and we did not resume the writing or think anything further about the communication.

On returning to my flat that evening, I recollected that I had a long piece of old Chinese embroidery answering the description given in the script. I had had it about fifteen years and did not remember whether I had brought it myself from the East or whether it had been given to me. A few days previously I had taken it out of a box and tried its effect on the piano. However, the colours did not harmonise in the room and I put it away without giving it another thought.

A few nights later Mrs. Dowden came to my flat. I decided that I would get her control, "Johannes," to tell me something, if possible, about this material. I placed it on my ouija board and Johannes wrote as follows:—

"This came from a country far over the sea, not a very hot place, rather high in the mountains, and I see people there making it. It is a long, long time before they finish it. Then I see it sold in an open place. It is sold to a very ugly old woman, so ugly that she frightens people. She holds this up and examines it, and after a time she carries it away. It has passed out of her hands into the hands of another woman. She had left a strong impression upon it. She was a very evil person I am afraid and she gives it to a younger woman who is not so disagreeable, but very much given to complaining and objecting to everything that meets her on her way through life. This thing has been used at a funeral as a decoration; it was not round the dead body, but has been over a coffin. The woman had it for a long time. She was quite

different, often ill; she too, has passed on here and I think she is here now. I feel she is coming. Here she is."

Mrs. Dowden then felt a different control. Her hand was pushed violently about the board and the following was written at lightning speed:—

"I want my cloth, it is my mother's cloth. I want it, you must not have it. I used to put it round me; it should have been on my body."

"Why do you bother about it now?" I asked.

"It is an heirloom. It ought to have been on my body."

I explained that it was now in safe hands, that I would take good care of it; and I tried to console her by remarking that it would, in any case, eventually become dust. I added that, so far as I was concerned, I had come by it honestly, that it had been bought and paid for, not stolen; and I suggested that she thought about something else.

Mrs. Dowden's hand wrote in reply: "It is my cloth and you must burn it."

I remarked that it seemed very silly to make so much fuss about a piece of material of its kind and assured her that I would take good care of it. Whereat she responded, "You are a Christian, you do not understand. I will go, but I will watch."

And with this sinister comment the lady departed. She has not been heard of since.

WHAT IS THE EXPLANATION?

Now, to what can we attribute this communication? Is it an example of the dramatisation of the subconscious mind? Or was the old lady's soul really stirred into its memories by the production of her cloth? Did her spirit really speak to us?

Had the first allusion to the old embroidery been made at my own place with the material near the table, it might have been suggested that the sight of it impressed the subconscious mind of Mrs. Dowden and wove this little incident about it. But the communication came, seemingly from nowhere at Mrs. Dowden's own house where there was no connection whatsoever. She had never seen or heard of the cloth, and I, when I took it out of the box, had never given a thought to its hidden memories.

There is an epilogue to this story. The embroidery described above was removed from my keeping, together with many other things, by burglars three years ago. Perhaps the old lady watches it still and will ultimately succeed in getting her precious cloth destroyed.

"DEATH CANNOT SEVER"

Mr. Ernest Hunt, who conducted the last of the London Spiritualist Alliance Book Discussions for the summer session took Dr. Norman Maclean's *Death Cannot Sever* as his subject and recommended it strongly, especially for the use of inquirers approaching the subject of survival from the religious side. Dr. Maclean, he explained, was a distinguished minister of the Scottish National Church (of which he is an ex-Moderator), and, considering the responsible position he occupied, he took a very brave line, first in preaching a series of sermons on "Prayers for the Dead," and later in publishing them as part of his book, in which he gave proof of a very complete knowledge of Psychical Research and an understanding sympathy with Spiritualism. Many clerics had denounced Spiritualism without having studied it or knowing anything about it. Dr. Maclean, however, had read, studied, and to some extent experimented, and his testimony was therefore all the more valuable. *Death Cannot Sever* was a wise book by a great-hearted man and should be widely read.

RELATION OF FOOD TO RELIGION

LOOKING through the file of *The Spiritualist Newspaper* for 1878, a reader of LIGHT came on an amusing "squib" (June 14) quoted from the *New York Times* and directed against Professor Thomas Huxley who at that time was regarded as a protagonist of Materialism and who presumably had associated himself with the slogan that "a man is what he eats." The "squib" is headed "Baby Culture by Professor Huxley," and reads as follows:

"It has long been the belief of many eminent scientific persons that the various forms of religion now prevailing are the direct results of different kinds of food. There have hitherto been insuperable difficulties in the way of demonstrating the truth of this theory, but that a man's religion depends upon the kind of food that he uses, and is modified to some extent by the climate in which he lives, nearly all advanced thinkers are convinced. It is pleasant to be able to announce that at last all possibility of doubt on this subject has been removed by a series of successful experiments narrated by Professor Huxley in his contemplated book on vegetable and alcoholic religions.

"Some time ago Professor Huxley was so fortunate as to obtain possession of a large litter of young children, the property of a positivist, who desired to devote his whole time to the study of gin, and who held that, inasmuch as there is no hereafter, it was not worth while for him to trouble himself about his children. The latter, who were to a great extent twins and were all under eight years of age, were perfectly free from all religious prejudices, and although the oldest swore with much fluency, he had no thought of the possibility of the existence of a God. Placing them in strict confinement, where no human being but himself and a deaf and dumb nurse could obtain access to them, Professor Huxley began a series of experiments with their food, which produced the most satisfactory and valuable results.

"The oldest child was fed exclusively upon Swiss cheese, and was allowed to drink weak brandy and water. He was kept in a room where the temperature was a little above the freezing-point, and was constantly exercised in climbing artificial precipices made of trunks and book-cases. Like the rest of the children he was taught to read and write, but received no other instruction. At the end of three months Professor Huxley was delighted to find him making preparations for a bonfire, in which he proposed to burn his nurse, on the ground that she did not believe certain doctrines which he believed. A month later he constructed a rude pulpit in which he constantly preached sermons denouncing flies and gnats who were his only hearers, for their fondness for sunshine. Before the end of his first year he had formulated a creed which Professor Huxley found to bear a very strong resemblance to that of John Calvin. It thus became clear that a diet of Swiss cheese, combined with brandy and water, and modified by a low temperature, is the immediate cause of Calvinism.

"Meanwhile, another boy had been fed upon oatmeal and whiskey; made to live in a damp room, and frequently sprinkled with a fine spray of water, closely resembling a Scotch mist. The boy soon acquired a peculiar broad accent, and showed a disposition to preach sermons hours in length. He displayed a violent aversion to pictures of all sorts, to scarlet, and to the sound of an organ. A very short time was all that was needed to develop him into an unmistakable Scotch Presbyterian. The experiment was satisfactory in demonstrating the truth of the materialistic theory of the origin of religion, but the unsatisfactory feature was the unconquerable tendency of the boy to throw things at the Professor whenever the latter incidentally mentioned that there was no God.

"The third boy was kept in a hot room, and fed upon macaroni and light wines, and compelled to constantly

grind a small hand-organ. This experiment also was a complete success. The boy became an unmistakable Roman Catholic, and displayed a degree of devoutness, joined to a fondness for sticking his penknife into the Professor's leg, which filled the latter with scientific delight.

"As for the next boy, he was treated with special care, with the view of making him an earnest and able scientific person. His diet consisted of roast beef and ale, and his playthings were slates and pencils, mathematical instruments, specimens of minerals and fossils, and anatomical drawings. Three times every day he was taken to the open window, and held, with his mouth open, exposed to the East wind. Every afternoon, two well-behaved little scientific boys were brought to play with him, and the three were accustomed to play pitch and toss with a pocket Bible for several hours. It was confidently believed that under this treatment he would become an eminent scientific person, but Professor Huxley was bitterly disappointed. The boy became a most impertinent and malicious little wretch. His self-conceit grew intolerable. It was his delight to pick in pieces and spoil every beautiful object that came within his reach, and to throw stones and to hoot at every respectable person who passed near his window. It is true that he did not believe in the existence of God, but this was a very slight consolation to the Professor when the latter was called a bigoted idiot by this wretched boy, or told by him that he was a stupid automaton, and he would like to disarrange his internal mechanism with a knife. The boy did not, as need hardly be remarked, resemble a modern scientific person in the remotest degree, and Professor Huxley confesses himself unable to account for the failure of his experiment.

"Nevertheless, in his contemplated volume, the learned Professor has been able to give the several formulæ for the production of Swiss Calvinists, Scotch Presbyterians, and Italian Roman Catholics, and, by these, establish beyond controversy his assertion that religion is the result of diet."

SCIENCE AND SURVIVAL

In an article in the *Nottingham Journal and Express* of 21st ulto. Sir Richard Gregory, the distinguished scientist, argues that religious creeds and doctrines have done as much to retard the evolution of the mind of man as to promote it. In regard to survival of death, he remarks that from what we know of the infancy of the human race there would seem to have been no period when the belief in the continuance of the personality after death did not exist. It was implicitly accepted by primitive man and the greatest philosophers had discussed it. He considers that, so far as we know, there is no actual annihilation in the natural world, but only change. The mind or consciousness may therefore not cease at death but continue to exist independently of the physical form. The article seems to be significant of the changing attitude of science towards psychic evidences. The open mind is taking the place of the old attitude of blank negation; but with regard to the retarding influence of creeds and doctrines it might be suggested that these things are not always of a religious nature—there are, for instance, scientific creeds and doctrines.

CHURCH AT DENTON. A new Spiritualist Church has just been opened at Denton, Lancashire, by Mr. George F. Berry, of the Spiritualists' National Union. Councillor J. Bardsley, J.P., chairman of the District Council, took part in the ceremony, and although not a Spiritualist, expressed his sympathy with the work as something that would benefit the town.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

(The views and statements of correspondents are not necessarily endorsed by the Editor, who occasionally prints, in the interests of free discussion, letters with which he does not agree.)

TELEPATHY FOR TRADE?

Sir,—Telepathy either illustrates the working of a spiritual or a physical faculty. If the activities of telepathy are spiritual, they give as strong and abundant evidence for Spiritualism as any spiritualist could desire. If these activities depend upon a physical faculty, they are organically connected with the protoplasmic bodily structure of those who exercise them; presumably they are connected with the brain, because they are a source of mentally fashioned information.

The range of telepathy is immense. Mr. Findlay cites a case in which the Medium must have been able during a seance in Glasgow, to visit Perth, Western Australia telepathically, gain information there from the minds of strangers about a new structure, or find the new structure and survey it in detail without extraneous help, and return to Glasgow with the necessary notes, while the seance was still in progress. (*On the Edge of the Etheric*, p. 110). In *Angels and Others* (p. 119) the Rev. Dr. Stowell cites a case in which the Medium must have been able to select from the whole population of the country one or other of a small group of strangers and obtain from his or her mind information to which the Medium had no more of a clue than to the whereabouts of the informant.

A vast volume of evidence familiar to all inquirers about psychic facts shows that Mediums can at seances obtain information by telepathy from all sorts of people present and absent, at whatever time the seance happens to be held; and it is an interesting point that those who are most resolutely bent on confining telepathy to the protoplasmic organism are also those disposed to assign the greatest scope to its possibilities. But why should this psychical faculty be devoted mainly to the maintenance of Spiritualism? The Medium's physical telepathic power could function as well in an office as in a room prepared for supposed spiritual influences. What an advantage it would be for an industrialist if he could find out by a Medium's telepathic faculty what competitors were devising. What an advantage for a trader if he could discover in the same simple way what rivals were planning. And what of the Medium at G.H.Q. in war? The man or woman who could be called in at any time to reveal what the enemy's general staff is scheming and how the next move will be enacted? Why should not these things be done?

The fees of Mediums shrink to a negligible, even an absurd figure in comparison with the results that can be reasonably expected if telepathy is a physical function. Of course, if we are dealing with a spirit faculty under Spirit-Control we are concerned with an entirely different matter. In that case the command of telepathic information is not simply at the disposal of industrialists or traders or G.H.Q. But in the other case surely the confident sponsors of non-spiritual telepathy should at once organise the incalculably advantageous and profitable hire for telepathy for business use.

Brookside,
Wraybury, Bucks.

GODFREY BURCHETT.

* * *

A PUZZLED READER

Sir,—I have been a regular subscriber to, and reader of *LIGHT* for a good number of years, but I think I have never before addressed the Editor. At one time, I used at all events, to get some enlightenment on perplexing subjects; but lately I have been more bewildered than anything else. Many statements are, in themselves, very complicated, and are made more so to me by the language

used. Thinking matters over I come to the conclusion that no one knows anything for certain on any subject, and even the wisest very little about subjects that most interest me.

Sir Oliver Lodge writes more clearly than most, but he often bewilders me. And even he says: "What Life and Mind are, I do not pretend to say." And in a recent number, in a quotation from an old issue of *LIGHT*, the description of us poor human-beings is a very deplorable one—"people who are self-deceived, or who deceive others, either from ignorance or malice!"—and "The psychic region has many pitfalls and blind-alleys for those whose wills are flabby and judgment weak."

To me, we are all poor creatures, more to be pitied than blamed, whatever we do, and the whole of existence—very sad and altogether unintelligible.

EDWARD A. SUTTON.

* * *

CONDITIONAL IMMORTALITY

Sir,—In thanking *LIGHT* and Miss Dallas for their kind comments on my new pamphlet, ("A Challenge to Sceptics," The Two Worlds Publishing Co.) I should like to endorse Mr. De Brath's article on "Conditional Immortality." On page 71 of my pamphlet I quote the Lady Nona as saying that "A great deal of what you call life becomes extinguished in the lower spheres, as though it sank by the weight of its own evil tendencies."

In a recent conversation, through Rosemary, with my father (the late Rev. Henry Wood) the point was even more explicit:—"I am sure, now, that man's own personal immortality depends entirely upon himself," he wrote through Rosemary's hand. "If he follows the true spiritual life he rises, in strength of spirit; and his interests and capabilities become much wider and stronger. But if he sinks lower into the realms of denser matter, his spiritual life may become weakened so much that personal existence is no longer possible; and he loses it."

Mr. De Brath is doing a great service to religious inquiry by drawing attention to this fuller interpretation of St. Paul's saying "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. vi. 23.)

FREDERIC H. WOOD.

"DIFFERENT FROM WINGS"—A correction: Mr. Charles Thornton points out an error in the wording of his letter "Different from Wings," published in *LIGHT* last week. In the sentence "I realised that the garment he was wearing, etc., "he" should have been "I."

"LIGHT" SUSTENTATION FUND

Donations to date amount to £610 15s., leaving £389 5s. still to be raised to complete the £1,000 required to enable the price of *LIGHT* to be reduced to 2d. We are grateful to Mr. J. D. Graham who has contributed another £10 in response to the appeal from Mr. Godfrey Burchett who, it will be remembered, offered to contribute a further £5 if nine others would give a like amount. Mr. Stuart A. Hirst has also kindly responded with the promise of a further £5. Details of donations to date will be published in *LIGHT* of 18th August.

MR. JOHN MYERS' MEDIUMSHIP. Mr. James C. Coates, the president of the Victoria Psychic Research Society, writes to point out that there has been a good deal of misapprehension regarding the photographic test at the Caxton Hall a few weeks ago. It is not generally known (he says) that this meeting was arranged at the suggestion of Mr. Barbanell. The Society also desire to state their opinion that the challenge made at that meeting by the Test Committee was made to the Society, and that it should not have been replied to by one of the speakers on the platform without their sanction.

Light

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THE ENLARGING VISION

WRITING in *Psychica* recently on the subject of "the Unconscious" (*L'Inconscient*), Dr. Jaworski briefly outlines his views on the nature of human life whether conscious or unconscious.

He leads off with the observation that very few people really understand what is implied by the term "Unconscious" meaning, of course, as used in psychical science. He finds that Spiritualists in particular regard the idea as an invention of scientific men designed to oppose the idea of spirits. In passing, it may be remarked that this is a little too sweeping: intelligent Spiritualists are quite willing to admit the idea if it is not pressed to ridiculous extremes. And as for the spirits themselves, we have knowledge of many communications which treat the matter directly or indirectly quite as philosophically as any learned and sceptical investigator might do. Let us think, for instance, of the communications lately given by F. W. H. Myers in *The Road to Immortality* and his recorded conversations with Sir Oliver Lodge.

But the reflections in Dr. Jaworski's article take us far beyond the region of that quibbling and logic-chopping which in some quarters passes for psychic investigation. He well maintains that when we commence the study of any subject we are bound to make classifications, though we do not forget "that such classifications are more or less arbitrary and do not correspond to reality, above all, to the things of the Mind (*l'Esprit*)."

No one to-day, he maintains, can deny the existence of the Unconscious region in individual life and in this connection he makes a playful allusion to the "genial Freud," but is more concerned with the works of Professor Jung of Zurich to which he refers students who seek experimental proof of the collective human region of the Unconscious. For he affirms not only an individual unconscious region, but a racial one into which it is extended and which contains the race-memory in which lie buried

those traits of the lower animals—the hog, the tiger, the serpent—from which we have risen, and which, one may add, occasionally emerge in human behaviour to show that, although they are buried deep in our past, they are not yet dead.

Dr. Jaworski sees the world and human life as a vast reservoir full of the confused thoughts of humanity of all ages. The activity and impulse of that region of the Unconscious lie at the back of the relatively small department which we know as the conscious personal life. It comprises "all that we know and all we have forgotten, all we know not, all we have never known, and all we do not wish to know." Each of us in the unknown depths of himself knows the truth—knows how some particular business will end, knows even when he will depart from this mortal stage. That may well be true—in his inner self man knows many things without being consciously aware of them. Nothing, says Dr. Jaworski, is quite as it seems to us to be—otherwise "all survival would be impossible." Incidentally he tells us that he has assured himself by personal experiment that the unconscious mind can read the future. Many others, by the way, have made the same discovery. In short, we are greater than we know; we are partakers of a life infinitely larger than the little field of personal consciousness, individual existence. The doctor suggests that while we believe ourselves to be actors in the drama of existence we are more likely to be spectators in this World of Illusion.

He holds that in what *is* there is everything that has ever been. And he uses the familiar metaphor of the film at the camera where the pictures to be projected were already waiting, folded on the reel, before we entered the picture-house.

He concludes with the reflection that while the Unconscious remains deeply mysterious, one must not suppose that it is dominated entirely by the illogical and chaotic—far from it! We should rather wonder at "the marvellous co-ordination of certain dreams."

It is a statement of views in which one could imagine Mr. F. W. H. Myers as being, in some measure at least, in cordial agreement. It certainly takes us beyond those little niggling pedantries in which the activities of the vast and living world beyond our ken are set down as hallucination by those blind guides who take as the measure of all reality the little life of the flesh and the passing show of our world of everyday.

In *Psychic Science* for July Mr. S. G. Donaldson describes a series of infra-red photographic experiments with his wife (Miss Kate Goligher, well known in connection with the late Dr. Crawford's writings). Mr. Donaldson states that since her marriage eight years ago, Miss Goligher has sat intermittently "owing to her time being occupied with the nursing and care of two daughters."

POET ENDORSES PSYCHIC FACTS

By MRS. HEWAT McKENZIE

READERS who enjoyed *An Austrian Background*, reviewed some time ago in *LIGHT*, will remember that the authoress, Countess Wydenbruck, quotes a beautiful and remarkable letter from the late distinguished Austrian poet, Rainer Maria Rilke. This was a reply to a letter from the Countess relating remarkable psycho-physical phenomena which she had experienced in a home circle.

I understand that it comes as a surprise to some who know Rilke's work as a poet (esteemed all over the Continent though little known in England for the lack of suitable translation), that in this letter he betrays considerable interest and even personal knowledge of such phenomena. The whole letter is worthy of quotation, but I must content myself with the following extracts. Rilke says:—

I am convinced that these phenomena do not merely satisfy a false curiosity but concern us more than I can say. Why should they not, like all that is unknown or unfathomable in itself, be an object of our perseverance and move us to amazement and reverence?

If the dead and those who are still to come should need a dwelling place what refuge could be more fitted to their needs than these mansions of the mind?

I should have felt something missing if I had not known these things to happen . . . to me they are one secret more among countless secrets that all have a greater part in us than we in them.

I am no good as a Medium, but I do not doubt for a moment, that *in my own way* [in his poetic gift] I keep myself open to the influence of those forces that sometimes are homeless, and that I never cease to enjoy and endure their fellowship.

How many words, how many decisions or hesitations, might not be accounted for by their influence?

Let me always share in the movements and repercussions that come to you from the unknown.

The animals who know and take part in the whole, who have their being in a broader plane of consciousness, they too lead us to the other side and they are close to the psychic state.

Rilke belonged to a distinguished Catholic family, and in his early life plumbed the very depths of mental and physical misery, and it is significant that he indicates that consolation reached him from his knowledge of the "other side," which he united to a beautiful natural intuition that the whole of life is spiritual and that the past, present and future are included in an Eternal Now.

The Hogarth Press has published one of his prose works, *The Notebook of Malte Laurids Brigge*, a thinly veiled autobiography; and in this there is excellent evidence that, in his boyhood in his own family, he had curious psychical experiences and information which no doubt stimulated a later interest. All material which indicates how widespread, though often concealed, psychic experiences are and how they may be found in most unexpected places, is grist to our mill, and the following instances are not unworthy to be related.

Malte, a young boy, and his father, were paying a visit to his grandfather in the old family mansion where Count Brahe gathered his descendants round him in almost feudal fashion. He used to annoy them by persistently referring to those who had gone as if they were still living and present among them. "The passing of time had absolutely no significance for him, death was a trifling incident which he utterly ignored." One evening at dinner, some one asked if the absence of a daughter from the meal must be attributed to illness. The Count replied, "No, she merely does not wish to meet Christine." At this reply, another relative, a stout major, sprang up

in great agitation and excusing himself, hurriedly left the table. The rather dreary meal went on to the dessert stage, when, in the dim light at the back of the large room Malte saw a movement near a door always kept shut, leading to an upper floor. The door now stood partly open and as the boy looked, curious and surprised, into the darkness of the doorway stepped a slender gaily-clad lady, who came slowly towards the company at the table. Malte looked at his father, who with his face the colour of death and with hands clenched, jumped up and went towards the lady. She walked on slowly and came closer to the old Count, who rose brusquely, seized Malte's father by the arm and drew him back to the table and held him there while the lady passed slowly and indifferently, in an indescribable stillness, through the space now left clear, and disappeared through a door on the opposite side of the room. Another boy in the party who made his home with the Count and had seen the apparition frequently, rose, and with a profound obeisance closed the door behind the stranger.

Malte's father now showed considerable annoyance; but the Count, calm and smiling, said, "You are violent and uncivil; why do you not let people go about their own business?" "Who is that?" cried his son. "Someone who has every right to be here, she is no intruder—Christine Brahe," said the Count, and at this reply his son rushed from the room. Malte gathered later that Christine was "an unfortunate lady," a relative long passed over who had died after the birth of a child.

The boy saw the apparition a second time during his visit, again during a meal. Christine entered at the same door and silence fell on the company as she stepped slowly like a sick person through the room: as she passed the Count he raised his wineglass in greeting.

Here is a record of an apparition seen by half a dozen persons simultaneously, who registered similar emotions regarding it, and which was greeted as a familiar and privileged guest by the master of the house.

A second incident falls into a different category. Malte's mother long mourned the death of a much loved younger sister and related the following story to the boy. A few days after the girl's funeral, the members of the family were having tea on the terrace of the house in which she had lived. Each member was occupied with thoughts of her but no words were spoken. The post was expected at this hour, and Ingeborg, the dead girl, had always brought in the letters to the family, though her illness had prevented this for some time before her death. "Perhaps our thoughts of her had called her," said my mother, "I suddenly realised that all the others were looking expectantly towards the house, and I too, thinking of her, and forgetting she was gone, was about to say, 'Where is Ingeborg?' when our dog shot from under the table as he always did to her, and ran as if to meet someone. For him she was coming; twice he looked round at us as if questioning, then he rushed as if at her as he always did, and began to jump round as if he had found her, round something not there to us, leaping up as if to lick her and whining for joy. Suddenly with a howl, he whirled round, dashed back to us and lay stretched out flat and motionless. My father, who had no fondness for animals, lifted him silently and carried him into the house."

Here the family only felt a "something" in the atmosphere, but the dog behaved as if a loved person had appeared, and collapsed physically when the presence apparently disappeared, dissipated maybe by the boisterous greeting of the animal.

How these old stories, long hidden in family archives, bear witness in every detail to incidents recorded in modern experience!

THE SECRET OF VASLAV NIIJINSKY

By DR. NANDOR FODOR

IN my lecture on *The Problem of Human Levitation*, reported in LIGHT, June 9th, I suggested that a rudimentary form of levitation is waiting for investigation in the elevation of famous dancers. I particularly mentioned Vaslav Nijinsky, perhaps the greatest ballet dancer the world has ever known, and certainly the most tragic one, as his mind broke down fourteen years ago at the height of his career and he has been the inmate of an asylum ever since. To quote from Cyril W. Beaumont's *Nijinsky-biography*, published last year: "He had a wonderful balance, so that he leaped in the air and came to the ground with the elasticity and ease of a bouncing indiarubber ball. His elevation was really extraordinary. That wonderful leap by which, as the sprite in *The Spectre de la Rose*, he entered from the rose-garden, through the open French windows, to alight beside the young girl asleep in her chair, must still linger in the memories of all those who saw it. There was a rose-coloured flash, and he was seen to describe a graceful parabola with the ease of a grasshopper leaping from one blade of grass to another. There was no flurry, no strained features, no thud as the feet came to the ground; it was just as though a rose-petal had been caught up by a night breeze and wafted through the open window.

"In *Les Sylphides* he used to make his exit with another unusual leap. There was no suggestion of an athlete attempting the high jump; it appeared as though the dancer had decided to fly, instead of walk, off the stage; for as he made his exit, he suddenly rose in the air and disappeared behind the wings.

"In the execution of leaps, Nijinsky displayed another rare quality, which contemporaries observed in the dancing of both Augustus Vestris and Mario Taglioni—the ability to remain in the air at the highest point of elevation before descending."

THE DANCER'S LEAP

Gathering in the threads of information about the elevation of famous dancers, I came to the conclusion that the temporary apparent suspension in the air is accomplished in the following manner: the dancer takes a deep breath and keeps on drawing in during the leap; he holds the breath while up, and, tightening his thigh muscles relaxes the trunk so as to rest it on the thighs, he breathes out during the descent.

Curiously, however, with the great dancers all this is unconscious and it is the teachers who trace the *modus operandi* from their observations. In this opinion I have been further confirmed in a conversation with Mme. Nijinsky who has recently arrived in London.

"For Nijinsky, dancing was religion," she said. "He believed that he had a mission to perform and that his gifts were given him to convey ideas to the world through dancing. Nobody was allowed to enter his dressing-room before the performance. Nobody could speak to him after he came out. He never answered. *He was no more the same man. He looked and acted like a stranger.* When once, in admiration, I told him what a pity it is that he cannot see himself he answered in all seriousness: 'But I do. I always see myself, I am detached, I am outside, I make myself dance from the outside.'

"I often asked him how he managed to stay up in the air. *He never could understand why we cannot do it.* He just took a leap, held his breath, and stayed up. He felt supported in the air. Moreover, he could control his descent, and could come down slower or quicker as he wished. I know he had extraordinary thigh muscles and I know that in the matter of filling his lungs with air, in a friendly contest, he has easily beaten Caruso and Erich Schmedes. More I cannot tell."

But I wanted to know more. Mme. Nijinsky kindly lent me a wallet which belonged to her husband. It

contained an envelope with an autograph of Nijinsky. I took it to Mrs. Ruth Vaughan and handed it to her control after she passed into trance. I got a double reading: of Mme. and Vaslav Nijinsky. Part of it is too private to be printed. But I can quote the following summary:

"There is an absolutely psychic condition around this, a physical-psychic, a strange atmosphere, an enormously strong power on which, however, one should not rely. I find it all mixed up. A man and a woman. A psychic power of a peculiar nature. There is a force about it that is diabolic. A capacity to be a physical Medium and a profundity for mediumistic condition of which I have seldom seen the like. There is something in the character which is peculiar. The man was peculiar in certain ways, quick in his movements. Perhaps he did not know that he had psychic power. Why am I so close to the woman? Of course, she has the stronger personality. The man is in a highly nervous, *almost mental condition.* The physical condition of this man has been reduced to a very bad state originating through the mental. Injections may have been given him. He is not himself. *He is connected with the other side. Almost like obsession.* His cheeks are sunk in, his chin is pointed, his eyebrows are high up and they give a peculiar look to his face. He is not large, a stooping position. His brain has been worked on to a great extent and has almost broken down. There is nothing wrong with the mind, only with the brain. But it is almost as if the mind has been taken hold of. He makes strange, clawing movements with his hands, like an animal, he bends forwards and coughs with a peculiar catch in the throat. He is in a state of evil which warped his body. It is devitalised. I do not see how his condition can be improved. *Not so much a definite obsession as an almost evil condition that is opened up from the psychic side. He is more in contact with an evil condition on the other side than with one person.*"

I volunteered the statement that he was an artist, hoping that more would come forward about his dancing. But I got only this:

"It is all gone. He has sunk very, very low. Of course *he has always been open to the psychic world.*"

Mme Nijinsky found the reading remarkably good.

IS NIIJINSKY OBSESSED?

"We had a governess with my children in St. Moritz," said Mme. Nijinsky, "who has been in India. She told us a lot about *Hatha Yoga* in which my husband became very interested. He began to read it up and corresponded on the subject with Maeterlinck. On the day of my father's death, fifteen years ago, we tried an experiment with a ouija board. It moved and it answered various questions: that the war will end June 29th, 1919, that Hungary will become a kingdom without a king, that Premier Tisza will be murdered and that in Russia there will be no war or peace for 22 years. It also told us of life after death, of the various spheres and of our previous lives. We did not take the messages seriously, but, as they provided amusement and interest, we kept on having sittings throughout June and July. My husband, however, took it more seriously than we did. He was advised to try automatic drawing and he did it with remarkable results. He composed a dance and asked me to dance it in Yogi fashion: by disconnecting my personality and abandoning myself entirely to the spirit of the dance. I did so and danced for hours in a state of trance and when I came to I thought they were fooling me with their congratulations. I kept it up for a few months but the drain on my vitality was too much and I stopped it."

[Next week the interview will be continued and some of Mme. Nijinsky's psychic experiences will be described.]

DO WE TRAVEL IN SLEEP?

By DAVID GOW

MANY are the references in communications from the Other Side to the journeys we make in sleep, meeting in that state our friends who have passed to another shore.

In that remarkable book, *Life Beyond Death—with Evidence* by the Rev. Charles Drayton Thomas, we find a chapter (XXX) devoted to the question, in which the author, a most painstaking investigator, weighs the evidence for the statements made to him by his communicators (his father and sister) on the subject and finds reason to accept the idea as probably true. But there are a great many who have no doubt on the subject by reason of their own carefully-observed experiences.

It is a fascinating study, this question concerning the journeying of the spirit into other realms during the slumber of the body. One could easily fill many numbers of LIGHT with instances—many of them deeply interesting—of the supposed wanderings of the soul during rest hours. The question is whether the spiritual self can actually leave the body during sleep, or whether its sensations of travel, visits to distant places on earth or in spiritual realms, are due to a temporary "extension of consciousness," clairvoyance, or impressions imparted by spirit agency. Those who oppose the idea of actual "travel" claim that so long as the body retains consciousness, however slight, the spirit cannot have left it, even temporarily, since such departure would mean death.

Of course in dealing with a world in which conditions of space and time are practically unknown, it is difficult to draw hard and fast lines. Consequently, Prentice Mulford, who depicts the souls of sleeping persons making "swallow-flights" over the earth, and congregating in thousands in various places to which they have been drawn by some latent attraction, may be as truthful on his plane of thinking as another authority whose view is that the souls of dormant humanity remain in close association with their related physical forms, but subject in many cases to flashes of the higher consciousness which bring them into rapport with more exalted planes of spiritual life.

Much, no doubt, turns on the nature of the sleep. In many cases, as authorities on hypnotism tell us, the sleeper passes from natural slumber into the hypnotic sleep, and in other instances—but these are extremely rare—the sleep merges into deep states of trance. From reflection on the subject, combined with a certain amount of practical experience, the present writer is inclined to the view that psychical experiences are not associated with normal slumber, but with certain deeper states of sleep. Writers on hypnotism have told us that some sleepers pass in and out of the hypnotic state several times during their slumbers. If this be so, one may see a suggestive explanation of a problem that has puzzled many of us, viz., the beautiful or solemn dream experience which winds up suddenly in a grotesque and ridiculous fashion. Most of us have had such experiences. May it not well be, in such cases, that the sleeper's spiritual consciousness temporarily in contact with the higher world, has by a change of state been submerged once more into the realm of physical brain action? Feeling that something was required of it, the lower consciousness would do its humble best to complete and round off the story with something of its own, the result being an anti-climax. I have sometimes wondered, indeed, whether if Coleridge had been able to recall the whole of his wonderful dream-poem, "Kubla Khan," he would have found it all as perfect as the fragment he published! If the lower consciousness had crept in at the close we may be sure that it would have finished in a strain of amazing bathos.

Similarly, it may be said that whether we travel in sleep or not, the whole character of the dream-experience depends on the state of the interior consciousness at the time. We may move (or appear to move) in "worlds of light" or merely pursue a disordered way amongst the phantoms of the brain.

RAYS AND REFLECTIONS

SHARPERS AND SIMPLETONS

One is always in sympathy with the ambition that Spiritualism should be cleansed. I have heard many stories of the depredations of rogues and impostors—I have indeed personally observed some instances, but always with the reflection that while there are fools there always will be rascals to batten upon them. Possibly in the great economy of life it is the function of the sharpers to brighten the wits of the simpletons.

* * *

OLD SOULS

Some of us are occasionally told—probably in recognition of our superior sagacity—that we are "old souls." Whatever this may mean (it is usually interpreted in terms of reincarnation) it is apparently considered as something desirable, even if it runs counter to the prejudices of most of us, especially the feminine portion, against being regarded as *antique*! But then it is asserted that "old souls" have a youthful outlook and gaiety of spirits. We may recall the case of "old King Cole"—he was a "merry old soul"! But that is a flippancy unlikely to commend itself to those very solemn philosophers to whom ponderosity and profundity seem to mean very much the same thing.

* * *

DUCTILITY OF MATTER

Many years ago I wrote of the "increasing ductility of matter." Since then, Science has shewn that matter has an electrical basis and is something which is constantly coming into being and going out of it. That was illustrated a few years ago by the experiments of the French physicist Le Bon, who claimed that he was able to produce at the points of electrical needles "artificial equilibria" of sufficient stability of ether to render it capable of photography by the camera. The moment the electricity ceased, these fields of activity ceased also. These experiments had no connection with Spiritualism but were purely scientific.

* * *

WHOM SHE LOVES

Swift vessels that outstrip the breeze,
And goals in easy reach,
By land or sky or distant seas,
With all that they may teach—
Yet still we find the barren mind,
And still the raucous speech.

Nature her tribute daily pays
To her exacting brood,
And ev'ry curt demand obeys
With prompt solicitude—
But still for her the thankless look,
And still the greeting rude.

Unwearying, with lavish hands,
While wax and wane the moons,
She fills the skies and seas and lands
With unregarded boons—
She knows her wiser children see,
And smiles at her buffoons.

And unto those she loves indeed
She evermore reveals
The inner things which they may read;
But from the rest conceals
The heart of every mystery—
The "secret under seals."

Beauty beyond where beauty glows
And skies above the skies,
She shows to those she loves and knows,
With fond maternal eyes;
But waits in patience for the rest,
Till they at last are wise.

D.G.

HOW TO INVESTIGATE SPIRITUALISM

ADVICE TO BEGINNERS

By RONALD McCORQUODALE

IF the beginner really wishes to discover for himself the truths revealed by Spiritualism, he must approach the task with an entirely unbiassed mind. The investigator must set himself to "read up" the subject. I feel sure that this is the best course for beginners to adopt after once achieving real open-mindedness. For, as Mr. J. Arthur Hill says: "It enables one to investigate with proper scientific ease when opportunity arises and with much better chance of securing good evidence. Without this preparation the investigator has little idea how to handle that delicate machine called a Medium, and indeed no amount of reading will entirely equip the experimenter for there are many things which only experience can teach. Also, without this preparation, the investigator will be liable either to give things away by talking too much or will create an atmosphere of suspicion and discomfort by being too secretive.

Before setting out to observe psychic phenomena one should cultivate first an interest in the subject and acquire some knowledge of Psychical Research by an earnest study of the recorded evidence of eminent investigators. Exactness of observation can only be cultivated by previous knowledge and acquaintance with the subject. Only thus can the investigator know what to look for or anticipate when actually experimenting. The investigator should bring to bear upon psychic phenomena a well-prepared mind already interested in and acquainted with all that can be known about psychic matters. Only thus can alertness of brain and acuteness of sense be assured in psychic investigation.

I therefore counsel all enquirers first of all to make a study of the researches of eminent investigators. For, as Professor Henslow says: "Anyone with a real desire to know the truth need not lack evidence if he will first read the records with an open mind; and then bide his time and be patient till an opportunity for first-hand critical observation arises. Absolute conviction must be attained by first-hand experience in the present."

The reading I recommend is the *Proceedings* of the S.P.R., the writings of Crookes, Lodge, Barrett, Lombroso, Richet, Crawford, Geley, Schrenck-Notzing, Bozzano and the book by Myers on *Human Personality*. My advice to the enquirer is: approach the subject of psychic phenomena scientifically. Adopt the scientific attitude and equip yourself as a critical, cautious, and competent investigator. Apply the scientific method in Psychical Research.

The investigator should consider what are the best conditions for obtaining evidence in sittings with good Mediums. One should try to understand mediumship, especially the psychology of the subject. The Medium should be treated, as Sir Oliver Lodge has said, "as a

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During the vacation Miss MacGregor and Miss Margaret V. Underhill will attend by appointment to receive visitors.

delicate piece of apparatus whereby we are making an investigation." The Medium is an instrument whose ways and idiosyncrasies must be learnt and to a certain extent humoured, just as one studies and humors the ways of some much less delicate piece of physical apparatus. This is quite consistent with taking all needful precautions against deception.

Here let me counsel the enquirer to sit only with accredited Mediums who are recognised by reputable organisations. Such organisations as the London Spiritualist Alliance and the British College of Psychic Science are most helpful to the enquirer desirous of knowing how to approach psychic matters.

Finally, I would submit the following rules: (1) Investigate personally and study the accounts of other reliable investigators of all phases of psychic phenomena. (2) Arrange, classify and tabulate all verified facts. (3) Make cautious inferences based on ascertained facts. (4) Seek to verify or disprove all inferences. (5) If the inference made is not correct make further inferences and continue investigation. (6) Never take anything for granted—always examine, test and prove.

Investigation should follow a settled order—observation and experiment, the search for causes (or necessary conditions) the discovery of differences from and agreements with similar phenomena known to us, observation of how the phenomena varies with varying conditions, and lastly the attempt to generalise. Logic must be applied to the investigation of Spiritualism and the enquirer must employ scientific reasoning in his pursuit of truth.

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By appointment, Miss H. MacGregor and Miss Margaret V. Underhill will attend at the Rooms during the vacation to receive visitors.

ERRATUM.—We regret that in our last week's issue the date of the passing of Mrs. Cadwaladr was given as 14th June instead of 14th July.

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SUNDAY, AUGUST 6th, 1933.

11 a.m.—Dr. H. P. Shastri.

Clairvoyante: Mrs. Esta Cassel.

6.30 p.m.—Rev. C. Drayton Thomas.

Clairvoyante: Miss Lily Thomas.

Sunday, August 13th, at 11 a.m. Mr. PERCY SCHOLEY

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2.30 p.m. Mrs. Bird's Ladies' Healing Circle. For appointments write to Mrs. Moysey (Hon. Secretary). (Suspended during August; first circle, Sept. 11th.)

3—4 p.m.—Mrs. St. Clair Stobart welcomes inquirers.

6.30 p.m.—Open Meeting in the Grotrian Hall.

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Tuesday.

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„ 30th. 2.30—Miss Lily Thomas.

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