

Light

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research

FOUNDED
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DEVELOPMENT OF THE HUMAN PSYCHE

By STANLEY DE BRATH, M.I.C.E.

IT is an amazing fact that despite the great advances of science in recent years, out of the multitude of 'psychic' books, in which each writer has generalised his own very limited perception and experience, so very few seem to have reached any grasp of the process through which Humanity has developed to the present day.

M. Cesar de Vesme, in his *History of Experimental Spiritualism* (a work laureated by the French Academy of Sciences) strikes a different note. He shows by careful analysis of the beliefs and practices of native tribes who have had no contact with Europeans or Asiatics in historic times, that nearly all the modern Spiritualist phenomena, especially forms of clairvoyance, are still current. These, apparently, have been a part of human development since man was man at all.

Many millennia would seem to have been required to develop man's physical body, but the early skulls of the Pliocene geological strata show a development which is distinctly human; and, in the 1,500,000 years that have probably elapsed since that time, there has developed the type which has left proof of its high artistic faculties on the caves of Altamira in Spain. These are reproduced in vol. xx. (p. 462) of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and are there stated as probably 50,000 years old.

This later period has been devoted to mental progress, which is therefore about 1/30th of the time required for his physical development. It is only on the scale of our short lives that man's progress seems slow; on the geological scale it has been rapid.

That this ascent is *unnecessarily* slow, is manifest by the wilful ignorance of seemingly well-educated men, who, for the most part, refuse credence to anything outside their own limited experience. One instance of this is given by M. de Vesme, who mentions two cardinal mistakes of the anthropological schools, as follows:

"They say that Primitive Man, struck with superstitious astonishment by the mysterious forces of Nature,

and by certain physiological or physical phenomena (such as dreams, syncope, echo, the shadow of the human body and its reflection in water), incapable on the other hand of finding any real explanation, had *forthwith* attributed all these to 'spirits.' From these supposed spirits, all religions were subsequently derived. Hence it follows that Spiritualism, and religion in general, are proper to the mentality of a child, a savage, a troglodyte, a pithecanthropus, etc., etc.; and so, as soon as man begins to acquire a conscious mentality, he gives up these puerile explanations and explains everything by Energy and matter, in a word, by Science, which has no concern with beauty or goodness."

M. de Vesme demonstrates at length that "the historical, experimental, and logical truth is that these famous postulates which still remain at the root of much quasi-scientific writing, are simply false, the one as false as the other." (*Primitive Man*, p. 60.)

Does the world heed? Not it. It would be content to go on for another 50,000 years without any such knowledge.

What it is essential to retain is this: that this belief in Mana—that there is a mysterious force in Nature, not fixed in anything and capable of being conveyed in almost anything—is found in almost all primitive people, even among those who cannot have had any mutual intercourse. In Africa it is called "Hasina"; "Masina" by the Malagasy; "Dzo" on the Gold Coast; "Tilo" among the Ba-Ronga; in America it is "Wakan" among the Sioux; "Orenda" among the Iroquois; "Mana" or "Kramat" among the Melanesians; "Churinga" or "Arangquiltha" in Australia, and so on. It is hardly more than a statement that there are mysterious phenomena—the moon changes its form and has phases, the wind blows, the seed germinates, women bear children, etc. There is a mysterious power in all these and they call that force "Mana" or "Orenda," or otherwise, names which, if we could get at their derivation, would be

found to mean something like "force" or "energy." Mana and its synonyms are used as a general term to cover them all, just as certain "religious" people will refer all supernatural facts to "the devil."

From the idea of Mana, there developed the notion of a "larva" or perishable soul, probably by "apparitions" or by a curious sort of will-power in clairvoyance; and thence again, the notion of a real surviving soul which is now called in question by the world at large, though not by Spiritualists, many of whom seem to imagine that survival and immortality are one and the same thing.

Indeed, many persons object to the word "Spiritualism" altogether, and would like to relegate it to the paltry phenomena of the seance-room, if they could do this without coming into conflict with the whole English language. The *Century Dictionary* (1899) one of the very best, in 8 imperial 4to volumes—gives under "spirit": "The principle of life conceived as a fragment of the divine essence breathed into man by God. In Biblical and theological language the spirit is the highest part of human nature as most akin to the divine, connected mediately with the body through the soul." (vol. vii. p. 5840).

Under "Soul," it states that soul is "a substantial entity, believed to be that in each person which lives, feels, thinks and wills. Animals and even plants have been thought to have souls." (Vol. vii. p. 5781.)

These are the fundamental starting-points of Spiritualism—the experimental fact of the existence of spirit as distinct from matter. This is philosophic and covers the whole ground of Truth, Beauty, and Goodness; Psychological Research deals with the purely experimental aspects of the subject. It seeks Truth on that basis only: Goodness and Beauty are outside its scope. This study is relatively new, it has gone back to the beginning. The first step out of pure "Mana" was the idea of surviving life. M. du Chaillu writes of the people of the French Congo: "These people think that a dying man leaves behind him a shade which survives him, but only for a short time. It remains near the buried body. Ordinarily it is malevolent but may be avoided by changing one's place of residence. It lasts just as long as the remembrance of the deceased. There is no need to worry over the spirit of one's grandfather; it is annihilated." (*Voyage dans l'Afrique Equat* p. 43.)

In his amusing account of *Jungle Ways*, Mr. Seabrook tells the story of an African negro, Diisi, who hung his grandfather's arm, dried hard and as black as ebony, by a string to the roof of his hut. Before undertaking any important adventure, he consulted this arm, which would wave if favourable to the project. (Publ. 1931, p. 130.)

SPIRITISTIC MAGIC

This is spiritist magic, of which hundreds of examples could be given. Therefore it is possible to believe in "phantoms" (which occasionally appear) without Spiritualism, Animism, survival of the soul, or any religion properly so called; for these phantoms are only regarded as rapidly perishing larvæ, very different from anything that can be called "the soul."

Let us remember that we are not dealing with a transitory and exceptional belief. In our own day, Theosophists and Occultists, arguing from the low scale of intelligence manifested, call this larva "the shell of the soul." This is advanced again and again to explain spiritist phenomena without admitting the survival of the soul; but it should be pretty obvious that the surviving "soul" of a man who has lived, like an animal, for his body only, may very well be in the position of the larva which has no spiritual sense and lives, or manifests, for a short time only.

That phantoms, which may be surviving souls, and not merely larvæ, do occasionally appear, is testified to by literally hundreds of instances in the *Proceedings* of the S.P.R. The latest reported case is given in the Am. S.P.R.

Journal for December, 1931. The writer is John R. M. Taylor, U.S. Army (ret'd). He says:

"In 1909, I was returning from the Philippines, as Capt. 14th Infantry (U.S.A.) in command of that regiment. The ship was crowded, and in one of the state-rooms was Mrs. A. the wife of an army officer. At Nagasaki, we took on Mrs. N., the wife of a naval officer, and her child. They were assigned to the room of Mrs. A. About a week later, Mrs. N.'s child developed measles. I told the ship's surgeon to move all three to the isolation ward, which was then occupied by a consumptive soldier, who was moved to the ordinary sick-bay. I put a sentry on the isolation ward. About a week later, the doctor came to me with a report. He said, 'I was making an early inspection and went to the isolation ward; Mrs. N. was very nervous, and said, 'About 2 a.m. I was awakened by a man standing by my bed. I ought not to be exposed to that sort of thing.' 'What did you see?' 'It was a man, I could see him by the moonlight by my bed. My baby cried out, she could see him too. I could not see his face. He stood by my bed, and said Rest, rest, peace! Then I saw him no more.' 'It was the ship's cat.' 'No it was not. I have seen cats all my life. It was as though I were present at the passing of a soul.' 'You mean some one dying?' 'Yes.' 'Did you ever see anyone die?' 'Never.' When he had gone I looked at my watch, it was 2 a.m.'"

"The doctor went on: 'Then I went to see Mrs. A. who was sleeping on a cot just outside the isolation ward. The sentinel was on his post. He had seen nothing. It was bright moonlight.'"

"I said, 'Why do you come to me about this?' 'Because the soldier whom you had moved out, died at 2 a.m., and was just beneath them.' I answered, 'You will take the proper steps to have the body prepared for burial at San Francisco, and you will say nothing more till we have disembarked there. The ladies will have to stay where they are till you can report that all danger of infection is passed. I don't want them to know they are on a haunted ship.' There were no more manifestations."

It would be pretty clear to those who know how common these manifestations are that the soldier who died, returned to his previous cot. The Census of the S.P.R. showed 80 first-hand cases in which the death of the person seen coincided within twelve hours with the vision of his or her presence, out of 352 cases of such appearances. (*Ency. Brit.* 1911. p. 455).

Taylor adds these lines which the anthropologists of his school are very careful *not* to reproduce:—"The philosophic schools which, from classic times onwards, have rejected the belief in a future existence, appear to have come back by a new road to the very starting-point which perhaps the rudest races of mankind have never quitted." (*Primitive Culture*, vol. ii. p. 106.)

This is the first phase in the development of the human psyche.

[Another article by Mr. De Brath will appear next week, in which another aspect of the subject of the Development of the Human Psyche will be outlined.]

"LIGHT" SUSTENTATION FUND

LIGHT Sustentation Fund now totals £654 15s. 2d., donations amounting to £12 4s. 2d. having been received since last week. These include a cheque from Sir Oliver Lodge, who writes: "I enclose £5 in response to your appeal and in order to take advantage of Mr. Burchett's offer."

Mr. G. Burchett offered recently to contribute an additional £5 for the Fund if nine others would contribute like sums. Will any of our readers join Sir Oliver in helping us to send a list of nine names to Mr. Burchett?

A further list of donations will be published next week.

It is hoped that a definite announcement in regard to the proposed reduction of the price of LIGHT from 4d. to 2d. will be made soon.

WHY LAUGH AT GHOSTS?

Sir Ernest Bennett, M.P., Assistant Postmaster-General (and Vice-President of the London Spiritualist Alliance) contributes an article, under the heading "Why Laugh at Ghosts?" to "The News-Letter" (September 2nd) the National Labour journal. In it he writes:

THE use of ghosts as a topic in popular literature is mainly confined to the months of December and January. For some reason or other there is felt to be some connection between the dark nights of Christmastide and the New Year, and stories of phantoms and apparitions. Many of these "seasonable" stories are concerned with the discovery that certain mysterious sights and sounds are really due to quite common-place things like moon-light shadows or scampering rats. Others represent the Christmas ghost as a tiresome and foolish entity with no capacity for anything except sudden appearances and disappearances. A smaller number still introduce us to a really terrifying spectre of malignant and even destructive tendencies; but, in general, the ghost is represented as an object of ridicule.

Nevertheless, in practice it is very doubtful if this attitude of mirthful contempt is ever found in the case of those individuals who have, themselves, actually seen a ghost. Of course, if one sees an apparition while in the company of other people—a rare experience—this feeling of fear might be greatly diminished, or might not exist at all.

On the one occasion when I, myself, saw an apparition of wholly inexplicable character, I was not alone, and I felt, while extremely interested, wholly free from alarm or fear. Yet I am quite sure that, had I been alone, I should have been thoroughly frightened . . .

The vast majority of people dismiss the uncongenial topic by saying "I don't believe in ghosts," and, if pressed further, add, "I have never met anyone who has ever seen a ghost." If it is worth while suffering such obscurantists as gladly as possible, one might inform them that many persons of even greater mental ability and experience than themselves do "believe in ghosts" even if they have not actually seen them . . .

There exists in England a body of researchers who have devoted time, money and enthusiasm to Psychical Research—a field which covers a wide range of subjects—telepathy, clairvoyance, automatic writing, physical phenomena, etc. A vast amount of evidence has been collected, sifted and documented, and those who take the trouble to read this evidence, varied, cumulative and convincing as it is, cannot escape the certainty that, whatever ghosts may be, they certainly exist.

Nearly 50 years ago a very important census was undertaken by the Society for Psychical Research. The following questionnaire was addressed to a large number of persons in various walks of life: "Have you ever, when believing yourself to be completely awake, had a vivid impression of seeing or being touched by a living being, or of hearing a voice, which impression, so far as you could discover, was not due to an external physical cause?"

The results were surprising. Out of 17,000 persons, no fewer than 12 per cent. of the women and 9 per cent. of the men declared that they had had such an experience under the conditions indicated . . .

The usually accepted theory of an apparition of the living is that it is due to volition, conscious or unconscious, on the part of the person whose figure is seen. In other words, A. suggests to B. that he (B.) shall see him. As telepathy is now an established fact, there is comparatively little difficulty in accounting for A.'s phantom when A. is a living person. But if A. dies and, despite this fact, his phantom appears to B., what then? If telepathy explains the pre-death apparition, why not the figure

seen after death? In other words, A. is not dead in the sense of having no consciousness or will, but is capable of actual volition and survives with, at any rate, part of his living personality still intact.

Since 1881 over thirty volumes of *Proceedings* have been published by the Psychical Research Society—a veritable storehouse of well-attested facts which cannot be swept aside by the pseudo-scientist or the idiotic ridicule of the "all rubbish" school. Here we are dealing for the moment with apparitions only.

Let us take two examples, based on first-hand evidence. In the long record of the well-known haunted house at Cheltenham it was established that the figure of a woman was clearly seen both in daylight and in the evening by reliable witnesses, singly or two together, and, on one or more occasions, by a group of three.

Take another carefully-attested case. A little girl of 11 saw beside her bed the figure of her mother who had died on the preceding day. Roused by the child's scream, the father enters from the next room and cries out, "Julia, darling," as he sees the phantom of his wife, while the nurse, reaching the room at the same moment through another entrance, recognises her former mistress and falls on her knees in prayer.

The evidence of these collective witnesses is of signal value, for, while one may dispose of an individual's testimony by talking about nightmare effects produced by dyspepsia, it is extremely improbable that two, and still more three persons should all be suffering from that exact type of dyspepsia at the same moment.

What is badly needed is a fresh census on this subject. However excellent the evidence accumulated by able and brilliant researchers in the past, fresh testimony is required for the present generation. Very few people indeed ever read the pages of the S.P.R. *Proceedings*. It is incredible that the source of such evidence has run dry; and I am convinced that a new census, conducted on the same scale, would yield results of the greatest value . . .

LADY COBHAM'S TESTIMONY

VISCOUNTESS COBHAM, in a letter to the *County Express*, Stourbridge, Worcester, answers a correspondent, "Interested," who had asserted that only evil spirits communicate at seances.

"I am talking from long personal experience," Lady Cobham writes, "and am in a position to refute his statement that only evil spirits communicate with those still on earth, for I have in my possession several books of wonderful scripts, of the highest spiritual type, with teaching completely in accordance with Christianity, which have been transmitted through the mediumship of my own family, and which have been not only of the greatest comfort to us, but also to many others in sorrow. 'Interested' bases his condemnation of Spiritualism on the well-known verses in Deuteronomy about wizardry and necromancy, but does not mention the whole 12 chapters in Corinthians which deal entirely with spiritual gifts and their uses. Why did St. Paul say, 'Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant'? Discerning spirits is also specifically mentioned as one of the gifts, and we are commanded to test the spirits. There would be very little sense in testing something we knew to be evil, as testing is surely carried out to find out of what quality a thing is; so this was obviously said to warn us to be careful with whom we associated in the etheric world. If investigation is done in a reverent spirit, and we ask for guidance and help in our work, the Angels which have been given charge concerning us will keep us from harm."

FOREIGN NOTES

TRANSLATED BY M. A. BUSH

APPORT PHENOMENA

THE August number of *Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie* brings, as he promised in July, some of the conclusions to which Professor Blacher of Riga has come after his prolonged and intensive study of the difficult problem of Apport Phenomena.

He endeavours, first of all, to clear the ground of the "trickery and exposure" hindrance. No one, he declares, really *knows* what is exactly taking place within the psychism of the Medium, entranced or otherwise; but we do know that there is constantly a conflict between the protective "control" on the one hand, and the vanity, or ambition, of the Medium on the other. This is merely a symptom against which we should be on our guard, but which should not be allowed to arouse in the minds of the experimenter any feeling of bias or antagonism.

As for actual *proofs*, so-called, they demand an infinity of time and trouble, and even when unassailable scientifically, serve very little purpose—i.e., they never convince a sceptic. As Professor Planck said during a recent lecture:

"This illustrates the strange but very general fact, viz., that a new scientific idea does not establish itself by gradually winning over its opponents—it is a very rare occurrence for Saul to become a St. Paul; what actually happens is that the opponents gradually die off, whilst the adolescent generation have been familiar with the idea from the start."

This is Professor Blacher's own opinion; no proofs will ever win over the real sceptic, therefore to stress that side of your experiments is a waste of time. Far better simply to accept the fact that we have before us a vast field of new and barely-explored scientific territory, which it behoves us to investigate painstakingly and without prejudice.

Abundant material already exists for those who seriously desire to study the question of the production of apports. The Rev. K. Blumhardt has recently published an account quite in accord with Blacher's experiments. He writes of pins, needles, knitting-needles, nails, lengths of wire, and even live animals (grasshoppers, bats, frogs) being drawn from the body of the Medium; under whose skin they could frequently be felt before they were produced. The facts are incontestable; our understanding of them is still extremely rudimentary.

In 1923, after a series of sittings with the Medium Guzik, and in a subsequent conversation with Schrenck-Nötzing and Dr. Geley, Dr. Blacher put forward the suggestion that during a sitting a powerful field of force was created around the Medium, which field of force was dominated by his Psychism. These psychic powers may bring about conversions of energy unknown to the exact sciences, which changes, rather than leading to an *ad absurdum* of the laws of energy with which we are now familiar, would—so he believes—bring about a more perfect knowledge of the same, and open up to us the wonders of a new dimension. Furthermore, the Professor does not see how we are to escape the acceptance of the idea that both animate and inanimate objects have an astral counterpart. He says:

"In the cases I have observed, it looks as though, through some occult psycho-biological relationship to matter, the mediumistic powers are able to draw the essential of an object within the Medium's field of force, and then to eject it again from the latent condition. The fact that, with my Medium BX, heavy objects were invariably drawn from his actual body, whereas lighter articles would appear close to and outside his hands, would point to the idea that the greatest activity of the field of force lay within the organism of the Medium.

A READER'S ANSWER TO A CRITIC OF "LIGHT"

LIGHT has its critics. Recently, a lady (the daughter of a Scottish Minister) wrote to a friend at Epsom complaining that LIGHT was becoming "too scientific and material," her view being that the subject of Spiritualism should always be regarded as "spiritual and sacred." Replying, her friend (who sends us a copy of the letter) wrote as follows:

"On the general question your letter raises some very big issues. The term 'Spiritualism' is capable of so many shades of meaning and is a most unsatisfactory label of appellation.

"Psychical Research, Spiritism and Spiritualism are terms used frequently to denote quite different things and yet the first often merges into the second and the second into the third. The first implies nothing more than an investigation into the facts, or alleged facts, of psychic phenomena. The second and third each imply a belief or conviction that psychic phenomena have a basis in spirit as distinct from material agency, and of the possibility of communication between discarnate and incarnate spirits, both of a spontaneous and of a consciously willed character, the second term being generally used by orthodox Christians who are entirely hostile to the practices and beliefs of Spiritualists in general, and by Spiritualists who are also orthodox Christians, to denote those followers of the movement who dissociate themselves from the Churches and orthodox Christian beliefs in general.

"The attempt on the part of Christian-Spiritualists to reserve the use of the term Spiritualism for themselves alone is, however, quite unjustified. The Jews, for instance, have formed a society for the study of the subject, and many are very keen believers in spirit-agency and communication. They are, of course, non-Christian, and yet no one can deny them the right to label themselves as Spiritualists as distinct from mere Spiritists, if they choose to do so. The Japanese, again, have societies akin to our Spiritualist bodies, as also have the natives of India. The subject is extremely far-reaching and universal in range and cannot be made the appanage of any particular sect or faith, Christian or otherwise. It may ultimately form the basis of a universal religion which will swallow up or embrace all the existing creeds.

"Personally I am very broad and catholic in my views and much enjoy the wide platform and philosophical tone and outlook of LIGHT. I do not find it in the least materialistic—quite the reverse, though it deals with many aspects of the subject, including the strictly scientific.

"The trouble with the world today is that it is so materialistic in its outlook and beliefs. There is no universal conviction of the spiritual nature of life and of survival of bodily death, and I am convinced that the only way of ultimately smashing the prevailing agnosticism is by hammering away at the *facts*—demonstrating by scientific methods the great fact of survival and all that it implies. It will never, in my opinion, be achieved by appeals to religious beliefs or religious dogmas alone, nor must the new revelations and discoveries be linked up *exclusively* with Christian teaching and tenets of faith—they must be universal and all-embracing in their scope. After all, even among the Christian Churches themselves, there are many shades of belief—especially if such bodies as the Swedenborgians and Unitarians are included.

"It will no doubt be a very long time yet before this ideal can be attained and in the meantime there must inevitably be much controversy—and doubtless at times bitter controversy—both in the Churches and in the home and in public life generally, before the truth prevails, as in the end it must and will prevail."

[We would be glad to have the views of other readers on the questions raised in this letter.—EDITOR.]

STRANGE CASE OF DEATH-BED VISION

DOCTOR IN A DREAM SAW PATIENT DIE AND DYING MAN SAW DOCTOR

By DR. NANDOR FODOR

OF the various kinds of apparitions, death-bed visions lend themselves the least to telepathic explanation. It appears as if those who passed over were waiting at the gates for their loved one. The dying one is fully conscious of the reason of their coming: sometimes there is an exclamation of surprise at the perception of someone whom the dying did not know to have died (the news having been withheld to prevent a shock), the apparitions always represent the departed, and the vision is shortly followed by death.

There are, however, exceptions to every psychic generalisation. In the case which I am going to describe the subject of death-bed vision was a living man—asleep. I shall quote from the letter of a friend, a medical practitioner in Wales:

"I have been terribly depressed lately and in an exceedingly 'receptive' mental state. The other night at 1.30 a.m. the telephone rang. My partner's voice came over the wire: 'There is a call for you to . . .' I was only half awake. I replied: 'Nonsense, I was there half an hour ago, he died while I was there.' The answer came back: 'He was all right this afternoon. Are you certain?' I replied: 'Of course I am. I tell you, he died half an hour back. I saw him die.' 'Well,' said my partner, 'the call has only just come in. Someone has probably collapsed.' 'Oh, all right,' I mumbled crossly, 'I suppose I shall have to go again.'

"I went. *I had not been there at all.* He died half an hour back even as I had said. I am told he said just before he died: 'There is the doctor's car, go and let him in.' I am rather worried about this. I don't like it at all. One has to be so precise in my profession. I did not dare to tell my partners. Very worrying."

I asked my friend to find out whether those who stood around the bed of the dying heard any coincident noise at the time which could have been mistaken for the arrival of a car. He replied:

"I know there was no coincident noise. The house was a considerable way from the traffic roads; besides, my car has a very definite note. It is called locally 'the aeroplane.'"

I offered my friend an explanation. In the sleep-state he may have left his body and, following an automatic professional impulse, gone to see patients. Having been rather violently awakened he remembered what he saw. But did he make his round in an astral counterpart of his car? The suggestion not only does not appeal to me but I know that my friend would have been outraged by it. So I ventured to say that the dying man, having become dimly conscious of his presence, interpreted it in the only possible manner: "the doctor has arrived and as he is not physically visible he must be in front of the house, just stepping out of his car."

I might have suggested a more orthodox explanation: that of a telepathic S.O.S. sent by the dying man and stirring the subconscious of the sleeping doctor to a reply which was then interpreted as an actual arrival. This, however, does not seem to me less supernormal and he who puts it exclusively forward will have to shoulder the burden of proof, which I do not consider an easy task.

Naturally, I expected my friend to remonstrate. To my surprise he was willing to consider the possibility of the release, in the state of sleep, of some essential force from the dominance of our physical brain, and to admit that this "essential" is capable of increased "potential" in exact ratio to the release from physical dominance. "Ergo, in sleep there may be sufficient release to permit of the knowledge of the decease in question without

bringing in the space dimension. This explains a vast class of phenomena, including many of the trance manifestations."

"But what about the remark of the dying man himself?" my friend continues. "Here, I admit, we are up against a snag—one that at first sight appears insuperable. What do we know of the processes of dying? Alas, practically nothing. We know the causes, and we know that from them result a protoplasmic degeneration which, when carried beyond a certain point, extinguishes the organism. This Rubicon we call death."

"If we axiomatise the possession of the 'essential,' we are forced to postulate a diminution to zero of the physical dominance during death and logically a synchronous widening of the horizon of that recondite 'potential.' In the case under discussion, the dissociation was gradual. So was the psychic emancipation and there was time for this fact to be physically manifested. We have then a psychic 'potential' sufficiently decontrolled to know of the adjacents of other 'essentials' partially and wholly released. This led quite naturally to the remark: 'There is the doctor's car, go and let him in.'"

The speculation of the doctor agrees closely with Prof. Joad's postulated *psychic factor*. It is about the last buttress which orthodox scientists can hold against the steady march of new concepts. My friend puts it forward as a hypothesis eliminating survival. I shall have no quarrel with him on this score. For if all men of orthodox science would be willing to go so far, much of psychical research would soon be accepted by the psychologists as their own domain. And that would be a revolutionary advance indeed!

A DREAM FULFILLED

THE following account of a dream that came true, may be of interest to some of your readers. It was related to me by my grandmother, who died at the age of 92. The dreamer was her friend in girlhood's days, and the whole incident made a great impression on my grandmother who was very clear-headed, and not given to paying much attention to dreams in a general way. The daughter of the dreamer is still living near London, and here is her account of her mother's experience, which tallies in every detail with my grandmother's story:

"This happened when my mother was a young girl in her own home. Soon after Christmas, she dreamt she was coming down the stairs, and, as she descended, the coachman who was in the hall, came to her and said, 'I was to ask you what to put in the paper? The master is too upset to think.' She replied, 'On March 3rd, Elizabeth, wife of Samuel Willis.' This was her mother's name. She woke, and realizing what the words implied, felt distressed, and of course would not tell any of her relations, but she had a great friend, your grandmother, so she told her, and that took it off her mind."

"Her mother was in perfect health at the time, but on March 1st she was taken suddenly ill, and on the 3rd she died. It was only when the girl was actually descending the stairs, and the coachman came to her with the very words she had heard in her dream, and she herself gave the same reply, that it all came back to her again."

"She had other curious experiences later. On one occasion long after she was married, she told the housemaid to set the tea-table for a visitor, as an old friend she had not seen for five years was coming to tea. The friend arrived, and was much surprised when the maid said, 'The mistress is expecting you, she said you would come,' as she herself had not thought of coming at all, but had been suddenly sent for that morning to visit a doctor who lived near, and had only then made up her mind to take the opportunity to visit her friend."

ELSIE BLOMFIELD.

"THE ROCK OF TRUTH"

MR. J. ARTHUR FINDLAY ANSWERS CRITICISMS OF HIS BOOK

MAY I once again trespass on your hospitality? I do so with reluctance, and yet your leading article of 25th August compels me to do so, as I feel that you are not giving your readers a correct impression of my book.

Your leader makes quite clear that the Spiritualism for which you stand is not at war with the Christian Faith. What is the Christian Faith? This you define as follows: "The Christian Faith is based on facts, the facts of survival and communication." This is your definition of Christianity, but it is certainly not the definition of it as understood by Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists and Presbyterians. Their faith includes numerous beliefs which have been incorporated into Christianity from other religions. The Red Indians and some Jews, Buddhists, Mohamedants and those of other faiths believe in survival and communication, but they are not Christians.

You seem anxious to assure the *British Weekly* that Christians have taken fright unnecessarily, as *The Rock of Truth* does not represent Spiritualism as you understand it. This being so, how do you explain the remark in the *British Weekly* review of my book, which was as follows: "He (Mr. Findlay) is right in saying that to very many the Bible and the Christian Faith are a continual stumbling block to their acceptance of Spiritualism."

The entire *British Weekly* review was for the purpose of frightening off Christians from Spiritualism. Why? Not only because of what is contained in *The Rock of Truth* but because Christianity, as understood by the Churches, is as diametrically opposed to Spiritualism as night is from day.

If Christianity consisted, as you say it does, in belief in the fact of survival and communication, do you think I would have taken the trouble to write *The Rock of Truth*? It is because Christianity, as preached today by all the sects of Christendom, is quite contrary to the teachings of its Founder that I gave the time and study to prepare the first part of my book, so that the second part dealing with Spiritualism could become accepted by Christian people.

The first part was to show how all the accretions and additions came to gather round the simple and sublime teachings of Jesus Christ, and how Spiritualism was in no way contrary to His teachings, however much it may be condemned today by the organisation that claims to be the interpreter of His mission on earth. Have I not devoted an entire chapter to His teachings?

If *The Rock of Truth* is based on error, then it has been a worthless effort on my part and it will die a natural death; but I took such precautions that my facts were facts and not just theories that I believe no one can point out any thing I have said about the evolution of Christianity to what it became at the Council of Nicaea and at the Reformation, which is untrue or in any way biased.

So long as Christians accept the Bible and the teachings of the organisation to which they belong as their only guide through life, Spiritualism will be kept in the background by the Christian Church, as something no Christian should tamper with. It is dangerous or fraudulent say they, and some do not hesitate to attribute it all to the "Devil."

Every seance proves that the 39 Articles of the Church of England, the Confession of Faith, and all the findings of the various Church Councils, from Nicaea onwards, were based on error, and it is only because of the more general acceptance of the teachings of Spiritualism that some, who still call themselves Christians, have thrown them over.

They still call themselves Christians, and they may think they are, but they are not. They may take Jesus as their example and thus go back to primitive Christianity,

before Paul's influence became dominant, but that is not Christianity as preached by the Churches. The Archbishop of York, a recognised leader of the Christian Church says distinctly: "I am quite convinced that direct evidence of survival is not either attainable or desirable," and yet you say Christianity is based on survival and communication!

Either you are wrong or he is wrong, but you will admit that he would be accepted by all Christians as a true interpreter of Christianity, in preference to the Editor of *LIGHT*, who, by far the majority of Christians, is not looked on as a Christian at all.

The duty of all Spiritualists is to uncoil the false from the true in Christianity, and put truth first and foremost at all times. If the teachings of Spiritualism are true, as we believe they are, then all these accretions to Christianity must go. It is only a matter of time and education.

Why, therefore, try to make out that the acceptance of Spiritualism does not affect one's Christianity? Of course it does! For the last eighty-five years Spiritualism has been steadily undermining the teachings of Christianity and before very many years the Christianity of today will be shelved and forgotten by all educated people.

They may still call themselves Christians but they will be minus the creeds, dogmas, ceremonials, and rites which make up the Christianity of today.

Every *British Weekly* reader who reads *The Rock of Truth*, and every Christian who reads it, will become more reasonable in his or her outlook towards Christianity, and also towards Spiritualism. No one has ever regretted emphasising the truth. My book emphasises what is true and exposes what is false. On that rock I stand.

Stansted Hall, Essex

J. ARTHUR FINDLAY.

* * *

[NOTE.—Whatever the Archbishop of York may say, the fact remains, vouched for by the New Testament stories of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, that Christianity is based on Survival and communication. The statement that "the Christian Faith is based on facts, the facts of Survival and communication" was not, however intended as a definition of Christianity as it now exists, but obviously refers only to its origin.—EDITOR.]

A PROTEST AND A CRITICISM

By MRS. ETHEL ASHTON JONSON

MR. ARTHUR FINDLAY has rendered such signal service to the cause of Spiritualism by his admirable book, *On the Edge of the Etheric*, and also by his indefatigable propaganda, that one hesitates to disparage any fresh effort of his to enlighten the world.

But his new book *The Rock of Truth*, notwithstanding its high-sounding title and its undoubted merit as a statement of many historical facts, calls for some protest from those of us who from personal experience are able to testify to the living power of the Christ.

All that Mr. Findlay says on the subject of the attitude of the Churches, Protestant and Catholic alike, is unquestionably true, and almost everyone today recognises the Pagan influences in orthodox Christianity. But when Spiritualism is claimed as the "One True Religion," one is forced to ask what is the real meaning of Religion. For is it not actually a "binding back" of the soul to its source, and if, as we must all believe, that source is God, how can a mere belief in survival, even though a certain amount of alleged information through Mediums concerning the conditions of the after-life be accepted, fulfil this definition of Religion?

Mr. Findlay's chief quarrel with Christianity seems to be caused by his doubt as to the authenticity of many of the sayings and doings of Jesus, but he disregards

entirely the outstanding example of His blameless and inspiring life and the overwhelming sense of His own Christhood. For He was in fact THE CHRIST. He realized the Christ-consciousness to a degree undreamt of by any of the Great Initiates who preceded Him and who prepared the world for His consummate achievement in dying to prove His faith. The Sermon on the Mount may not have originated in His mind but, so far, no living Teacher has ever carried out all its beatitudes in his own life as Jesus did.

The outstanding value of His life, however, is His insistence on the true purport of His mission, which was to assert and emphasize the union of Man with God and the Oneness of all life.

In Mr. Findlay's book, there is no mention of God as a personal influence or of the consciousness of Union which Jesus came to manifest. The doctrine of the Vicarious Atonement and the soul-destroying dogma of the efficacy of a last-minute conversion to gain everlasting bliss have no place in the teachings of Jesus. They are accretions which even now are being discarded and the true beauty and power of the Christ-consciousness is gradually bringing to the Christian world its rightful illumination.

Mr. Findlay disparages Jesus because he says He gave no new information of the after-life to the world nor told a single new fact not already known. In the first place, how do we know that He did not? If Marconi had lived then and had by some miracle arrived at his knowledge which has given us wireless, would the scientists of those days have recognised his discovery as worth recording? What was the fate of Galileo?

And is Mr. Findlay justified in assuming that every Spiritualist today will accept the alleged information he has been fortunate enough to receive from discarnate beings as to the details of Life beyond the grave? There have been very many communications from thence affirming the truth of Reincarnation for instance, and who is to judge which report is correct? With a few exceptions the entire Eastern world has always believed it, so also did the early Christian Church in the time of Origen. Is it not possible and even probable that, as Jesus said "In my Father's house are many mansions," so there may be souls in every stage of development, and just as on earth we have races holding diametrically opposite views on every sort of subject, so in the Life beyond men must surely differ and be as prone to dogmatize as to what is truth as they are here?

If it be true, as psychologists appear to have proved, that many of the so-called spirit-communications are emanations from the sub-conscious self, coupled with telepathy, does it not behove us to walk warily in the matter of defining the exact conditions of survival? It has frequently happened that those who have felt most infallibly guided by spirit teachings while in the body, have subsequently confessed through a Medium their former erroneous views. So far, it seems impossible to arrive at any absolutely reliable description of the after-life that is credible. Even Frederick Myers, with all his lofty attainments, humbly confessed his unwillingness to dogmatize and merely gives us what appears to his still limited vision to be the approximate likeness of the soul's life hereafter.

Mr. Findlay closes his book with the pious hope that the time is at hand when the Christian Churches shall have discarded Christ and all that He stands for, and shall have reached his *Rock of Truth*. Prayer, devotion, sacramental worship are all to be swept away and Reason alone is to be the god. And yet for over two thousand years One who has been called the "Rock of Ages" has also been known and felt as the "Way, the Truth and the Life," notwithstanding the fact that His example has not been followed. It is not His doing, for Humanity has still to learn that He is forever the "Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

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).

A CORRECTION

Sir,—There is an error in the "Rosemary" quotation in Dr. Fodor's interesting article on "Multiple Personality" (LIGHT, September 1st.) The word "feebleness" appears instead of "influence" in the following passage:—"The *influence* of these (superstructures) seems to cause what is known as 'multiple personality.'"

The article also gives the statement as "Rosemary's answer," and the quotation is prefixed by the phrase, "This is what 'Rosemary' wrote." Both answer and written statement were Nona's, not Rosemary's, and the latter was in partial-trance at the time. I am sure Dr. Fodor will forgive me for correcting these slips, which give a wrong impression of Nona's thought and the passivity of the medium.

FREDERIC H. WOOD.

* * *

EDINBURGH PSYCHIC COLLEGE

Sir,—The attention of my clients, Edinburgh Psychic College, has been drawn by Mr. Ritchie himself to a paragraph in "A Northerner's Notes" in your issue of 1st inst. which refers to "the literary and educational work which he supervises at the Edinburgh Psychic College." I am requested to inform you that Mr. Ritchie's work at our Centre was confined to the conduct of classes on Psychical Development and the giving of private sittings and healing treatment. The College authorities also wish me to add that Mr. Ritchie's connection with them has been terminated.

WILLIAM WILSON,
22, Craiglockhart Quadrant,
Edinburgh.

Solicitor to the
College.

* * *

TELEPATHY AND BUSINESS

Sir,—Mr. J. B. Morgan thinks that business people don't use telepathy because each knows the others would get the same advantage. But business people don't renounce advantages because others can share them. A motor car manufacturer does not decline to use an exhibition because rivals will use it. He trusts himself to use his chance profitably whatever others do. If telepathy could serve business ends those who would try their fortune with it would not be lacking.

GODFREY BURCHETT.

Brookside, Wraysbury.

* * *

HELP FOR SPEAKERS

Sir,—As a Spiritualist, I am anxious to do "my bit" to help, and the most practical way I can think of is in my own line as a teacher of voice-production. In that way, I would willingly help anyone who is training for platform work as a Spiritualist, by giving them a course of lessons in diction, resonance, breathing, etc., according to what they required (for no fee, of course).

DORIA CARTE.

51, Clarendon Road, Holland Park, W.11.

MR. JOHN MYERS' MEDIUMSHIP

The officers of the Victoria Psychic Research Society, London, inform us that the party of Spiritualists from Holland (of whom details were given in last week's issue of LIGHT), had a second sitting for psychic photography with Mr. John Myers on August 29. Two plates were selected at random from the sealed envelope containing the unused plates from the previous sitting and "extras" were obtained on each plate. The plates then remaining in the envelope were developed, without results.

Light

All communications for the Editor should be addressed "The Editor of Light, 16, Queensberry Place, South Kensington, London, S.W.7." Phone: Kensington 3751. (Editorial only)

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SPIRITUALISM'S CENTRAL MESSAGE

SPIRITUALISM'S first and greatest task is to bear witness to the fact of human survival as proved by communications from those whom the world calls "dead." From that fact, overwhelming in its importance, there follow implications affecting every branch of human thought and every interest in human life—personal, social, political and religious. But, before any of the implications can be pressed home, the fact of survival must be established, as those who dispute the fact and the validity of the evidence by which it is established naturally decline to admit the validity of the implications.

As yet, neither the fact nor the evidence have been generally accepted. Materialistic science denies the possibility of survival and therefore refuses to consider the evidence. The Churches, in their corporate capacity, profess themselves content with their traditions and beliefs and deny the need for evidence, leaving large numbers of their members and adherents to drift into a condition of doubt not far removed from complete unbelief in the possibility of a future life.

To Science and Religion alike, Spiritualism brings the positive affirmation that survival is a fact, as natural and as certain as death. It offers the evidence it has accumulated; it points to the impressive corroboration in sacred and secular writings, ancient and modern; it provides facilities for the collection of fresh evidence. This is the fundamental Spiritualism, on which there is agreement amongst *all* Spiritualists, whether they be Christian or non-Christian; this is the Spiritualism which is the potential ally of all Religions based on belief in a future life but especially of Christianity which in its primitive form was spiritualistic in the fullest sense of the term.

In regard to the fact of survival, only three views seem to be possible—acceptance, rejection or uncertainty. But in regard to the implications to be drawn from the proofs of survival, many

views—social, political and religious—may be held with equal sincerity. Particularly is this true in the matter of Religion. To some people, assurance of survival through communication with their dearly-loved "dead" leads to increased devotion to and enjoyment of the services of the Church or religious Society with which they are associated; to others, it brings a revision of religious beliefs which may lead to an entirely new outlook and to the breaking of old ties and the formation of new. Both classes may be equally sincere.

Individual interpretation of the implications of proved survival appear to lead as naturally to differences of belief and opinion as do individual interpretation of the Scriptures. This may be regretted but it seems inevitable; and it provides reason for our insistence on the desirability of keeping the central message of Spiritualism free from the complications of individual or group theories in regard to religious beliefs and conditions of the future life. This is our answer to the main question raised by Mr. J. Arthur Findlay in his interesting communication printed on another page of this issue.

We are anxious that the proofs of survival shall be made so convincing that all the Christian Churches will accept Spiritualism as an ally, but we do not for a moment imagine such acceptance would lead to uniformity of belief or practice. The history of the religious side of the spiritualistic movement, with its many divisions and differences, is proof to the contrary. But it would lead to a revivification of Religion and, for the sake of a bewildered and suffering world, that is a consummation devoutly to be desired.

WHY LAUGH AT GHOSTS?

IT is unusual to find in a political journal an article dealing seriously with the results of Psychical Research, and we hope that the readers of *The News-Letter* (the National-Labour official fortnightly journal) will duly appreciate the good fare provided for them by Sir Ernest Bennett, M.P., the Assistant Postmaster-General, whom readers of LIGHT know as the esteemed Vice-President of the London Spiritualist Alliance.

Sir Ernest heads his article "Why Laugh at Ghosts?" and gives quite good reasons why the subject of ghosts and apparitions should be regarded seriously. He even quotes a case of after-death appearance which can be explained only on the hypothesis that the person concerned is "not dead in the sense of having no consciousness or will but is capable of actual volition and survives with, at any rate, part of his living personality still intact."

On another page (563) we reprint the larger part of Sir Ernest's article, so that readers may judge for themselves how faithfully he has dealt with the subject.

BOOK REVIEW

By H. F. PREVOST BATTERSBY

THE CHURCH EXPLAINS

CONSIDERING the perverse and unscientific attitude towards Spiritualism of the Roman Catholic Church, one is glad to welcome from Father Herbert Thurston, S.J. a volume* in which its case is very fairly put.

Dr. Joseph Husslein sets forth in a preface the Biblical reasons for the Church's posture. He quotes the pronouncement in the Pentateuch against the psychic practices of the Canaanites. He does not mention that those practices—a form of Black Magic which included human sacrifices—would be just as sternly condemned by Spiritualists today. He does not explain why this one Mosaic injunction should be honoured, while others, so serious that a death penalty was attached to them, are disregarded and even flagrantly violated by the Church today. He ignores the fact that Jewish history is honeycombed with spiritualistic practices: that Samuel, clairaudient in his youth, and in direct communication with Jehovah, acted, in his memorable days, as a medium who gave clairvoyant readings for money, and formed psychic circles to forecast the future: that David received the design of the Temple by automatic script: that divination even of forbidden kinds was practised to obtain a response from heaven: and that heathen priests, as Balaam, drew instruction from above by their own mediumistic methods. Apports, levitations, materialisations, clairaudience, clairvoyant prediction—the Bible is full of it, and surely, when evolving a reason for Samuel's resurrection, Dr. Husslein must have known that the prophet had twice previously pronounced the king's impending doom, so that it was scarcely necessary that he should be dragged from his tomb to repeat it.

Far from Spiritualists objecting to the evidence of the Bible, they seem likely to be soon the only people capable of believing it; but we would like to know if the deity the Church worships is still the blood-thirsty tribal god of the Jew.

Father Thurston opens with the suggestion that "the next century or two may witness the recognition of many psychic truths which are at present hidden from us . . . Can we speak quite confidently regarding the limitations or the range of angels, demons, and incarnate human souls, notably the unbaptised?"

We, Spiritualists, certainly cannot; and it is cheering to learn that the Church also has doubts, and to be told that "even in the most orthodox circles" the pronouncement of St. Thomas as to the souls of the dead "has not of recent years won universal acceptance."

The Catholic conviction that it is the Devil who is behind Spiritualism—even the innocent dowser being pictured with hoofs and a tail—has been somewhat shaken of late by conversions to Catholicism by messages from the Other Side. But, though conceding that "Satan is very subtle and poses sometimes as an angel of light," the author does not suspect him of thus attempting to curry favour with the Church.

Two of these notable conversions were achieved by a Jesuit spirit who "expounded marvellously the Churches' doctrine," and his work was completed by such distinguished characters as St. Ignatius de Loyala, and St. Francis Xavier, who "communicated a complete course of instruction." The efforts of these great spirits are the more interesting since creeds seem to have but a slight significance on the other side; and, with such evidence, it appears somewhat unkind that the author should conclude: "It is easy to believe that Satan and his myrmidons are apt to take a direct part in such intercourse."

With such a conviction at the back of his mind, it must

have been difficult to plan a work which concedes facts of enormous interest and bans investigation.

It is not easy to be at once negative and consecutive, and Fr. Thurston merely glances, but quite equitably, at certain aspects—"Telekinetic Phenomena," "Accordion playing of Home," "Katie King's Materialisations," "The Truth of Telepathy," "Clairvoyance," "The Script of Oscar Wilde," and "Doyle versus Houdini,"—all very good reading, but not making for any definite review of the subject.

He is sometimes inaccurate, as when he describes Mrs. Duncan's sittings at the L.S.A. as "to the complete satisfaction of all concerned," but one realises he never is so intentionally.

Still, he might have considered, when calling Spiritualism "a new-fangled creed," that, in the matter of its most objectionable belief—communication with the dead—it is thousands, perhaps, millions of years older than Christianity and is embraced by the greater portion of the human race. The only new-fangled part of it lies in its divorce from superstition and its approaching union with science; a change of partners on which perhaps, one could hardly expect the blessing of the Church.

"GRIM HISTORY"

Neither, I think, is it tactful to describe Spiritualism in 1915 as having "a long and rather grim history behind it," since "grim" would be an utterly inadequate epithet with which to describe the pollution for centuries of the Holy Catholic Church; and its members should realise that, from our point of view, it is not only Spiritualism that has dishonest Mediums.

Neither is it wise to toy with the assertion "that Spiritualism is filling our lunatic asylums," since even the unsatisfactory statistics available show a far larger proportion of mental mischief caused by other religions, a reasonable result since Spiritualism should produce none of that emotional exaltation which upsets the cerebral balance.

But if Father Thurston's warnings reduce the number of "dabblers" he will have done us a service.

As in every other faith the important business is to obtain conviction. The author is "not at all sure that the certainty of a painless death and of a happy awakening in a land of brightness and peace would be a boon to mankind at large and a help to the better discharge of our social duties." In that he is in agreement with Mr. Whately Carington who thinks it would "disrupt our existing civilisation."

But though Spiritualism confirms the Church's view as to discipline in the Hereafter, its moral compulsion should be more effective, since it offers no remittances through another's virtue. The sower must reap what he has sown, since the harvest is himself. The certainty of that has an even more sobering authority than the thunder of the Church.

Father Thurston's complicated attitude of acceptance and disapproval leads him occasionally into a "willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike" position. He knows, for instance, that the evidence for the "direct voice" is overwhelming, yet he suggests that owing to the "absolute darkness" the Medium may be himself conducting the trumpet's amazing flights; whereas it is that very darkness which rules out the Medium's interference: and though he admits that two or three voices have been heard speaking at the same time, he says that "it is extremely difficult to be sure that he (the Medium) is not himself speaking through the trumpet," though he produces no evidence of a Medium with two or three separate voices. Such furtive thrusts are unworthy of a serious investigator. Moreover, direct voices have been produced in broad daylight and without an accredited Medium. Is it any wonder that Spiritualists are exasperated by that sort of attack?

Nor is it reasonable to disparage "the 'Fruitage' of Modern Spiritualism." If you cut down the tree you

* *The Church and Spiritualism.* Herbert Thurston, S.J. The Bruce Publishing Co., Milwaukee, 1933. \$2.75.

must go without the fruit of it; and after Christian Churches have been murdering Mediums for over a thousand years, it is rather childish to object that they have had so few descendants.

"CHRISTIANS WERE ALL SPIRITUALISTS"

"The Church in all ages," says Father Thurston, "has forbidden any attempt to communicate with the dead through unauthorised channels." Well, it all depends from what event you date the Church. It is the Spiritualists' contention that that very stricture marks Christianity's decline. The Christians were all Spiritualists in the Apostles' days, had all the spiritual gifts enumerated by St. Paul, which were sometimes bestowed even before the official seal of baptism; and the Apostle gives in 1 Cor. xiv. the detailed description of a seance. St. John explains how to discriminate between the various kinds of controls, as did Hermas, the friend of St. Paul, in the *Book of the Pastor*, which—spoken of with respect by Clement of Alexandria and Origen, and read in the Churches till the 5th century—figures in the most ancient catalogue of the canonical books received by the Roman Catholic Church. After describing how the higher spirit "fills the man who speaks as God wills," it continues, "On the contrary, an earthly spirit is easily recognised; it is vain, without wisdom and without force . . . It is importunate, talkative, and does not prophesy without recompense."

During the 2nd and 3rd centuries, Christians addressed themselves directly to the souls of the dead to decide points of doctrine. St. Gregory the thaumaturgist, bishop of Neo-Cæsarea, declared that he "received from John the Evangelist in a vision the symbol of his faith." Origen speaks often of the manifestations of the dead, and states—as with the cases quoted by Fr. Thurston—"many people have embraced the Christian faith in spite of themselves, their hearts having been suddenly changed by some spirit either in an apparition or a dream."

St. Augustine declared "the spirits of the dead can be sent to the living and can unveil to them the future which they themselves have learnt either from other spirits or from angels or by divine revelation"; and in his "City of God," explains how the etheric body can communicate with spirits and angels.

St. Clement of Alexandria, St. Gregory of Nice, St. Jerome and St. Thomas Aquinas all affirmed the same belief.

No! surely we are entitled to ask at what date the Church renounced the spiritualistic errors it had learnt from the companions of Christ, though even after a thousand years of its sad history, we find one of its most distinguished Cardinals writing, "One has reason for astonishment that there should be found men of good sense who dare either deny entirely the apparitions and communications of spirits with the living, or attribute them to hallucination or the arts of devils."

Well, is it wonderful that today, we also think that we have "reason for astonishment?"

MR. HORACE LEAF'S NOVEL

Readers of *LIGHT* know Mr. Horace Leaf, F.R.G.S., as an able writer on psychic subjects who possesses knowledge of practically all phases of mediumship and psychic phenomena. In his latest book—for he has at least half-a-dozen to his credit—he breaks new ground. In *Ahmed's Daughter* (Wright & Brown, 6/-), a novel, he deals with the mysteries of Indian religions and the life and quarrels of some of its strangely-assorted peoples. In a foreword to the story, Mr. Leaf confesses he has received assistance from the unseen collaborator whose life-history (on both sides of the veil) is the theme of the tale. *Ahmed's Daughter* is a book that can be read solely for its interest as a record of adventure, but which at the same time provides many delightful sidelights on Indian thought and habits—many of them strange to Western readers.—G.H.L.

SPIRITUAL HEALING

By R. H. SAUNDERS

LIGHT recently gave some interesting and successful cases dealt with by that wonderful spirit the Persian Physician, Abduhl Latif. I have a record of 1,300 cases he has dealt with from most of the countries in the world—diagnoses and treatment—and could fill many issues of *LIGHT* in describing the diseases and cures, or alleviation, but the two following instances provide some quite unusual features.

Mrs. Chamier, an English lady residing in Belgium, wrote to me three years ago appealing for help. Her husband was dying—the prostate gland was closing up, the bladder ceased to function, and the blood-stream was being poisoned. The doctors attending him said that an operation at his age (84) would kill him, yet if he were not operated on he would also assuredly die. The unhappy man could get no sleep, and day and night endured misery unspeakable. With this hopeless outlook it was no wonder the wife asked for spirit help. I submitted the case to Abduhl Latif directly I got the letter, but I found he had dealt with it the moment the link was formed by writing the letter to me, and it shows how rapidly response can come under favourable conditions.

Mrs. Chamier had no idea that she possessed any psychic power, but it is obvious it was lying dormant awaiting opportunity for springing into activity, for after writing me she felt a curious tingling in her hand and arm and an urge to take up pencil and paper. She did so, and her hand wrote rapidly a message in a continuous line. She had no idea of its import until reading it, when to her amazement it said, "I, Abduhl Latif, have the case in hand—take note there must not be any operation. I will see to this myself. In three weeks he will be well."

This startling but comforting assurance gave the wife great perplexity. "Is this my subconscious mind at work?" she asked herself. Again the agitation and control of the arm and hand occurred, and she picked up the pencil. Instantly it wrote, "No. I, Abduhl Latif alone am responsible—he will sleep tonight." It was so—for the first time for months he had a long and refreshing sleep, and an improvement took place in his condition, daily increasing until at the end of three weeks all traces of his troubles disappeared and the organs functioned properly. This is three years ago, and the improvement is still maintained.

This is not all, for shortly afterwards Mrs. Chamier felt this vibration in the hand, and the desire to write. She took pencil and the message, written at incredible speed, read: "Your rheumatoid arthritis is now under my care—you will be well." For years Mrs. Chamier had been crippled by this troublesome complaint and the prediction gave her, naturally, great joy. As Abduhl had said, the trouble disappeared and for three years she has had no return. This, again is not the end of the story, for our good Persian physician, finding the lady an excellent sensitive, has used her hand in many messages, and above all, has given, through her, diagnoses of seventy cases, with many alleviations for the sufferers.

At Lourdes recently a case of rheumatoid arthritis was announced as cured, although the authorities there do not claim a cure until the improvement has continued for twelve months.

With a thousand persons or more gathered together, each and all animated by Faith, and a determination to be healed, with the priests' blessing, and the consequent expectant condition, is it surprising that ecstasy should be induced, and the physical emotion rise to the spiritual? When this occurs, anything is possible and cures sometimes result. But this case, so loudly boomed by the Press as a miracle, should be compared with the one I have mentioned where no recourse has been made to any paroxysm, but in the calmness of every-day life, undisturbed by religious or other forms of induced hysteria, a cure has been effected.

"ELVES, FAUNS AND FAIRIES"

By DAVID GOW

IN 1691 the Rev. Robert Kirk, minister at Aberfoyle, Scotland, wrote a serious treatise on "The Nature and Actions of the Subterranean and (for the most Part) Invisible People heretofore going under the name of Elves, Faunes and Fairies," describing himself as a Circumspect Inquirer residing amongst the Scottish-Irish in Scotland. Mr. Kirk entitled his essay *Secret Commonwealth*, and described its purpose as something designed to suppress the "impudent and growing Atheisme of this age." That laudable aim, by the way, was shared by Glanvil who some ten years earlier (1681) had published his *Sadducismus Triumphatus*, a collection of stories of what today we should call psychic phenomena, to put to shame the materialistic scepticism of his age. It is a quaint reflection that such protests were necessary more than two centuries ago, when it was Theology and not Science that ruled human thinking.

Mr. Kirk's manuscript did not reach the printing press until 1815 and then issued in an edition of only 100 copies, but it evidently made a sufficient impression, for in 1893 another and larger edition came forth; and today we have a Third edition: *The Secret Commonwealth of Elves, Fauns and Fairies*, (Eneas MacKay, Stirling, 7/6 net.) with an introduction by Mr. R. B. Cunninghame Graham—one of the most picturesque characters of today—a reproduction of Andrew Lang's Dedication to Robert Louis Stevenson in the 1893 edition, consisting of a humorous poem in the Scottish dialect, another poem celebrating the Rev. Robert Kirk as "The Fairy Minister" and "The History of the Book of the Author," all by Andrew Lang.

I found Mr. Cunninghame Graham's Introduction and Andrew Lang's racy and critical "Comment" so interesting that I came near to forgetting the substantive part of the book, Mr. Robert Kirk's quaint narrative with its ancient spelling and phraseology, like a small picture in a very elaborate frame. Mr. Kirk quite obviously believed in the fairy folk whom he described as "of a midle nature betwixt Man and Angel." He writes of these "Siths or Fairies" or the "Good People," as possessing "light changable Bodies (lyke those called Astral) somewhat of the nature of a condensed cloud and best seen in Twilight." Further, "thes Bodies be so playble thorough the subtilty of the spirits that agitate them that they can make them appear or disappear att pleasure." Then follows a categorical account of the manners and customs of the fairy folk written with as much circumstance as though the reverend author were describing a tribe or nation on earth. Indeed, to him they were a community of actual beings, of various grades. He speaks of them as an "abstruse people"—a whimsical phrase—and fortifies his argument by scriptural citations, much as a Spiritualist might do in an argument for psychic phenomena; and he remarks very pertinently: "How much is written of Pigmies, Fairies, Nymphs, Syrens, Apparitions which though not the tenth Part true, yet could not spring of nothing." He gives examples of Second Sight in the Highlands, and brings in many considerations necessary to support the idea of a world of spirits, whether fairies or not. Indeed, much that he says of the "Aereal People" would apply to the idea of discarnate spirits in general.

He was a strange character, this Mr. Kirk of Aberfoyle, just one of those elf-like folk whom Sir J. M. Barrie loves to depict in their habit as they live. The minister must have been something of a fairy himself; indeed, Mr. Cunninghame Graham, in his charming Introduction, more than hints as much. He was a seventh son, and therefore traditionally gifted with magical powers. And his end was passing strange. Although he had a tomb in the east end of the churchyard of Aberfoyle, his remains, it seems, are *not there*. His successor, the Rev. Dr. Grahame, related in a book, *Sketches of Picturesque Scenery*,

that as Mr. Kirk was walking on a *dun shi*, or fairy hill, he fell into a swoon which was taken for death. The rest is "wropt in mistry." There was a funeral, but one rather reminiscent of certain mock funerals, like that of Roger Cly, the spy in Dickens' *Tale of Two Cities*. It was a "seeming funeral."

Now that we have the elf-parson's testimony to the realm of Faerie, in a handsome volume, illustrated by a picture of "The Hill of the Fairies at Aberfoyle" (from the water-colour drawing by Sir D. Y. Cameron) and supplemented by the commentaries of such distinguished writers as Andrew Lang and Cunninghame Graham, the study of the Fairy Legend should be considerably advanced, and the veil of mystery surrounding it a little thinned. To me, at least, the elfin realm—whatever it really represents—is an integral part of the great question of that spiritual world of which the seers, poets and some at least of the philosophers have discoursed through all the ages. There was more than fancy in Milton's saying that "Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth unseen both when we wake and when we sleep."

No one who has combined the study of fairy lore with that of psychic science (especially when the study has been fortified with practical experience) can fail to see how closely the two are associated, so much so that it has often been argued that the fairy tradition must have grown out of the contact between man incarnate and man discarnate in that obscure region which is known as the Borderland. In short, that there are not two separate kingdoms, fairies and human spirits, but that many spirit manifestations take apparently fairy forms. On that question I have my own views, the statement of which might only serve further to vex the inquiry. Nevertheless, the two subjects blend into each other in a singular way and there are some striking parallels between the two, so much so that what was written and believed concerning the elfin kingdom illustrates and supplements what we have learned in the seance-room and the psychic laboratory. One striking resemblance is the elfish and elusive nature of psychic faculty—of the very essence of fairy lore.

But we need not be impatient of those who scout the fairy tradition. It seems to be, for some, a necessary condition of intellectual tidiness and scientific method. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle once expressed to me his regret for having touched the fairy legend at all, for it seemed to him that it tended only to confuse and complicate the region of legitimate psychic inquiry. That is true enough, but it simply means that one should not take too large a field to till.

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CONSOLATION

SOME time ago a correspondent expressed a wish for consolatory articles. So we reprint the following little essay by Rev. John Page Hopps, which first appeared in our pages many years ago, and which we have slightly abridged :

What a profound significance there is in these words, "There the weary are at rest!"—not only the physically, but the sin-weary; the poor burdened soul that was "pressed down" by the corruptible body; the baffled, misled mind "weighed down by the earthly tabernacle"; the spirit that only needed kind Death to make it saved and free. And so, when we all go home, we may all prove that it is a gain to die. Then shall we all be "born again," in a higher sense even than Jesus meant; for then will the dust and scars and fetters of the body fall away, and the spirit be put in full possession of itself.

But even in those exceptional cases when the physical does not result in spiritual evil, it is still almost inevitable that spiritual weariness will result. For, say what we will, it is hard to believe in a good Father, when all along the poor body is worn, and the struggling mind is harassed with pain. Or, if the brave and confiding soul does hold by its faith, none the less does it become weary in the struggle. For this weariness also, rest is reserved—the rest not of unconsciousness, but of emancipation—the rest of a clear shining of the Father's face—the rest which comes with explanation, with satisfactions, with content, with life's battles fought and won.

So, then, let us all say :—

On that wonderful day
When I am still on the bed,
Smile through your weeping and say :
"He is gone by the upland way!"—
Do not say I am dead.
Say I am freed from the fires
Heated seven times red—
From the heart that vainly aspires,
From the hunger of blind desires ;
Do not say I am dead.
Say, "'Tis the dying is past,"
Say, "He is living at last!"
Do not say I am dead.

But it here becomes us to emphasise what I just now indicated—that the rest of which we speak is not inaction, but only emancipation. We want no heavenly fairy-land, no silent scene of mere repose. We want no mental desolation, no spiritual sloth. We want no cessation of exertion; but a world where, with increasing activity, the toil-worn body shall be unknown; where work shall not cease but only cease to be wearisome, and where unceasing employment shall be unceasing delight.

And now let these thoughts remain with us :—

Departure into the unseen makes no change in those who go, except in their advancement. We shall see again the dear old faces.

God does not send strange flowers every year.
When the Spring winds blow o'er the pleasant places,
The same dear things lift up the same fair faces—
The violet is here.

It all comes back—the odour, grace and hue ;
Each sweet relation of its life repeated :
No blank is left ; no looking-for is cheated ;
It is the thing we knew.

So after the death-winter it must be.
God will not put strange signs in the heavenly places
The old love shall look out from the old faces.

Departure into the unseen is essentially a happy thing—a very natural and beautiful thing. Death is as beautiful as life—dying as natural as being born: and, if we were very wise, we should know that it is advancement and a gain to die.

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The Syllabus for the Autumn Session will be published shortly.

Sittings may be booked with Mrs. Abbott, Mrs. Garrett, Mrs. Mason, Ruth Vaughan and other approved mediums in town.

MR. JUSTICE McCARDIE

IN the Wimbledon Spiritualist Church *Circular* for September it is reported that, at the service on July 31st, through the trance-Medium Mr. Gerald de Beaurepaire, a message purporting to be from the late Mr. Justice McCardie was given. It contained the following passages :

"Friends of the earth are helping me to speak to you—Henry McCardie—God help me! God help me! I knew there was no death—I knew they chose me, the Higher Ones, to sit in judgment on her, God's instrument. At that moment when the message could have been delivered that would have shaken the world, I, Henry McCardie failed—If only I had had the courage—I should not have lost my judgeship—Life for me henceforth would have been very different.

"Friends of the earth, I must come back; I will come back by God's help, for they have sent the Christ to me. There was no condemnation, no finger of scorn for me, who had received the opportunity to stand for the Truth, and threw it away.

"Friends, it is difficult to explain to you what I feel to the lady. I do want, if she will let me—if they will let me—to use her body that I may speak to the people, and also help my brother judges on the earth. They are not evil, not bad men, but just encompassed by evil."

MISS ESTELLE STEAD

Miss Estelle Stead is taking a well-earned holiday. After her recent bereavement, it became obvious to her friends that unless she got right away from London for a prolonged period, a general breakdown was imminent. Miss Stead is at present staying in Italy, and from there goes on to Egypt and the "Holy Land." Her well-wishers all over the world, wish her speedy recovery, a happy holiday, and a safe return.

* * *

Prior to going abroad, Miss Stead dedicated the "Little Chapel" at 28, Wiltshire Road, Brixton (of which she is president) as an annexe of the "W. T. Stead Bureau." Full information as to the activities of this new centre, can be obtained from Mrs. Rene Edouin, the resident medium (Telephone: Brixton 5085).

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11 a.m.—Mr. R. Dimsdale Stocker.

Clairvoyant: Mr. Thomas Wyatt.

6.30 p.m.—Mr. Percy Scholey.

Clairvoyante: Mrs. Annie Johnson.

Sunday, Sept. 17th, at 11 a.m. Mr. LEWIS JEFFERSON

Clairvoyante: Mrs. Esta Cassel.

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" " 6.30—Mrs. Fillmore.

" 20th. 2.30—Mrs. Helen Spiers.

" " 6.30—Mr. Glover Botham.

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