

Light

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research

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1881

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LED BY A STAR WHAT CHRISTMAS DEMANDS OF YOU

By URSULA BLOOM

IT is the feast of Christmas. The shops are decorated, and in our hearts there is that certain thrill, that sense of excitement, the knowledge that—for a short time anyway—the world will be kinder, life will be more genial, happiness will abound. The old message of Peace and Goodwill to all men will descend from Heaven once more, and live, unfortunately for all, too brief a space in our hearts again.

Nineteen hundred years ago, men were led by a star to an Infant shrine. There lay the Messiah Who had come to redeem the world, and to found a new faith, a faith which has been but badly carried through.

I suppose that now, nineteen hundred years after the great miracle of Christ's birth in Bethlehem, the world is at its lowest ebb. Then it was needing its Redeemer badly. It had become a world in which power and preferment only mattered. The old gods were gods of vengeance, there was no humility, no comfort, no sympathy, it was a world driven by those in power, and driven hard. Now, after a world war, we are a world that has gone to pieces. The war destroyed the last particle of a dying faith in us. The churches have been wrong, wrong from the start, in that Christ never decreed a priest-ridden religion, but Christianity—a Christianity that we in our ignorance have never attempted to follow. In the Victorian era, the Church tried hard to retain its hold. Its hold was the same dogmatism that the Romans used, when they trod on the heart of unhappy Jerusalem. It was not the hold that Christ would have employed.

Now we have empty churches. We have men and women who have not had the benefit of an upbringing close to the faith of their forefathers. Men and women who are here to-day and gone to-morrow, and for whom life after death does not seem to exist.

The young people of to-day are seeking and are not finding. What do we hear going on around us? "We snuff out like candles." "What does the afterwards matter? I don't believe there is an afterwards." "Get all the fun you can now, and as you can."

This is the generation of young people who have no soul, who cannot touch the deep realities of life and of death; who put off thinking of the inevitable to-morrow, of the other side, until they actually pass over.

For us all there is for ever a star shining, which asks us to follow its lead. Nineteen hundred years ago, wise men followed it to the humble inn where they learnt the simplest truths. That star has never set. It still reigns high in the Heavens, and is there for those who will follow it. It is immortal.

It tells of our immortality, and it only asks us to "Seek, and ye shall find." It is every man's and woman's duty to satisfy themselves that they have done their utmost to be assured of what happens after death. It can be only one of two things—either we snuff out, or we go on. If we go on, then an added responsibility is ours. We have got to live this life so that we may go on wisely and well, and not have to pay for mistakes which we have willingly made here. We have got the very word "mistakes" wrong. The sins that matter are the sins of lust, and of intolerance, and of gross hard-hearted misunderstanding; the sins of thinking the worst of other people, of selfishness, and of determination to have that inevitable good time, whatever happens and whoever suffers.

The sins of blindness to the star that only asks us to follow it.

If your faith has failed you, if you are groping about in the abyss of miserable uncertainty, take yourself in hand now. It is your duty to find out something about the

to-morrow which knows neither night nor day. It is not a duty that you can shirk and shift on to somebody else's shoulders. It is something that you personally have to undertake, something you have to find out for yourself.

Spiritualism can give you proof. I am not suggesting for one moment that you should go dabbling in psychic matters, and having sittings, and laying yourself open to all manner of dangerous uncertainties. Spiritualism has its charlatans, it has its frauds, and it lays itself very much open to these. I am suggesting that you should attend a service, read a book or two on it, and then make a simple test yourself. Nobody can convince you save yourself. Proof is only coming to you from a personal contact with the other world. Proof is a personal thing, something that I cannot give you, something you can only find for yourself.

You have got to *know* that we do not flutter out like candles in a wind. You have got to *know* that we suffer very much for the evil that we think and speak here. That there are people in another world who would give all they know to re-live their earthly span again and cannot.

You have got to know that the star leads you to find the cathedral within yourself, not the cathedral outside yourself. You are a temple, and in that temple you receive God. You are a body here to live for God, and to work for God, and you cannot dispose of your responsibilities as easily as you imagine.

The star is there for you to follow. If you are blind and will not see it, then you lose the great truth behind the Christmas message of Peace on Earth, Goodwill to all men. It is your duty to find out more about yourself, instead of letting the world slip by with nothing done. You ought to discover where you are going, what will happen to you at the change called death, and if there are others who will help you, and how they will help. You ought to make the road easier for yourself to tread, and incidentally easier for those who walk with you, by living to-day for to-morrow. By giving out of yourself in the right direction, and so making the world a far finer and nobler place.

Christmas demands this much of you.

Christmas demands that the great light of the star shall be reflected within the light of self, and, held high, act as a torch lighting your path to eternity. Christmas asks this, it gives you the great chance, it demands that you shall take it.

Are you going to miss it for another year? Are you going to set aside all thoughts of life after death and its meaning, and say "Oh, what's the use?" Life after death is the most important matter to life before death, only so few of us realise it. Life before death must be properly lived if it is to help life after death at all. Knowledge is needed. Aid is needed. Direction is needed.

But the star still shines to guide you.

Follow its lead.

TRUE GHOST STORIES

PROMISE TO APPEAR KEPT TEN MINUTES AFTER DEATH

By ANNIE BRITTAIN

GHOSTLY visitations and tales of haunted houses have, from time immemorial, been associated with Christmas, and it is therefore rather an appropriate time to relate two very eerie experiences which actually happened to me.

Most people are conscious of a creepy, hair-raising sensation stealing over them when reading, or listening to a ghost story, but I can assure my readers that it is far more harrowing to be actually involved in one.

The first experience happened when I was a girl of about sixteen. At that time my family left the West Riding of Yorkshire, and went to live at Longton, one of the Five towns. Six months later I was sent back to my old home to transact some business connected with the family, and whilst there, visited my Uncle Percy who was ill. Uncle Percy told me he was greatly concerned about the new religion of Spiritualism in which my people had lately become interested; that he had grave fears for their souls, in short, that they were on the wrong road and heading for a hot corner. Uncle Percy concerned himself very much about people's souls, by the way, and tried to do a lot for them. However, to set all doubts at rest, he made this pact with me before we parted—that when he died, he would return and show himself to me if he found it were possible.

My uncle was not seriously ill, and I really cannot recall having given the pact a second thought. Usually a girl of sixteen finds life exciting anywhere, even in the Five Towns, and my uncle's promise to haunt me was for-

gotten until, six weeks later, it was brought home to me in a singularly terrifying fashion.

I was devoted to my Uncle Percy, but I often think he had no sense of humour. To frighten a young girl almost out of her wits by projecting himself as a grey mist into the crack of a door, then to emerge from it a new man, like a new hat out of a band-box and to have engineered all this just ten minutes after he had shuffled off his mortal coil, was, to say the least, a little inconsiderate of him, and dreadfully unnerving.

But as this is a ghost story that is absolutely true, I will tell it just as it happened, neither suppressing nor exaggerating, with the meticulous accuracy of the professional narrator of events relating to apparitions.

It was a Saturday evening and I was feeling unwell. My parents had just gone out and left me alone in the house, and as they would not return for two or three hours, I bolted the yard-gate, re-entered the house, and bolted the front and back doors. The house was very old, and a large stone-flagged passage led from the front door into the living room, which also had a paved floor. The least sound made by anyone in the passage resounded throughout the house. I went into the living room, which was large and airy, and, closing the door, lay on the couch to rest, but not to sleep. A minute later I got up again to turn the gas low and soften the glare, then settled myself on the couch once more, leaving sufficient light to enable me to see everything in the room clearly.

I had been resting for nearly half an hour when, quite distinctly, I heard the front door open, and was startled by a heavy tread in the passage. Just for a moment I thought my father had returned, but remembered, with

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TRUE GHOST STORIES

(Continued from previous page)

a little shock, that both doors had been bolted on the inside and that anyone who entered would have to be admitted by me. Burglars flashed into my mind. I propped myself on one elbow and tried to shout, but no sound would come from my throat.

Tramp, tramp, tramp came the approaching steps, and the echoes followed in their wake. The few seconds which elapsed before the footsteps reached the door seemed an eternity, and each trivial detail in the room seems photographed on my brain. The hands of the little clock on the mantel-piece pointed to 9.35; even its ticking seemed to be suspended.

Just before the steps reached the door, I remember noticing that the stool used by one of my young brothers, was lying overturned on the hearth.

The intruder halted at the door. Imagine my feelings when the knob began to turn and the door opened inch by inch. As the door swung noiselessly on its hinges, I saw the crack fill with a dense grey mist, and when it was fully open, a thick cloud, oval in shape, reached from top to bottom of the doorway almost touching the sides at the widest part.

I think I had expected a man, but the horror of this nameless thing unnerved me. As the dreadful thing drew on towards me, perspiration broke all over my body. I had no more control over my legs than if they had been made of lead, or I think I should have run for the door the moment it was clear. I could neither speak nor scream, but I tried to wave the horrid thing away with my arms. As though it were aware of my anguish, it moved along by the table towards the centre of the room. And now the cloud began to shrink and disperse on the outside, as though it were being fanned away by something lurking at the core.

Even as I watched I saw it take on the faint outlines of a man. Then the thing burst. It was just as if a match had been put to a cloud of petrol vapour. Only it burst, not into flame, but into my Uncle Percy! For an instant I saw him stand there as real as life, and I remember exclaiming "Oh! Uncle Percy." Then something gave way in my head and the blessed mantle of unconsciousness fell over me.

Whether my Uncle Percy attempted to revive me with astral smelling salts I do not know, but when I came to myself, I was lying on the hearthrug where my father had found me, and he (my father) was bending over me with restoratives in his hand. My first words were "Oh! father, Uncle Percy is dead," and I related to him what had happened.

It seems that my father had returned alone, knocked repeatedly, and receiving no answer had become alarmed. Then he looked through the window and saw me lying on the hearthrug in a faint, and finally he had broken a pane in the back kitchen window, undone the latch, and entered that way.

The sequel is short but dramatic. While we were at breakfast next morning, a telegram arrived which read: "Percy died 9.25 last night"—just ten minutes before he had kept his pact to appear to me.

A GRUESOME EXPERIENCE.

The second experience was the most gruesome I have ever passed through; and, even as I write, the horror of that night comes back to me.

It occurred when I was staying with some friends at a house in North Wales in the year 1909. The house is very old, and has a business attached to it; for this reason I am not mentioning the name of either the town or the people.

The moment I entered the house, I was conscious of a peculiar psychic atmosphere, a suffocating sense of oppression which, despite all the bright good humour and

cheeriness of my friends would not dispel as the day wore on.

My friends were a musical family and we spent a jovial evening. At bed-time, I was shown to my room and wished good-night and sound sleep. My bedroom was small, but I noticed nothing unusual about it, and, being rather tired, undressed quickly, blew out the candle, and settled comfortably in bed for a good night's rest. But I courted sleep in vain.

That weird feeling which had remained with me during the day seemed now to be in the very air I was breathing. It was as the advent of some horror, formless and unspeakable, that, drawing ever closer, would presently fall upon me and strangle me.

I had been lying awake for perhaps an hour, when suddenly the bed was flooded with a faint unearthly light which seemed to come from over the head of the bed. Fearfully I turned my head, and lo! where there had been solid wall was now an open door, through which the mysterious light was streaming; and, standing just within the doorway was a man, wild-eyed, and with his throat slit from ear to ear. Blood was pouring from the frightful jagged wound and soaking his clothes.

I did not wait for further developments but pulled the bedclothes over my head quickly, and, shutting my eyes tightly, prayed for my "guides" to protect me. I asked that this poor earth-bound spirit (for such I judged him to be) might be set free, and as if in answer to my prayer, I felt presently a soothing influence steal over me and sank into a dreamless sleep.

When I woke, the sun was shining brightly and the sky was a happy care-free blue. The oppression of the night had vanished like smoke and I felt quite lighthearted.

After I had dressed, I examined the wall at the back of the bed at the spot where I had seen the apparition. At first glance it seemed quite sound, but on looking closer I found that, although the wall-paper was unbroken, I could trace beneath it the outline of a door.

I had determined to say nothing to my hostess of my uncanny and unwelcome midnight visitor, but at breakfast one of my friends enquired if I had slept well, and I suppose, deciding from my hesitating manner that I had not, beguiled me into relating my experience. My friends now told me that many years ago, a former tenant had committed suicide in the house, but in precisely which room they were unable to say. They, too, had noticed the signs of the door at the head of my bed, but as it was papered over at the time they had taken the house and they had never felt any urgent need of extra room, it had remained undisturbed. I said I was certain that the act had been committed in the small room behind the door, and during the day this conjecture was confirmed by a gentleman who had known the former tenant well.

This same gentleman was also able to tell me that what I had seen in my vision was a true description of the manner in which the man had died. My hostess wished to change my room, but I asked her not to do so, as I felt that the apparition would not trouble me again. Nor did he, for from that time the psychic atmosphere was clearer and I slept undisturbed.

Such an experience as this is horrid in the extreme, and I hope sincerely that I shall never have another.

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SIR ERNEST DE BRATH

Lieut.-General Sir Ernest De Brath, whose death from heart-failure, at the age of 75, is reported from Nice, was for many years a member of the L.S.A., and his passing will be regretted by many readers of LIGHT, on whose behalf we offer our sympathy to Lady De Brath and to Mr. Stanley De Brath (brother).

MARY PICKFORD'S GHOST STORY

"I BELIEVE IN THE CLOSENESS OF THE OTHER WORLD"

MARY PICKFORD, the "world's cinema sweetheart," believes in Survival and she also believes that ghosts of former occupants share her home, Pickfair, in the Beverly Hills, near Hollywood, California. In the *Motion Picture Magazine*, U.S.A., (quoted by the *Progressive Thinker*, U.S.A.) the story is told in Mary's own words: "This house is haunted," she said. "There are ghosts in the attic. They have been there for the twelve years we have lived here. You know, I think that I am a conservative person, careful of what I say and not quick to jump at conclusions, and that I am strongly inclined to avoid anything that approaches the sensational. Yet I say to you, here and now—there are ghosts in Pickfair. They have been here as long as we have."

"Years ago, this house was an old hunting-lodge. I have heard that the woman who owned the house died here. She died, I believe, a lingering and perhaps a tragic and reluctant death. It is said that she used to sit at a certain window, night after night, to watch the sun go down over the place on earth she loved beyond all others. Perhaps she resents us who have followed her here. Perhaps, poor soul, she still feels that this is her home and that she and her friends have a right in the attic, fingering old and well-loved things, moving possessions about, having parties, resentful and confused at the changes and at the new inhabitants. Perhaps we who live here are as strange to her and to her friends as they are to us."

"I do not know who these people are. I have no idea why they are here, or what they want. But I know that they are here."

"When first I heard these sounds, I gave them all sorts of explanations. I thought there was wind under the eaves. I attributed them to the settling of the wood—to something, anything that might be explained by natural causes. Douglas agreed with me. He scoffed at the idea of ghosts as a man would. He doesn't scoff now."

"Then we had the roof altered. It was no longer possible for the wind to creep beneath the eaves. It wasn't reasonable to suppose that we wouldn't know the sound of settling wood. It was no longer possible to believe that natural causes could be responsible for the unmistakable sounds of pacing feet—up and down—up and down—like this—or for the equally unmistakable sound of trunks being moved from place to place and back again. There were noises so insistently loud that we could not sleep at night. I could not sleep. Those sounds, those noises have continued unabatedly up to this very day, up to last night. . . ."

"One night Douglas and I were sleeping in the front bedroom. I was awakened by his calling me. 'Mary,' he said, 'look over at that curtain and tell me what you see. I looked and told him I saw a pair of eyes—eyes that were certainly not earthly eyes. He asked me to describe to him their exact colour, position on the curtain, expression, size. I did. And then he said, 'I didn't give you any hint, did I? I didn't say a word?' I told him 'No.' And he said, 'Well, you have described to me exactly what I saw—exactly, in every detail.'"

"Douglas now believes with me that agencies we cannot explain away are in this house, in the attic. And if Douglas concedes so much, it is proof positive that this is no fantasy on my part, no imagining of a woman's brain conjured up out of weariness or a belief in the nearness of those who have passed over."

"I do, you know, believe in the nearness of those who have gone on. I have been asked why, if this is my belief, those I have loved most dearly do not come to me. They do come to me in dreams—dreams that are more than dreams. Some day they will come to me outside of dreams. It is simply that we do not know how to meet

them—we have not yet found the means of contact. But we did not discover radio, the mystic power of hearing voices a world away, until very recently. There will come a time when communication with those in the other world will seem no more and no less remarkable than the radio seems to-day."

"Douglas recently tried to reach me on the 'phone from Switzerland, just before leaving for home. There was static to such an extent that he could not, at first, get through to me. I was not worried. The static condition would pass—and he would get through. It is the same with us and with our communications with those other loved ones another world away. Some day, in some clear hour, the static will clear away and communication will be established."

"I believe in the closeness of the other world," Mary insisted, "I believe in the continuity of the individual life. I believe that if now, to-day, this ceiling should fall and I should be what is known as 'killed' and you should see me carried, lifeless, from this room—I believe that I would continue to live here, at Pickfair. I would go to the studio. I would be in these rooms, go through the routine of my life, be here—until I had learned better."

"They have not learned better, those poor ghosts who inhabit my attic. They must cling to the idea that this place is still theirs. They must resent it because they are pushed aside, made unwelcome. They haven't learned better."

MEMORIAL TO WILLIAM HOPE

AT the Church of All Saints, Weston, near Otley, Yorkshire, on Sunday, December 10th, the Vicar, Rev. C. L. Tweedale, unveiled a memorial to the late William Hope, of Crewe, the world-famous psychic photographer. It is in the form of a brass, mounted on a solid oak plaque, and reads as follows:

TO THE GLORY OF GOD and in MEMORY of
WILLIAM HOPE
OF CREWE

BORN DEC. 10th 1864: DIED MARCH 8th 1933.
WHO BY HIS WONDERFUL SPIRITUAL GIFTS
BROUGHT CONSOLATION TO THOUSANDS
DEMONSTRATING HUMAN SURVIVAL
AND "THE LIFE OF THE WORLD TO COME"
TO HIS DAY AND GENERATION.

"TO ANOTHER DISCERNING OF SPIRITS" I Cor. xii. 10.
"MADE MANIFEST BY LIGHT" Ephes. v. 13.

C. L. Tweedale.

M. E. Tweedale.

The service was attended by people from many different parts of the country, including Mr. Arthur Hope (son), and Mr. Latham (son-in-law). In his address, Mr. Tweedale said he knew Mr. Hope intimately and regarded him as "the most wonderful man of this or any other age in his power to give permanent evidence of survival and the life of the world to come."

MR. SHAW DESMOND

"The Unknown World," the first of a series of four articles by Mr. Shaw Desmond, is given pride of place in the January issue of *Nash's Magazine* now on sale. The topic is "Do We Go On?" In the opening article, Mr. Desmond re-states the attitude of scientific men for and against Survival. The second is to be entitled "The Truth about Mediums"; the third, "The Case for Ghosts"; and the fourth "What Happens After Death."

Readers of *LIGHT* will be interested to know that an article by Mr. Shaw Desmond will appear in our first issue for January, 1934.

FRAU LOTTE PLAAT'S VISIONS

AFTER a short stay in England, Frau Lotte Plaat returned, last week, to Norway where she now resides. As a psychometrist she has few rivals. In England she underwent but sporadic experiments. Her extraordinary psychic gifts received much wider scientific attention in Germany. In 1929 Dr. Paul Sunner published a book: *Die Psychometrische Begabung der Frau Lotte Plaat nebst Beiträgen zur Frage der Psychometrie* (The Psychometric Gift of Frau Lotte Plaat with treatises on the question of Psychometry). This is an elaboration of the report of the Berlin Medical Society for Psychical Research on experiments conducted with Frau Lotte Plaat and first published in Nov.-December, 1928, in the *Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie*; it forms an important contribution to the literature of psychometry. Quite recently Prof. Ludwig Jahn published another book: *Das Medium Frau Lotte Plaat und ihre weltumfassende seelische Einfühlungskunst* (Medium Frau Lotte Plaat and her world-encircling soul sense). It gives the life story of Frau Lotte Plaat, narratives of almost incredible assistance she rendered in German criminal cases, and an account of her late tour in England, the United States and Central America.

Before leaving England, Frau Lotte Plaat kindly consented to give an interview for LIGHT.

How do you see when you psychometrise?—was the first question.

"When I take an object into my hand," replied Frau Lotte Plaat, "the past begins to speak to me. I actually hear a whisper which I believe to be that of Sœur Angeline a spirit who is always close to me. Point by point, detail by detail, the past unfolds, I get further and further away in time down to the infancy of the owner of the object, then I come back to his present and to his future.

"This is the most puzzling part of my gift; often a considerable worry. I don't want to see the future; for the average man there are too many unpleasant things in it. But I cannot help it. The object which I hold in my hand is a key which opens both the past and the future.

"A lady lost her dog. She came to me with the dog's collar. As soon as I took it in my hand I felt a terrible pain in my side. I knew instantly that the dog was run over by a motor car, it died from several broken ribs and was thrown in the Thames. The dog wore no collar when this happened.

"An instance of the future. I was invited to the country by an English family. I told them: Take care of the little child. I see her with a broken ankle in the next three or four days. The governess was accordingly instructed. She never left the child for a moment. Yet the child, toddling in front of her, fell and broke her ankle as I foresaw.

Does that mean that the future which you see is inevitable?

"No. Sometimes the fulfilment of events is prevented by precautions. An accident in the street can be avoided by staying at home. But people are strange. They always try to test fate. If they stayed at home they never would know that the warning was well-founded.

"In some directions the gift does not work. Friends asked me once before a race which of the horses was going to win. I saw the horses and pointed out one which I saw going with the first prize. It was a hopeless outsider. They laughed at me. But the horse won. If it had been a question of large stakes, I don't think I would have got the impression. I tried it on roulette. The numbers which I chose were invariably wrong.

Is your foresight always personal or can you foretell the future of a community, of a whole country?

"I can make local forecasts from a point de repère. In Vienna and Graz, in certain streets I foresaw revolution. I saw people ankle deep in blood, lots of them wounded and a few dead. In Graz the vision was fulfilled. In Vienna not yet."

IF MEDIUMS WERE PSYCHO- ANALYSED

MRS. ELIZABETH SEVERN'S VIEWS

PSYCHOLOGY considers mediumship a state of dissociation. It is claimed by some that dissociated states could be welded by suggestion and then mediumship would vanish.

Psycho-analysis also claims to have a cure for dissociation, but the method is opposite to suggestion. Instead of building over, it searches for the origin of dissociation, digs deep down into the unconscious and brings the cause into the light of normal consciousness, setting in operation, by such elimination, the process of natural healing.

Would mediumship, as a consequence, disappear or remain unaffected? To this absorbing question Mrs. Elizabeth Severn, the noted analyst, (whose latest book *The Discovery of the Self* was recently reviewed in LIGHT) gave, in a special interview, the following answer:

"Orthodox psycho-analysis would say that mediumistic manifestations are the effect of dissociation. A cure would involve reintegration and the manifestations would, in all probability, disappear. I differ slightly. My attitude is more flexible. I think that, with sufficient care, reintegration could be effected and the psychic faculty preserved. In fact, I strongly incline to the belief that instead of destroying mediumship, psycho-analysis would improve it, for it would free the Mediums from all their idiosyncrasies and a clearer flow of supernormal information might be vouchsafed. For psycho-analysis might be extended to the Control as well. It would not only establish the Control's independence of personality, but could benefit him just as well as it benefits those in the ordinary state of consciousness.

"Saying this, I do not mean to pin myself down to a staunch belief in Controls. For all I know, they may not be necessary at all for supernormal functions. Theoretically a dissociated self, i.e., a secondary personality, might be physically sensitive when the normal self is not. Being psychic means to me an extended power of registration, a receptive function of which hypnotic experiments, even actively, furnish positive proof. The extension of this power of registration is due to the injury which the *psyche* suffered in early childhood. It is nature's self-protective device, without which the patient would have succumbed to the injury. If the extension reaches beyond the physical and the perceptive function becomes habituated, there is no reason why it should not remain unaffected after a synthesis has been accomplished. In the few cases within my experience, the supernormal function has been thus preserved. It is natural that it should be so. For no one loses talents by analysis unless he wants to. Nothing is forcibly removed. This is another essential difference between the suggestive and the analytic treatment.

"Another point on which I might dwell. Psycho-analysis does not accept mediumship as hereditary. It is not due to a pre-natal but to a post-natal influence. If the child of the Medium were taken away and brought up with due care in non-psychic environment I do not believe that any supernormal powers would manifest. I hold that in all cases injury or environmental influence is responsible for psychic gifts."

DR. GEORGE LINDSAY JOHNSON, M.A., M.D., is known to many readers by reason of his interest in Spiritualism and Psychical Research, and by his books, notably *The Great Problem*. For many years past he has resided in South Africa and we have just heard through his friend, Mr. Aubrey Turle of Bristol, that, although he has reached the age of eighty, Dr. Johnson is still in practice (in Pretoria).

REINCARNATION—HYPOTHESIS OR FACT?

RESTATEMENT OF ARGUMENTS FOR AND AGAINST

REINCARNATION: is it hypothesis or fact? This was the problem discussed in the presence of a large gathering of members and friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance on Thursday evening last week (December 14). The speakers were: Dr. Fielding-Ould (president of the L.S.A.), Miss Geraldine Cummins, Miss Olive Pixley and Mr. H. F. Prevost Battersby.

DR. FIELDING-OULD

DR. FIELDING-OULD, opening the discussion, said there was perhaps no philosophical doctrine in the world that had so magnificent an intellectual history as that of Reincarnation—*i.e.*, the idea of the unfolding of the human spirit through recurring lives on earth and its development into intellectual faculty and conscience during a heaven-life, so that a child, when born, appears with his past experiences transmuted into mental and moral tendencies and powers. As Max Muller said: "The greatest minds humanity has produced have accepted Reincarnation."

"Yet I do not wish to be too dogmatic," he said, "and would only suggest that Reincarnation can be reasonably accepted as a provisional hypothesis rather than as a rigid dogma. Reincarnation was taught by the ancient Hindus as an undoubted fact on which morality is based. The Buddha taught it. Pythagoras and Plato included it in their teachings; Josephus states that it was accepted by the Jews. It appears in the Bible and Christ accepted it, telling his disciples that John the Baptist was Elijah. The Latin poets, Virgil and Ovid, take Reincarnation for granted and the rituals composed by the learning of Egypt inculcated it. The Neo-Platonists accepted the principle; and Origen, most learned of the Christian Fathers, declared 'that every man received a body according to his deserts and his former actions.' Later, we find it taught by Goethe and Schelling; and Hume declared that it was the only doctrine of immortality a philosopher could look at. Lastly, Professor McTaggart, in reviewing the various theories of immortality, came to the conclusion that Reincarnation was the most rational.

"Wordsworth, Rossetti, Browning and Tennyson and other poets believed it. The reappearance, then, of the belief in the theory of Reincarnation is not the emergence of a belief of savages among civilised races, but a sign of a recovery from a temporary obscuration of the truth by mediæval Christianity which, by derationalising religion, has led to much evil and given rise to so much scepticism and materialism.

"To assert the special creation of a soul for every fresh body—implying that the coming into existence of a soul depends on the formation of a body—inevitably leads to the conclusion that, with the death of the body, the soul will pass out of existence, for that a soul with no past should have an everlasting future is as incredible as that a stick should exist with only one end.

"The loss of the teaching of Reincarnation gave rise to the idea of a never-ending heaven for which no one is good enough, and a never-ending hell for which no one is wicked enough—it compressed human evolution to an inappreciable fragment of existence, hung an everlasting future on the contents of a few years, and made life an unintelligible tangle of injustices, of unearned genius and unmerited criminality, and left an intolerable problem for the thoughtful—a problem which could only be tolerable to blind and foundationless faith."

After pointing out that Reincarnation furnished a key to a crowd of psychological enigmas, such as infant prodigies, genius and innate faculties, Dr. Fielding-Ould said the problem of evil had always been a source of embarrassment to the opponents of Reincarnation, for evil had not its origin in the will or powerlessness of a

responsible Creator, but was simply the measure of inferiority of worlds and of souls—in both cases it was bound to diminish in proportion to evolutionary progress. "Evil," he said, "is useful, for it is the goad which punishes if we remain stationary; but evil in the absolute sense of the word has no real existence if the principle of Reincarnation combined with the generally-accepted law of evolution is accepted.

"If I put forward the theory of Reincarnation as a probability," said Dr. Fielding-Ould in conclusion, "it is a probability which sooner or later will become universally accepted as a magnificent certainty."

MISS GERALDINE CUMMINS

MISS GERALDINE CUMMINS said that on the subject of Reincarnation she had an open mind, though it very nearly became permanently closed when, in two years, she met three very ordinary women who all claimed to be reincarnations of Napoleon. "The nations are quarrelsome enough," she said, "without the addition of a number of female Napoleons."

In all seriousness, the theory of Reincarnation presented one grave difficulty as regards its acceptance. So far as she knew, there was no accumulated mass of evidence of continual re-birth on earth which would satisfy the scientific mind, or even the mind of the man in the street; whereas there had been put on record in the columns of *LIGHT*, and also at the S.P.R., an amazing variety of evidential cases which all seemed to point to the survival in part, if not as a whole, of human personality. When evidence was presented of Reincarnation, it could usually be explained by clairvoyance or some Spiritualistic hypothesis.

Miss Cummins quoted two stories recently related to her in support of Reincarnation. In the first, it was stated that a quantity of treasure had been located and recovered by a Brahmin priest who said he remembered his previous incarnation, during which the treasure had been buried; and in the second, an Indian boy, who said he was the reincarnation of a murdered policeman, gave information which led to the conviction of the murderers. Clairvoyance might explain the second case, she said, but not the first. But even if they accepted this evidence, it did not suggest a hundred or more lives spent on earth by the human soul, which was the claim put forward by many Theosophists and Buddhists. Mr. Sinnett once declared, with truth, that such a doctrine was a form of transcendental materialism—a kind of materialism she fancied, repugnant to Spiritualists.

A MESSAGE FROM F. W. H. MYERS

They would be interested, Miss Cummins continued, in an extract from an essay on Reincarnation communicated to her in the name of F. W. H. Myers. It included the following:

"I am quite clear that those human beings who live almost wholly in the physical sense while on earth must be reborn in order that they may experience an intellectual and higher form of emotional life. In other words, those human beings I have described as animal-man almost invariably reincarnate . . . but metempsychosis does not involve a machine-like regularity of return. I have not noticed any evidence of a continual progression of births and deaths for any one particular soul. I do not for a moment believe that the individual returns a hundred times or more to the earth. . . .

"It is not necessary for us to return to earth to gather into our granary the manifold variety of life and knowledge. We can reap, bind and bring it all home by participating in the life of our group-soul. Many belong to it, and these many spread themselves in their journeys over past, present and future. Indeed, in the group, we speak of the life of a man as a journey. Very well. I have not, at any time, been a member of the yellow races,

but there are souls in my group who have known and lived that Eastern life, and I may and do enter into every act and emotion in their past chronicle. I perceive and feel the drama in the earthly journey of a Buddhist priest, or an American merchant, of an Italian painter, through our communal existence. And I am, if I assimilate the life thus lived, spared the living of it in the flesh."

MR. PREVOST BATTERSBY

MR. PREVOST BATTERSBY said he had read about Reincarnation and found it just as easy to be certain it was true as that it was not. On this side and on the other, conviction seemed to be divided; and though the negation of belief could never claim to be convincing, the burden on the positivists would seem to require the production of someone who had been reincarnated—which was by no means easy.

"I was interested to discover," he continued, "in Sir James Frazer's latest volume, how widespread is the belief in re-birth among primitive people. The Margi of Northern Nigeria seem to regard it as the only sort of immortality they can hope for, and they restrict even that privilege to the souls of the good—which seems hardly upheld by the slow improvement of humanity, not that it by any means follows that a good man in one incarnation will be a better man in the next.

"The Gonds of Southern India used to bury their dead in the house, to have their souls handy for the next grandchild that came along, sometimes marking the corpse with soot or vermilion to be able to label correctly any babe with a similar marking; and since house-burial has been forbidden as unhygienic by a paternal government, they collect the soul of the deceased—it is an extraordinarily complicated procedure and as often as not results in an insect—and enshrine it in the house in some concrete form. That is to say, if the soul consents. It does not always, in which case its token is taken outside the village, has a chicken sacrificed to it, and is buried under a heap of stones and there apparently its reincarnation potentialities end.

"Now, as they say on the wireless," Mr. Battersby continued, "I am going to take you to Tibet, since there, perhaps because they have no daily papers, they take an intelligent interest in their souls.

"Buddhism in some form or other is the foundation of their beliefs, and though Buddhism denies the existence of a transmigrating soul and considers the belief of a permanent ego as a most pernicious error, the large majority of unlearned Buddhists have lapsed into the old Indian doctrine which represents the self periodically (in the words of the Bhagavad Gita) 'changing his worn-out body for a new one, as we cast away a worn-out garment to clothe oneself in a new.' Based on that belief lines of successive incarnations of human worthies have been recognised. These are styled 'rosary of births' or 'rosary of bodies,' because they are linked together like the beads of a rosary."

Mr. Battersby, in conclusion, quoted two stories of reincarnation related by Madame David-Neel. In the first of these, it was stated that a boy proved his right to a lama-succession by recognising a snuff-box and calling for a certain cup, the existence of which had been forgotten; and in the second, a young man established his right to an important office by recognising places and people and recalling incidents of which, in the ordinary way, he could have had no knowledge.

MISS OLIVE PIXLEY

MISS PIXLEY said that to believe in the law of Reincarnation must be primarily an act of faith, for it either was a law or it was not. If it were a law, the knowledge of the working of it must be specific knowledge and involved the complete awareness of the functioning of the individuality. It should be a part of one's creed: "I believe in the Reincarnation of the soul and the fulfilling of the law." By the law, she meant the law of Love. She believed that their souls incarnated again

and again until they individually learned not only not to break this law but to fulfil it—in fact to be the law, to be Love.

"The law of Reincarnation cannot be proved," she continued, "any more than the law of love can be proved, though they both can be demonstrated. None of us who have any powers of observation and deduction can accept God as a beneficent being—can in fact have any real religious beliefs—when we, seeing the lives of geniuses and idiots, kings and beggars, athletes and cripples, chefs and dyspeptics, surgeons and patients, and, looking on the phenomenon of incarnation, judge it to be an isolated experience.

"Personally, I believe it was an accepted fact, at the time that the soul of Jesus incarnated. Most certainly in those days they seem to have taken for granted that the souls of great men like the old prophets reassumed earthly forms; for when Christ asked whom the people thought He really was, the disciples told Him the current gossip of the day—which was that He was believed to be the reincarnation of one of the prophets, some saying that He was this one and some saying He was that.

"Don't you think we might have been saved the Inquisition, and the Reformation, and the bloody wars of aggression and acquisition," Miss Pixley asked, "if the doctrine of the Reincarnation of the soul to fulfil the law of Christ on earth had been incorporated in the Christian faith?

"The repugnance that the average Christian mind has towards Reincarnation is always, I think, a personal one. They would not care if the whole world reincarnated, so long as they individually were not forced back into a repetition of their present conditions, and are often obsessed with fears at possibly finding themselves in retrograde and more limiting ones. Usually it is the result of unsatisfactory emotional experiences, which have provided such bitter pain that the thought of having to endure it all over again makes complete oblivion a soothing alternative. I emphatically believe that, if we understood the law of Love, our whole conception of the law of Reincarnation would change. . . .

"Most people think how much easier life here would be if only we had a reliable retentive memory, so that we might profit by past experiences in bygone lives. There is no doubt that if boys and girls had cribs on their desks beside them they would find examinations extremely pleasant, but the headmaster would have no guarantee that any lesson had been properly learned. Education here is only a reflection of education in the world of Light. And the prize to be won is the perfect consummation of love, and that is the urge that drives our souls back again and again to graduate in the most difficult of all spheres, the material world.

"Memory would not really help us with all the changing conditions and changing values. You know how hard it is for the aged not to adhere stubbornly to the conditions that prevailed in their youth. Parents in one life can fail to understand and sympathise with the rising generation. How should memory of Egyptian, Roman, Mediæval or Georgian times, help us to focus on our immediate present, or help us to develop our dormant capacities? Surely our minds would hark for ever backwards, meditate on past joys and desiccated tragedies.

"The little experience I have had of talking to people who remember one of their lives made me aware of that very danger. They are apt to live in the past, think it far more important than the present; they go to museums to study their particular era—it is of invariably greater importance than their present social position, and they live mostly in a dream world.

"When we have achieved our equilibrium, when we are conscious souls, when the values of life are part of the rhythm of our being, then memory will be able to function in us, then the past, present and future will fuse in the great white light of revelation and there will be a new heaven and a new earth."

MARGERY MEDIUMSHIP VINDICATED

FINGERPRINT ALLEGATIONS REFUTED

WITH the coming to London of Dr. L. R. G. Crandon, light has been shed on one of the most baffling psychic mysteries of recent years.

The supernormal fingerprints which "Walter," Margery Crandon's deceased brother and control, produced, under conditions of absolute control, for many years, were made the subject of inferences of grave nature by the report of Mr. E. E. Dudley (*Bulletin of the Boston S.P.R.*, Oct. 1932), according to which these prints were identical with those of "Dr. Kerwin," a living man, and could not, in accordance with the mathematics of dactiloscropy, also correspond with those of any other person, living or dead.

Owing to the delay in returning an answer to the charges raised by Mr. Dudley (and conjointly by Mr. Arthur Goadby and Dr. Hereward Carrington), in January, 1933, Dr. W. F. Prince (*Bulletin XIX. B. S.P.R.*) brought forward definite accusations of fraud.

We are glad to announce that, in a special volume of *A.S.P.R. Proceedings* which contains 500 pages and 104 plates, a complete answer has been made to the charges laid against "Walter" and, indirectly against Margery.

"The delay in publication," Dr. Crandon stated in an interview with a representative of *LIGHT*, "which was solely due to financial reasons, tested our staunch friends and supporters, but at last they will find their faith justified. The course we adopted was not only to compile evidence for the disproval, to a hundred per cent., of all the statements of our detractors; we also scrapped, in a sense, all past fingerprint experiments and initiated, under still more rigorous conditions, an entirely new series. The result of these experiments is now also incorporated in the report and presents, I confidently believe, a final case.

"Mr. Thorogood, the research engineer of the *A.S.P.R.*, procured complete impressions of both hands and all fingers of Dr. Kerwin. In a long series of experiments he also obtained complete hands of 'Walter' in relief. He demonstrated that these hands were produced supernormally. An expert comparison of these new prints and the old ones with those on which Mr. Dudley's charges are based and an examination of the history of the old prints reveals the following situation:

"THE LEFT THUMBPRINTS: On August 23, 1927, at Mr. S.'s request, 'Walter' produced, according to records, three thumbprints which he said were of his left thumb. Dudley and S. pronounced them to be identical. Mr. Bird published what purported to be one of them in the *Journal* in 1928. This wax is not available. The other two alleged left thumbprints were retained by Mr. S., and he now has them.

"Mr. Dudley now claims that the print he published (1928) is identical with Dr. Kerwin's left thumbprint, and in his exhibit it appears to be so. It is true, however, that the two that were retained by Mr. S. are entirely unlike the one Dudley published and is now using, and entirely unlike Dr. Kerwin's authentic and freshly-made left thumbprint. Furthermore, the two we have are identical with the left thumbprints recently obtained supernormally by Mr. Thorogood. *It is therefore, apparent that the one used by Mr. Dudley for his comparison for some reason or other is not authentic.*

"It is also alleged that Mr. Hutchinson (of Cincinnati) was given one of the three prints made on the evening referred to. We have not seen this wax, but it is said to be identical with Dr. Kerwin's left thumb. If this be true, it would necessarily differ from the two we have that were made at that time and also differ from the left thumbprints recently obtained by Mr. Thorogood. It is possible that Mr. Hutchinson was mistaken as to what was given him. It certainly seems improbable that one of the three left thumbprints produced (the first left thumbprints we

had ever had) would have been so casually disposed of. Some other wax may have been given him or some change may have been made in it or some substitution may have been made. We do not undertake to answer that problem.

"The conclusion, however, in regard to the left thumbprint is that we have two of the authentic old left thumbprints and many recent ones produced supernormally. *All of these are different from Dr. Kerwin's left thumbprint.* It is clear that the one used by Dudley is not authentic.

"THE RIGHT THUMBPRINTS: For purposes of comparison, Dudley used a right thumbprint produced in February, 1927, and published by him in the *Journal*. We do not have the wax. The right thumbprints recently procured supernormally by Mr. Thorogood agree with most of the old right thumbprints; and the markings on the casts made from most of the old paraffin gloves produced before dental wax was used agree with those of the standard 'Walter' hands. There is a great similarity between these right thumbprints and the authentic right thumbprint of Dr. Kerwin, but they are not identical. 'Walter's' right thumb has a staple in the core and Dr. Kerwin's has a rod. There are other differences which demonstrate that they are not the same. Whether the print used by Mr. Dudley for comparison is like Dr. Kerwin's it is impossible to say, as without the wax, the differences cannot be detected.

"*The general conclusion is that neither the right nor the left of the so-called 'Walter' thumb prints is the same as Dr. Kerwin's; that the 'Walter' prints are produced supernormally; and finally, it is demonstrated that Mr. Dudley's declaration is unfounded.*

"If further evidence is needed, we have photographs showing the 'Walter' hand taking the soft wax out of the hot water dish, then pressing his thumb and fingers on it, handing the finished print to Dr. Richardson and, finally, Dr. Richardson shaking 'Walter's' hand in congratulation. The hand is crude but the part used in the experiment is well developed. Walter has repeatedly called attention to the perfection of his fingers and nails. Examination of the hand frequently showed absence of bone in the distal phalanx.

"Altogether, 150 prints have been made in the past. Dr. W. F. Prince made fun of the fact that a left thumbprint has been made of the right thumb. Nevertheless, this is a fact. Teleplasm being ideoplastic, Walter can make the thumbprint with right or left hand, or his foot for that matter.

"Why do we accept these prints as 'Walter's'? Not only because we see them being made, but because we found evidence of a thumbprint on 'Walter's' razor-handle which is consistent as far as it goes with being 'Walter's,' though not extensive enough to make complete identification.

"Mr. Thorogood had constructed a box about 24 x 24 x 30 of layers of different materials, seven in all, including felt, pine wood, rubber, spun-glass and so forth. As one experiment, a piece of plasticine clay with perfectly smooth surfaces was put into this box, which was then padlocked. After about 15 minutes, the box was opened and the plasticine had a perfect 'Walter' print on it. The control throughout this experiment was perfect.

"Mrs. Frances Gray lay recently dead at her house in Buffalo, New York. 'Walter,' the same night and time, produced a thumbprint which he said belonged to Mrs. Gray. We telephoned to the Gray's home and asked that thumbprints be made of the lady, just dead. With a highly commendable scientific courage, her husband and her nephew proceeded to get the thumbprints. They were sent to Boston and found to be indeed the prints which we had supernormally obtained of the lady in question.

"We are constantly amazed as to the firmness of execution, the power and control of the teleplasm.

Recently, hands have been produced in the presence of Mr. Thorogood and Dr. Adams, of Massachusetts Institute of Technology. These are large, strong masculine hands with broken finger-nails, hairy arms, and in one place, a varicose vein. Complete positive or model hands have been obtained, including thumbs and all fingers.

"I want it to be clearly understood that Margery is not out to prove anything. Her circle is putting in much time, money and reputation for the sole purpose of observing and recording accurately the phenomena which occur in her presence. If the experiments would tend to show that survival is not a fact, that conclusion would be just as important scientifically as to prove its opposite.

SPIRIT CONTROL

"All phenomena are produced under strict control conditions. The Medium is examined and searched by a woman sitter and then, hands held, is conducted into the seance room. She is tied in the chair, and ankles and wrists are fastened to the Windsor chair with surgeon's tape. This tape is then marked with a coloured pencil by any one or more sitters to prevent any free action. Under these conditions, articles running from a light luminous small straw basket up to a steel weight weighing 20 lbs., or a chair, may be lifted off the floor. The basket may go up like a wild firefly, going about in a big circle, hitting the ceiling, tapping people and picking up objects.

"The photographs of the teleplasmic apparatus by which 'Walter' speaks show a mass like a large potato. It is connected by what looks like an umbilical cord to the right nostril, and a fine white cord connects the mass with the right ear. How this curious-looking structure is able to talk we do not know, unless it be that it flowers out in the dark into a shape like the human larynx. Our Dr. Richardson has devised a machine which so controls the voice apparatus of Margery that she cannot talk. Despite this, the voice goes on freely. A hand put over the Medium's mouth, with the consent of 'Walter,' does not stop the voice. Water held in the Medium's mouth makes no difference. During all these tests the voice will whistle or talk, whatever is asked for, and it works just as well at solo sittings.

"The ultimate test of voice-control is when, in the box described above, a microphone is established. Half the sitters remain in the seance room with the box, the other half go down two flights to a perfectly-lighted room containing the megaphone. Conversation is now carried on between the group downstairs and 'Walter' through the megaphone. At the end of twenty minutes the group upstairs come down and declare they have heard nothing, while those downstairs have carried on conversation. This would seem to prove that the origin of the 'Walter' voice, in this instance, was within the sound-proof box.

"In the phenomenon of passing solid matter through solid matter, Mr. W. H. Button is now carrying out certain experiments similar to those of Prof. Zollner with Slade.

"The psychic lights of 'Walter' are very puzzling. 'Walter' declares them to be the power that is the source of all life. The lights appear first as if coming from the body of the Medium. They vary in size, from a one-inch line of light up to a mass as big as a man's head. They may be visible to half the circle and not seen by the other half, and then revolve the other way. They increase in luminosity in the presence of flowers, dance about with incredible speed and may finally go out to touch the head or face of any stranger who requests it. The light is cold. Its luminosity is similar to that of moonlight. It is evidently controlled by intelligence in regard to intensity, shape, size, etc., and can be turned on and off at Walter's will."

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).

TRAINING OF MEDIUMS

Sir—I am in agreement with at least one of the Rev. H. Crabtree's statements (LIGHT, December 15th). He says, "I have attended some services where the clairvoyance has been striking, many where it has been trivial and some where it has been highly distasteful." The fact is we must improve our Mediums. We have collected £2,000 for the Sir Arthur Conan Doyle memorial fund. I am sure he would be glad to have this money used to begin a college for the training and issuing of certificates of not only proficiency in psychic matters, but also in moral character and general education. Some Mediums are illiterate and a good number only 10 per cent. above that condition. I know half-a-dozen whose moral character is shocking. In medical circles the General Medical Council keeps all doctors in order, without fear or favour or else out they go, and the same treatment is required for paid sensitives. Streatham, London. (Dr.) E. H. WORTH.

* * *

PHOTOGRAPHIC EXPERIMENT

Sir,—I think Mrs. Hilda Brett Durrant shows in her letter the real spirit of psychic research as opposed to preconceived opinion. There are a great many self-styled investigators who really have no claim to scientific methods. The true pioneers of our modern science were bold enough to experiment beyond the confines of accepted teaching, and they produced the telescope, spectroscope, electroscope, etc., out of the most unpromising material, by following up clues that appeared to be contemptible to the majority.

I am somewhat amused to hear that apparently Mr. Barlow has discovered something which I heard that Mr. Becquerel had discovered round about thirty years ago. It is published in a book I have possessed for that length of time. Undoubtedly photographs can be copied by latent radio activity; but what we want to know is why, if the matter is so simple, some Psychic Research Officer does not come forward and copy exactly what our psychic photographers do, and under the same conditions. It would be a rare advertisement for some photographic company, for the press would give it wide publicity.

Q. C. A. CRAUFURD.

[Several letters are held over, including a "Reply to his Critics" by Mr. J. Arthur Findlay.]

DR. CRANDON ENTERTAINED

Dr. L. R. G. Crandon was entertained to dinner at Dartmouth House, Charles Street, London, on Monday evening by the president (Dr. Fielding-Ould) and Council of the London Spiritualist Alliance. Dr. Fielding-Ould presided and the guests were as follows:

Major Alexander, Vice-Admiral J. G. Armstrong, Mrs. Herbert Baggallay, Mr. and Mrs. Prevost Battersby, Mrs. Carlyon Bellairs, Dr. L. R. G. Crandon, Mr. George Craze (President, Marylebone Spiritualist Association), Captain Dampier, Mrs. Ch. de Crespigny (Hon. Principal, British College of Psychic Science), Commander Dove, Mrs. Findlay, Dr. Nandor Fodor, Mrs. Forman, Mrs. Ford, Commander and Mrs. Grisman, Lady Harris, Mr. Frank Hawken, (Secretary, M.S.A.), Mr. G. H. Lethem, Mrs. Hewat McKenzie, Mr. J. W. Miller, Miss Mercy Phillimore, Mrs. Thos. Pierson (of the American S.P.R.), Miss Olive Pixley, Mr. Frank Romer, F.R.C.S., Miss Rentzsch, Dr. F. C. S. Schiller, Mr. Sheridan-Patterson, Rev. Drayton Thomas. Sir Lawrence Jones, Bart., accepted an invitation but was unable to be present owing to sudden indisposition.

After dinner, Dr. Crandon related a number of interesting incidents in connection with the mediumship of his wife "Margery."

On Tuesday evening, Dr. Crandon addressed a crowded meeting at the L.S.A.—his subject being "The Vindication of the 'Margery' Mediumship."

Light

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**To all our Readers, Contributors and
Supporters,
Hearty Good Wishes
for
Christmas and New Year.**

CHRISTMAS REUNION

CLOTHED with garments woven of beautiful old legends, garlanded with the evergreens and flowers of winter, and aureoled with the light that never was on sea or land—once again Yule-tide approaches. The imagination of our forefathers depicted Christmas sometimes as a jovial old man, with a special interest for the children of Christendom, as a Father and the bountiful bestower of gifts; sometimes as a radiant child, thus identifying him with that divine infant who is said to have come to earth first in Bethlehem—the Christ Child.

Until of late years, the birth of the infant Jesus seemed to be an immense time ago. But now science has multiplied the age of the earth into millions of years and so vastly extended our estimate of Time that two thousand years ago seems comparatively yesterday. And we are told by those learned in religious origins that Christmas is by no means a purely Christian festival. It seems that many of the world's saviours, according to the legends, were born in caves or stables at or about the time of the winter solstice: that the Christmas idea is simply a beautiful Nature myth adapted to religious purposes.

It is an old story, this. We are most of us well familiar with it. We do not find it at all disillusionizing, although to those who allow the letter to kill the spirit it may well be disturbing. The fact is that truth will bear any amount of scrutiny—and like gold it resists the action of every acid. Keats thought that the wonder of the rainbow might be destroyed by analysis, but the result proved that analysis only

increased the wonder and in nowise diminished the beauty.

When we look into this question of Christmas and of Christianity we see it as a light shining through all the religious systems and all their myths and legends. We see it as light of a revelation of the interior Spirit gleaming through all the manifestations of the external world. As a revelation, Christianity is nothing if it is not a presentation of universal religion, of eternal truths too often hidden from view and forgotten.

But Christmas is not the time for deep disquisitions. Let us think of it from the point of view of a time of reunion with those who have passed from sight, but not from presence—"the beloved, the true-hearted" who at these festivals of the soul "come to visit us once more." That was once a poet's dream—to-day it is a matter of "cold fact"—if indeed "cold fact" is not too chilly a term! But we know it to be not only metaphorically but literally true. "Love bridges the chasm," said Diotima, Love has indeed bridged it, with the aid of that Science which represents Wisdom in action.

To every fireside this Christmas where those who are gathered are hospitable in thought to the unseen visitors, come the shining presences of friends and kindred in the Unseen—and there are no vacant places!

"MARGERY" VINDICATED

READERS will welcome—as we do most heartily—the forecast of the American S.P.R. report on the "Margery" mediumship, in which certain allegations of fraud in regard to the famous "Walter" fingerprints are definitely refuted. These allegations were that the "Walter" fingerprints are identical with the fingerprints of Dr. Kerwin, a living man, and that therefore they could not be genuine. The answer, based on very careful and prolonged inquiry and experiment, is that the allegations are unfounded, that the "Walter" prints are produced supernormally and that they differ materially from those of Dr. Kerwin. This result, though belated, is what was expected by those with an intimate knowledge of the methods and objects of the "Margery" circle. Fraudulent intention being unthinkable, it was difficult to conjecture why fraud should have been perpetrated. Also, had fraud been intended, Dr. Crandon and his associates would surely have avoided the glaringly obvious risk of using the prints of a well-known living man when they could easily have secured prints which could never have been traced.

We congratulate Dr. and Mrs. Crandon on the result of the investigation and shall await with much interest the arrival of the full text of the A.S.P.R. report, which, we understand fills a book of 500 pages and is illustrated by 104 plates.

[Four Pages have been added to this issue to make room for Christmas features.]

DOCTOR'S MARVELLOUS EXPERIENCES

BOOK THAT LED TO CALL FOR RESIGNATION

As stated in LIGHT last week it has been announced that, as a sequel to the publication of his occult experiences in his book "The Invisible Influence," Dr. Alexander Cannon, M.D., M.A., F.R.G.S., has been called upon to resign his position under the London County Council at Colney Hatch Asylum. The following review gives an indication of the marvellous experiences described in the book.

By MRS. HEWAT MCKENZIE

IF you have been haunting bookshops lately, your eye must often have been caught by such titles as "The Latest Thrilling Detective Stories," "My Greatest Thrill," etc., but I can assure you that, if you will buy and read the book bearing the very modest and beautiful title of *The Invisible Influence* by Alexander Cannon, M.D., M.A., F.R.G.S. (Messrs. Rider, 5/-) you will get the genuine thrill of your lives. It is not written by a romancer, nor as a best-seller, but because the author has something of importance to pass on to his fellows.

Dr. Cannon is in charge of important work at one of our great asylums: he is the author of well-known books on Psychiatry and Neurology, and of numerous pamphlets on kindred subjects. He has held important professional and professorial appointments in Hong Kong, and has for many years made a study of Hypnotism and the benefits to be derived from this still largely-neglected field in therapy, especially among the criminal and insane.

That is why "Hypnotism Vindicated" appears in flaming red on the cover of the book, but the word only tells half the story. "There is something more, a factor which I am trying to discover," says Dr. Cannon. He has also made a close study of psycho-analysis, and I have before me a pamphlet of a broadcast lecture on "Dreams and their interpretation" given by him in Hong Kong in 1929.

Dr. Cannon has worldly honours as well as scholastic; he carries the rank of Knight Commander of Asia; and, in the Occult world, has attained to the level of an Adept. When a man of such qualifications speaks of occult mysteries in a natural way and as a record of his own personal experience, who would not listen?

Many have told us of the hidden secrets of Thibet and of the great Occultists who dwell there and of their marvellous powers, but the information has so often been shrouded in secret allusions and occult jargon, and accompanied by so much unverifiable deduction, that we have turned from it in despair. Alice Bailey in *Initiation, Human and Solar*, and Alexandra David-Neel in her books on Thibet have dealt with such matters. Dr. Cannon, however, can write a plain tale. He takes us with him on a journey to the Great Lhama, who has invited a visit. He is accompanied by a friend, the "sage," and on the way, and during their resting periods, we are enlightened by conversation on telepathy and hypnotism, and share with them many actual psychic experiences—all giving an insight into the study and thought undertaken by the author.

Psychic students are reputed to be able to swallow "tall" stories, but here we find some of the very tallest offered in all seriousness by the author, bearing witness to powers scarcely known in this country.

Take this one on levitation for instance. The travellers are nearing the Monastery where the Great Lhama dwells. They must cross an impassable gulf, fifty feet wide, over a great ravine. A messenger has been dispatched to meet them; he stands on one side of the chasm, and gives them directions as to the personal preparation required to accomplish the crossing, by levitation. I gather that this consists in control of the breath and in a kind of auto-hypnosis, and it is understood that both the travellers are no novices in such matters. "Within the

course of a few hours," says Dr. Cannon, "we had made our bodily state fit to allow of this great miraculous transportation phenomenon taking place by pure mental effort; and in another moment of time we were both landed safely on the other side, but our boys and our luggage still remained on yonder side." (These were ordered to return to the abode they had left that morning.) A similar phenomenon marked their return journey a few weeks later.

Or take the following experience, when they were received by the Great Lhama in full audience. All present saw the bluish aura three inches thick which completely surrounded his body. A coffin containing a dead man was brought in, and Dr. Cannon was allowed to test its condition in every way he wished, and concluded that the man had been dead for more than twenty-four hours. A command from the Great Lhama was followed by the opening of the man's eyes; he raised himself and walked to the Great Lhama assisted by two monks; keeping his eyes fixed upon him, he bowed, and then returned to the coffin becoming apparently lifeless again.

"Is this a feat such as fakirs perform by the stoppage of all their functions?" Dr. Cannon asked himself, for he had seen such wonders, but the Master replied to his unspoken thought: "This man has been 'dead' seven years, and may remain dead for another seven, he is some hundreds of years old and may live for ever." "Where is his soul or unconscious mind in the meantime," asked the doctor, and was told that it was used on special missions on the earth and that in fact this 'dead' man was the messenger who had met and assisted them at the crossing of the gulf.

Can we accept such a story, and yet this man of our own world offers it to us in all sincerity? As he left the presence, the Great Lhama said to him: "Fear not any man, fear not thineself, remember that fear is failure and the forerunner of failure."

"Why have I been chosen for such an experience?" asked Dr. Cannon of his guide at the gulf. The messenger replied, "with a penetrating gaze which I shall never forget," "We take you not at your present value, but because of your capabilities: it is what you will be that concerns us. You are fated for this and no man can deter you from your faithful following."

There are many other remarkable instances recorded of hypnotic or telepathic or psychic power. Dr. Cannon uses all three words variably. He saw a tree withered by command and used his camera to record the fact; and he heard the story from the Great Lhama himself of the famous English Judge who, some years ago, fell into the hands of "black magicians" in Thibet (those who use the hypnotic power for evil purposes and with whom the white magicians are continually at war) who was cursed by them, the curse taking effect in our midst not long since. Dr. Cannon himself knew something of this matter towards the end, but was unable to help.

The moral of all this is that man has deep unexplored layers of consciousness, which, by concentration and experience, can be used to influence others powerfully for good or ill. Dr. Cannon calls this power "the Master of Destiny" in all our lives, whether consciously apprehended or not. He holds that we are all subtly affected by the operation of these Universal Mind forces, and denies that man has free will; that, only in so far as we regulate our own mind to receive and give the best are we able to protect ourselves from inimical influences, and he quotes many sayings of Jesus emphasizing this truth.

"I am not a Spiritualist," he says, and forthwith proceeds to defend Sir Oliver Lodge against the many attacks made upon him: but he betrays his belief in survival in many pages; and if we would differ with him, it would be that he gives us little insight into the part that the

Unseen helpers play in this world of thought-forces in which we dwell; also, he seems to fix a man's future progress as determined by his achievement here, while the Spiritualist envisages new opportunity and progress in the Unseen which may redeem past failure.

It may be of interest just to mention an experience with a trance Medium in London which Dr. Cannon shared with a famous judge. I have been privileged to see the notes taken at the time and am allowed to say that the "lady of the trance" was Mrs. Annie Johnson. They went to her nameless, and without a word from them, Dr. Cannon's status, title, relations, achievements and intimate associations were given, and some prophetic statements made, quite unknown to him consciously, which were subsequently realised.

"I would never have believed such things could possibly have happened. . . . I gasp with awe at the marvels of man's mind," says the doctor, in relating this experience.

Dr. Cannon gives Alexander Erskine, the well-known hypnotist, hearty acknowledgment for first introducing him to the facts of hypnotism, and dedicates his book to him. "This science of hypnotism and telepathy," he says, "opens the door to the innermost secrets of the mind of man."

"India and Thibet can teach us more about psychology and the workings of the mind than any Freud or Jung or Adler."

Such remarks make us wonder whether the wheel is coming full circle again and whether scientists and medical men will rehabilitate in our day the facts revealed by Mesmer and practised by Braid and Milne Bramwell, and Ashburner and Gregory. The time seems to be ripe and Dr. Cannon has left the door ajar.

"At this very hour," he concludes, "the world is seething with unrest in its search for, not a specialist in this, that or the other, but a specialist in Mankind as such, who views man as combined of spirit, soul and body: and recognises that the interaction of the three is so close that they can never touch one without touching all three." In this all psychic students are in full agreement.

"WELL-ATTESTED FACTS"

CONFIRMATION of some of the marvels described by Dr. Cannon is provided by Major Yeats-Brown, who (according to the *Sunday Express*) "has been described as knowing more about Yoga than any other European."

Writing in the *Sunday Express* (December 17th), Major Yeats-Brown says:

"Dr. Cannon writes of these things in his recent book, but his explanations seem to me entirely unsatisfactory. Not that I can explain the phenomena produced by Indian and Tibetan magicians.

"I do not know how they can overcome physical fatigue so that, with a curious, wolf-like lope, they can run more than 100 miles without stopping. Nor how they can conquer gravitation so that they have been seen to rise in the air with no support between them and the leopard-skin on which they have been sitting cross-legged. Nor how they can swallow lethal doses of poison without hurting themselves. Nor how they can pass at will into a trance which closely resembles death, with heart and lungs at a standstill. These are well-attested facts, vouched for by credible witnesses.

"I have seen three of these mysteries with my own eyes, and, although I cannot explain them, I can, at least, suggest certain lines on which scientific research might throw light on them. . . .

"With regard to levitation, the vagus nerve plays a part; all I can say about it is that (given a sound heart, such as I possessed) I used to be able to alter my weight by as much as 16 ounces avoirdupois by mere control of breathing."

[Dr. Cannon appealed against the decision of the L.C.C. calling for his resignation and, we understand, that as a result of an inquiry held on Monday, the request for his resignation was unanimously withdrawn.]

IS IT THE VOICE OF CONAN DOYLE?

"LEADERSHIP OF THE COSMIC CHRIST"

HAS Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, on the other side of the Veil, found it necessary to revise his views as to the value of mediumistic communications, the person and work of Jesus, and conditions of progress in the Beyond? That he has, is the burden of a book—*Thy Kingdom Come*, arranged and edited by Ivan Cooke (Wright and Brown, 7/6)—which is certain to arouse controversy and may well prove to be an outstanding landmark in the history and development of the Spiritualistic movement.

The book consists mainly of messages purporting to come from Sir Arthur Conan Doyle through the mediumship of Mrs. Grace Cooke, together with explanatory notes and comments by Mr. Ivan Cooke. It will require careful reading and consideration to understand its implications and assess its value. Meanwhile, some idea of the changes in A.C.D.'s outlook and teaching—assuming that A.C.D. is actually behind the messages—may be given by a few extracts.

"THE CHANGED MAN THAT I AM"

About himself, the Communicator says: "People will accept my message, they will—they must—for so much depends upon this teaching. Conan Doyle is the spokesman for the Great Ones and when my mission is finished I shall leave the earth plane and advance. I have not hurried my own family in this matter, because I know that they find it difficult to accept the changed man that I am. . . .

"I used to think that everything was very easy in the spirit world—in fact I made a point of painting pretty pictures of it. I would not take away one iota of belief and hope, but should like to give a clearer idea of the state to which one passes on leaving the physical body. . . . It was utterly and entirely different from what I expected, and that is what most people, Orthodox and Spiritualist alike, will find—a very different Heaven or Summerland from that which they anticipated. We must clear the ground and give a purer vision. . . .

"It is certainly not wrong, nor is it undesirable for you to seek, or to give your friends an opportunity of returning to communicate. In many instances that communication brings the utmost value and help both to the spirit and to the ones on earth. But, having had that experience—the man in the spirit-world having been able to send messages of assurance—both parties should realise that there is work to be accomplished and that work cannot be done if the spirit is continually being held back.

"When the garbage is cleared from Spiritualistic phenomena, when purer channels are opened for our use, then man will receive information concerning man's physical being, mental training, and spiritual upliftment. Such are the things which we want to get through, and not merely a demonstration of tinkling bells, turning tables and banal chatter."

WHAT SPIRITUALISM LACKS

A very important section of the messages deals with the relationship of Spiritualism to the person and work of Jesus, who is linked by the Communicator with the "Cosmic Christ."

"What is wrong with Spiritualism," the Communicator asks, "and how is it that Spiritualism does not make the advance it should to-day? The fault in the main lies with the Spiritualists, because they are not faithful to their name. Are those worthy to bear the name who reject the saving power of the Cosmic Christ, the divine spirit of love—but rather would I describe them as materialistic; and if we, brothers and sisters, can do aught to raise Spiritualism from its materialism, then we shall have accomplished something too mighty for us to understand

at this juncture. Spiritualism lacks the leadership of the Cosmic Christ. . . .

"GRADUALLY BEGAN TO SEE THE LIGHT"

"There was a time when I renounced the saving grace of Jesus Christ and, as I was led into Spiritualism, I believe that Spiritualism helped me to become a little less materialistic—I gradually began to see the light and the beauty of that life of the Nazarene. I accepted Him as a wonderful Medium at first, as a noble brother and comrade to man. Truly, truly, He is the great brother, the brother of humanity, but the quality of his brotherhood cannot be reconciled with the prevailing idea that He was merely a man as ourselves. All is a question of degree—He in us, we in Him, who was and is Son of the Father. Let us remember how limited and partial a manifestation could be made through the body of Jesus, but surely enough to teach mankind that God is a God of love. By the example of life itself, He demonstrated that the one way to eternal life and the Kingdom of God was through Him, through man identifying himself with His divine grace, His magnificent thought, His transcendent spirit of love and tenderness and mercy, the one saving grace for poor humanity.

"This will be very clearly demonstrated within the next five years. Man can see signs and portents creeping upon the world; the undermining of the rotten systems, the bitter fruits of war and armaments, reparations and tariffs. It is to be demonstrated to a bewildered world that all must bow to the one power which only can save humanity from utter destruction—even the saving power of Christ, as manifested and demonstrated through Jesus of Nazareth. . . .

"To every soul—whether he be black, white, or yellow—Spiritualist, Orthodox Christian, Buddhist, Atheist—there comes the dawning of the great white light . . . in other words, the Cosmic Christ; or, in other words, Jesus the Christ, the One beloved, the One supreme being. Every soul, whatever his label, however he deny, must enter Heaven through the 'narrow gate,' through immeasurable light, the perfect wisdom of the compassionate Christ."

Other subjects dealt with in the messages include the problems of evil, reincarnation, the course of development in the rising spheres beyond the veil, and healing, on all of which very definite views are expressed—views which are certain to be strongly supported by some Spiritualists and as strongly opposed by others. A comprehensive review of the book will appear in an early issue of LIGHT.

"BLUE ISLAND" A DREAM STATE

FURTHER proof that a change of outlook comes with experience of conditions on the "other side" is provided in the book, *Life Eternal* (Wright & Brown, 7/6) communicated to Miss Estelle Stead by her father through the mediumship of Mrs. Hester Dowden. The book is described as "an explanation and an enlargement of *The Blue Island*," an earlier work communicated in the name of W. T. Stead, in which a vivid description was given of his awaking on the other side (after the sinking of the Titanic) and of the conditions which he then experienced.

In the new book, *Life Eternal*, the communicator describes the Blue Island as a "dream state," and asks: "Have I disappointed you all by saying that in my sense of the term the Blue Island was a delusion?" He then goes on to describe what he now considers to be the reality of the after-death condition and to deal with many related subjects. A specially interesting feature of the book is a section following each chapter in which questions arising out of it are answered.

A review of the book and its teaching will appear in an early issue of LIGHT. G.H.L.

"Facts" is a new quarterly, described as the official organ of the Friendship Centre, London; the price is 6d.

FOREIGN NOTES

REHABILITATION OF THE DUTCH MEDIUM, J. LUS

IN response to his own desire to disprove certain attacks that had been made upon him, says the *Revue Spirite Belge* (November) Mr. J. Lus submitted on August 11th to a test sitting, at the house of Mr. and Mrs. Sparenburg.

As well as his usual sitters, there were present by special request, two engineers, a Professor of Physics, a Professor of Mathematics, and a Doctor. The Medium was stripped and searched; bound securely, and the knots sealed with marked wax. Hands, feet and head were besides held by different sitters throughout the entire sitting.

At its close, the sitters unhesitatingly put their signatures to the attestation of the following facts:—

(1) The spirit asked that they should place upon a small table in the centre of the circle a sheet of paper which they had all initialed, and a pencil. The light was turned out, and in less than a minute, they were told to turn it up again. Below their signatures was written the guide's name, "Adventas," corresponding in every detail with such signatures previously given.

(2) The guide announced that he would fetch an object from the adjacent room. After a moment, they were told to look, and the light showed one of the Medium's gloves upon the table. One member went to the bedroom, and found the corresponding glove in the pocket of the coat which remained undisturbed and folded upon the chair.

"Turn out the light, and I will endeavour to take it back," commanded the Guide. After a pause, however, he declared that the power was insufficient. On turning up the light, the glove was seen lying upon the floor at the far end of the room near the door.

(3) A folded handkerchief was laid upon the table. It was found knotted in the shape of a gentleman's tie in less time than it could have been so manipulated by normal means even in full light.

(4) Lastly, the Guide announced that he proposed to apportion two small stones by way of thanks to Madame Sparenburg, and to Mr. B. the engineer, who, he said, had contributed much power. After a brief interval, these stones materialised—the lady's being pronounced by the Professor of Physics to be an unpolished ruby, and the other, a colourless crystal.

No doubt remained in the mind of any one of the sitters as to the genuineness of these phenomena.

ANIMAL INTELLIGENCE

Dr. Christopher Schroeder, of Berlin, in his study of animal and plant psychology, quotes in *Zeitschrift für Metapsychische Forschung* (September) the following episode, which was personally observed by a learned colleague of his, Herr Plate.

During the bad floods in 1892, the River Elbe overflowed its banks. One day, Herr Plate noticed some horses in the adjacent meadowlands, which lay a couple of feet under water. Two of the animals had climbed to some slightly higher ground on one side, but two others stood close together in the water. Curious to find out what kept them there, Herr Plate went along the top of the dyke until he was only a hundred yards or so from where they stood. Then he saw that the two mares were standing up to their bellies in water, and that, supported between their rounded barrels lay a young foal, high and safe above the floods—which shortly after that subsided.

Commenting on this and other stories of animal intelligence and seeming reasoning powers, Dr. Schroeder writes:

"Such behaviour under abnormal circumstances, corresponding in effectiveness with acts prompted by highest human reasoning, cannot possibly have its source within such creatures themselves. Its origin must be sought outside of them, in the unconscious (not the subconscious)—to use the terminology of human psychology."

FURTHER EVIDENCE FOR SURVIVAL

By J. ARTHUR HILL

(Author of "Psychical Science and Religious Belief,"
"Letters from Sir Oliver Lodge," etc.)

VII.—EVIDENTIAL BUT INCOMPLETE

THE chief interest of the evidence to be described in this article is that it was received through two different Mediums—one in Bradford and the other in London. They did not know each other, in fact they had never met. And the curious thing is that I was not successful in verifying the evidence that was given. That is partly why I am describing it now; it may be that some reader will be able to give me the required information concerning the man who was mentioned through the two Mediums.

As introductory explanation, I will say merely that in 1923 there died a near relative of mine, who gave me fully identifying evidence at many of my sittings with Aaron Wilkinson in the succeeding years. I will quote from my verbatim reports, as usual.

Medium, A. Wilkinson. May 7, 1924.

A man named Slater is here. He comes from Martin Top. Top of a hill where there is a kirk. Someone has brought him here for some purpose. Rather hearty manner, not polished, but quite a good sort. This man seems linked up with some influence, and quite probably there will be some sequence to it.

There is some gentleman with a white beard, very white hair, used to preach the Gospel, name William. . . . Used to preach without much reward. I think he did not follow it as a profession. (Uncertain whether this man is the same as the Slater of the last paragraph or not.)

Medium, Mrs. Leonard. May 16, 1924.

(After references to my relative.) Do you know there was a place he was interested in? Not been able to go for some time before he passed over. Public place. That building was a kind of centre. People were attracted to it who did not live near it, a place that did good. Little booklets I see. Sent them out M A R . . . M A R T I N Consonant T. Martin T. Not Tin, but a bit like it. S keeps coming in his mind in connexion with it, but he keeps pushing it out. It is a T sound, nearly O. Try again. T O P. Enough to show you what he means. An S name that comes in, not a short name, starting with S. L A T E. Slater. Met someone. Made him think of someone he has met on the other side. A rather elderly man he was fond of. Passed over. Rather a full grey beard, almost white. Fine, good-looking man. Strong, firm, good face. Picture he had on earth of him. Met him again now. . .

(When the trance ended, there was the usual whispering, but the only distinguishable word was "Slater." I was leaning forward, with my ear near Mrs. L.'s mouth, to catch everything, and the whispering seemed to be in the throat, rather than through the lips, but this might be an illusion. Anyhow, the word "Slater" was very plainly said, with a kind of eagerness, as if it were of special importance.)

Medium, Mrs. Leonard. May 9, 1925.

Martin. Gave it last time. Martin S.

(J.A.H. He gave the name Slater before, but we cannot find him.)

Same one, trying to get now. Elderly man, not young. F. Something to do with a place or number. Four, four. He shakes his head, and says No, not a number. Place. Four. Near finding him on a clue, which didn't lead to him, but very near. On right track. If you had just gone up another turning, metaphorically, you would have traced it. Have you been looking in a book with names in, turning it over, come across the name in a fat book, not a new book, an old one? May not be in your house. He shows me. Going to find the book that contains the particulars, in a place not very close to your

house; another village or town. More stone than brick. Seems to be part of it inside very dark. Hall or entrance place, two doors opposite each other, one left and one right. Feel you going to the left. This book would be by itself, or in such a position not to have to worry about it; it would be almost placed in your hands. Spoken about this name through another Medium. Four, not a number. Seem to get a feeling of going back to some time ago; old feeling with it. He feels certain; he smiled then. One place this man had lived in was a narrow street, one end of it very narrow, dark coloured houses, some of them shops in lower part, little windows, not comfortable, pretty places; ugly. Is there a works there, too? Going up narrow part. I hear something going thump. I see a tall chimney; feel it is like a factory. He nods his head; "quite right." Man was very much connected with when here. Letter L over the place. He says he thinks you are going to discover this suddenly, not just yet, he wants to get two or three things through first. May be kept back a bit, till more built up about it. Founder, as if he founded something. Slater founded it. Do you know that he (my relative's name was correctly given here) tried to give you something about same person through Wilkie?

In a sitting with Mrs. Leonard on May 11, 1925, there were further references to Slater, who was said to have been connected with a small religious body, and with foreign places, the suggestion being that it was missionary work, but that was only my interpretation. Also there was a reference to Leyburn. It was said that Slater passed over before my relative.

In further sittings with Wilkinson, there were references to Slater, and attempts seemed to be made to clear the matter up, but the effort seemed to lead to confusion. But it was said that there was definite purpose behind it all, and it appeared to have some connection with Martin Top, though what that connection was, I could not make out. In one of the Leonard sittings, it was said that "Brown" was also connected, and would be found to be important. This also was unrecognised.

WHO WAS MR. SLATER?

As regards evidentiality, the facts are as follows. My relative, whom I will call F., was interested in many small Congregational churches in the Yorkshire dales, visiting them from time to time, and helping them in various ways. The one in which he took most interest, was Martin Top—a small chapel not far from Clitheroe. It stands alone except for a caretaker's house; there is no village, but the chapel serves the surrounding country where there are isolated farms. The chapel was well described in a sitting which I have not had space to quote. I asked Wilkinson after one of the sittings, whether the words "Martin Top" meant anything to him, and he said he had never heard them before. This place was so much in F.'s mind that it is quite in accordance with what I should expect, to find references to it in the communications.

It is specially interesting to get the same reference through two Mediums who were unknown to each other. But the queer thing is that I cannot trace the man Slater, although he also was mentioned by the two Mediums. I have made exhaustive inquiries round Martin Top, and am sure that no Mr. Slater has lived there for a long time, if ever. There are some Slaters a few miles away, but they were not known to F., so far as I can make out.

If any reader of these articles, living perhaps in Burnley or thereabouts, happens to know of a Mr. Slater who died about 1923 and had been in the habit of visiting Martin Top, I should very much like to hear.

My belief is that F. had engineered a particularly good piece of evidence, which should exclude any hypothesis of telepathy from my mind; but his test has been too ingenious. He apparently said to himself "There! he

(Continued at foot of next column)

"TWIN SOULS"

A ROMANCE OF THE SUPERNORMAL

MOST of us have read or heard stories of strange meetings—as, for instance, of people who, coming together for the first time, are conscious of a feeling of mutual recognition and who, on comparing notes, find that in some mysterious way they have been aware of the existence of each other; they have apparently met in their dreams, and the meeting in everyday life has come as a fulfilment of vision.

I have read or heard several such accounts, but not until quite recently did a case come under my direct attention.

At a friend's house I was introduced to two people, a man and a woman, apparently a newly-married couple, who had a similar story to tell about themselves. They related to me how, before they had ever met in actual life each was conscious of the existence somewhere in the world of the "twin soul"; they had yearned for each other; there were dreams and premonitions, all afterwards fulfilled.

The man, while in a troubled state, had visited a Medium for advice and had been told that there was really such a woman as he had dreamed of; that in a short time he would meet her face to face, and the recognition would be mutual and joyous. It all fell out as foretold. They had been present at some social gathering and had been introduced to each other as strangers. With a glad cry of recognition—"At last!"—they greeted each other and the separated lives had now been united.

It sounded like a novelette; but here were the two people before me and the opportunity to examine the case. It was a long story, told with ecstasy on the part of the woman (who had a rather ethereal look) and with quiet assurance by the man whose occupation was prosaic enough—he carried on a small garage, having previously been a soldier in the Great War. I took the names and address of the couple with other particulars, and the Medium (whom I knew) confirmed the account they gave.

One item in the tale—the man's statement that he had sometimes heard the woman's voice singing "from afar" and that the song was one actually sung by her—reminded me of Rudyard Kipling's story "The Brushwood Boy," a tale of a boy and girl who, meeting in childhood, are afterwards aware of each other in their dreams, the boy having gone abroad in the meanwhile. When, grown up, they meet again in England, each remembers the dream-life in which through the years of separation they had continued their old companionship. There is a dream song sung by the girl which both remember.

Such events form part of the romance of the supernormal. The facts—when they are facts—can be examined, but on the interpretations there is room for any amount of dispute, and probably the wiser method—as in supernormal phenomena generally—is to record the facts, without embroidery, and let the inferences from them take care of themselves.

D.G.

can't say that he knew anything about this!" But it seems that very few people did know about his acquaintance with Slater, and accordingly I found it difficult to verify.

I feel sure that the messages were genuine, and that a special effort was made over this one. It would furnish really remarkable evidence if I could find, after all these years, that F. did know a Mr. Slater in connexion with Martin Top.

As I have said, there was no Mr. Slater at the place itself, and the people there do not remember even any visitor of that name; but I suspect that there was a Mr. Slater who had some slight connexion with it in some way, perhaps preaching there as a supply, and either meeting F. there, or having some acquaintance with him.

INTER-RELIGIOUS CRUSADE

PLANS for the future of the Inter-Religious Crusade were discussed at a social meeting held at the Grottrian Hall, London, on Saturday evening last (December 16th). Mrs. St. Clair Stobart—originator and leader of the movement—presided, and there were present representatives of various Christian Churches and also of Muslim, Hindoo, Buddhist and other religions.

Mrs. Stobart referred to the public meetings already held at Whitfield's Tabernacle and the Guildhouse, at each of which speakers were drawn equally from East and West. Regarding the future, she had interviewed the Bishop of London who said he could not permit joint meetings to be held in any of the City Churches, which had been dedicated exclusively to Christian worship, but was willing that they should be held in any church hall that might be secured. Mrs. Stobart suggested the desirability of holding a great propaganda meeting, and said Mr. Lloyd George had expressed his willingness to speak at such a meeting.

Funds were needed and it was suggested that at least £100 should be raised to finance mid-day meetings to be held somewhere in the City of London.

In the discussion that followed, exchange of pulpits and platforms was mentioned as one way of encouraging good feeling and understanding between the various religious sects. The Rev. A. D. Belden (Whitfield's Tabernacle) suggested that the Bishop of London might be asked to speak to Muslims; and the Imam of the Mosque at Woking who was present, said if the Bishop would come, the door of the Mosque would be opened for him and he would be heartily welcomed.

Other speakers were Rev. G. J. Sparham (Unitarian), Dr. Shastri (Hindoo), Mr. Lewis Jefferson (Church of England) and Mr. Shaw Desmond. An interesting programme was provided by Mr. Adie (songs), Madame Shastri (Japanese dance), Mr. Nakamura (Japanese flute), Miss Zillhart ('cello), and Mr. F. A. Armstrong (organ).

S.N.U. AND MR. JOHN LEWIS

The Council of the Spiritualists' National Union informs us that they have written to Mr. John Lewis, Editor of the *International Psychic Gazette*, in regard to an article in which he criticised the administration of the Parliamentary Fund. The Council offers to produce the accounts of the fund for inspection by Mr. Lewis or by any professional auditor deputed by him, in the presence of the Union's auditor who would be able to reply to any questions.

"If after this inspection," says the Council, "you persist in continuing your attacks and misleading statements, the Council will have to consider what further steps they shall take to protect the Union."

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WHY FRANCE HAS NO PHYSICAL MEDIUMS

IN discussing this question in *Psychica*, M. C. de Vesme points out how greatly Psychical Research in France is hampered by the fact that there are no great physical Mediums in that country. When men of scientific mind honestly wish to investigate these matters, they are obliged to go to other lands to verify what they have heard of some Medium there; if satisfied, they then have to cover all the expenses of bringing the Mediums to their own country, maintaining them there and remunerating them. On top of this comes the language difficulty: few such Mediums speak French, and very often the French investigators speak no other language; official interpreters have to be engaged. Why then are there no native French Mediums?

M. de Vesme appears to have little doubt himself as to the causes responsible for this lack. He utterly denies that either race or climate play any part in the deficiency; though he admits that temperament is a factor—the French people have little of the mystic in their make-up and too much of the “blagueur”; widespread Freemasonry has likewise been a deterrent.

Good Mediums have developed best in a mystical, spiritualistic atmosphere. Almost invariably great investigators who began with non-spiritualist convictions and on purely materialistic methods, have discovered that such an attitude militated against the success of their experiments, and that the best results were obtained by conducting their sittings as though in full agreement with the spiritualistic claims made by the Medium in question. Schrenck-Notzing, somewhat brutal in his methods in earlier days, came to grasp fully this essential point, viz., “that it is necessary never to oppose the Medium’s opinions as to the subconscious personifications to whom they attribute the nature of spirit-guides, unless you wish unwisely to inhibit their best and most interesting phenomena.”

As soon, says de Vesme, as such Mediums pass from the hands of Spiritualists into those of anti-Spiritualists, you see their faculties wane and often entirely die out. It is folly to expect a plant to flourish and bear seed unless it is nourished and suitably cared for: mediumship is an emotional faculty, and it can only freely develop in a similar atmosphere.

DREAM PROBLEMS

MORE IN OUR MINDS THAN WE ARE CONSCIOUS OF IN NORMAL CONDITIONS

A LADY correspondent relates a curious dream in which she found herself on a hot day standing by a haystack in the country. Near by reclined two elderly women in early Victorian costume. They were sleeping soundly, indeed, both were snoring with mouths agape. Below them, as though it were the title to a picture, were the words: “The Hon. — and the Hon. — who have undertaken to play the part of jockeys in Mr. —’s new farce. NOTE.—It is wiser to employ trained help during a heat-wave.” (Presumably the dreamer could not decipher the names, as they are not given.)

Now, I admit that this was a very queer dream indeed, especially as the lady has no interest either in racing or the drama. But I cannot explain it. I have in the past been asked to interpret other dreams of the same type, on the theory that the dreams were unlikely to have had their origin in the mind of the dreamer. But this is asking too much. Most of the dreams related were quite meaningless, apparently without point or purpose, but very curious in themselves. They seemed like casual snatches of actual life coming for a moment into the purview of the dreamer, and quite alien to his or her ordinary interests and pursuits.

One can only speculate on the possible cause. It is hardly necessary to suppose that such dreams always arise outside the consciousness of the dreamer, the fact being that we do not know the limits of our own minds or what we are capable of imagining in states of heightened consciousness.

An old friend of mine (a parson) was visited by dreams in which he carried on an argument with a dream personage who made remarks far wittier than anything the dreamer believed himself able to invent. He gave me some examples and I had to admit that the clever repartee of the dream-person was quite unlike anything my friend could have devised, so far as I knew his mind. It is quite possible that he was really in contact with another intelligence, as he suggested, but it would be difficult to prove this merely on the theory of a supposed mental superiority. As I have said, there is more in our minds than we are conscious of in normal conditions—things that would surprise us if we knew. I am looking at the matter, of course, quite independently of any theory of spirit-communication which would be rather to beg the question, in such instances as these at least. K.

THE HEART OF YULE

Where once through miry country lanes
The pack-horse trudged, and farmers’ wains
Lumbered along at tedious pace,
Now the swift automobiles race—
Where glimmering candles burned o’ nights
Now glow the fierce electric lights.
Old days are gone, old manners fled:
Yet still the fir-trees overhead,
The holly and the mistletoe
Their familiar pageant show;
With verdure changeless and serene
They keep the ancient memories green.

New days bring but a surface change—
Nought can the soul of life estrange,
Though ever on its spiral climb
To fairer ways through smoke and slime,
And now another Yule is here—
The golden milestone of the year—
See how above, where nothing mars
Their beauty, glow the ancient stars.
By gifts and greetings as of old
The message of the heart is told—
Pledge of the things that still abide
Through every passing Christmas-tide. D.G.

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O God, Who illumines and enlightens us,
Have pity on them for they know not what they do.

Their reign is ended.

The earth is moist, that the new harvest may germinate.

Water, earth, fire,

All shall unite to prepare for a new Edifice :

The Edifice of Eternal Truth,

Founded on the principle of Reincarnation.

The new faith is newly born,

But its rapid growth will soon bring it to maturity.

Pray with me, brothers, that the Kingdom of

God may open its doors to tired human pilgrims.

Peace in the hearts and souls thirsty for Truth.

Peace to the souls weary from the long journey.

Peace to consciences tormented by doubt of Eternal Truth.

Peace to the little orphans, who shall each find a mother.

Peace to him who sinned away his young life ;
he shall find grace and pardon.

Peace to him who with uncertain steps lost his way ; he shall have a guide.

Peace to all creation : Sun, water, earth, tiny animals giving their grace to the sky, rugged rocks for the fashioning of young souls.

Peace to the tender blades of grass and to the hidden flowerets.

A beneficent and radiant dawn will arise on the world, showing with its luminous track the right path to follow.

Brothers, let us embrace, following this new path towards Perfection.

Peace !

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