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MIRACLE OF PERSONALITY STRENGTH OF THE PHILOSOPHICAL ARGUMENT FOR SURVIVAL

There are two lines of argument leading to the assurance of personal Survival of death—(1) the experimental evidence provided by Spiritualism and Psychical Research; and (2) the philosophical reasons for regarding Survival as probable and in accordance with natural law. In this article, Mr. C. Wicksteed Armstrong summarises that part of the philosophical argument based on a consideration of "The Unbounded Universe."

By C. WICKSTEED ARMSTRONG

(Author of "The Survival of the Unfittest," "Life in Spain To-day" and other well-known works.)

SIR JAMES JEANS has said that the Universe is perhaps a Thought. To him, the Creator is before everything else a Mathematician, and, as I had already surmised in my *Mystery of Existence*, first published in 1909 (Longmans), the Laws of Nature are the Laws of Thought—based upon mathematics. Indeed, it is found that many things in Nature, recently discovered, are only comprehensible to our minds as mathematical symbols.

But this does not mean that the material world is unreal. Matter, formed as we now know by energy and of energy, may be called the concrete thought of the World Spirit, but it is real because it is the same to all minds—that is to all Mind. Reality can have no other meaning.

VASTNESS OF THE UNIVERSE

The surface of our globe is finite but unbounded, since it is spherical. Relativists have surmised that in a similar way, not to be pictured by our limited understanding, the Universe is finite but unbounded, having four dimensions. However that may be, we can discover no limit to the vastness of the Heavens. Each time a new telescope is built more powerful than any of its predecessors, countless suns are revealed to us of which we had no previous knowledge; and we certainly can set

no bounds to the possible extent of Space, teeming with millions and millions of such flaming bodies each of so huge a size that our feeble powers of imagination cannot for one moment picture them. Nor can we set any limit to the number and variety of existences, unimagined and unimaginable to us, which may be contained in those remoter regions of Space whence even light, travelling at 300,000 kilometres a second, takes millions of years to reach us. Even here and around us are existences of which we are only now beginning to be aware, although they literally surround and envelop us. We are finding them out through the marvellous powers of inference with which modern science has endowed us, although they are in no way perceived by our senses. Such are the countless ether waves, some of which we now harness to our service in various ways. What then may the Universe not contain? Surely he would be a bold man who dared to suggest limits to its wonders!

THE INFINITELY SMALL

In the opposite direction to vastness, we have, too, infinite smallness. In fact it would seem that, since the laws of Nature are based upon the laws of thought, the fact that we can set no mathematical limit to divisibility means that no such limit exists in Nature. It is calculated that 250,000,000 atoms placed in line would not stretch one inch, and it used to be thought that an

atom of matter was the smallest possible particle. Now, however, we know that each atom contains a solar system—a certain number of electrons revolving inside it with extraordinary rapidity around a central nucleus, just as the planets revolve around the sun. To the electron, therefore, the atom is enormous, for, in proportion to its size, the electron is as far removed from the centre of its atomic universe as are the planets from the Sun. To us, on the other hand, the atom is so small that no microscope can show it. Still, we cannot say that even the electron is the smallest possible particle. It too may be marvellously constructed, and subdivided; and its divisions again subdivided, and so on *ad infinitum*.

We have then, on the one hand, the infinitely great and, on the other, the infinitely small; or, in other words, there are no such realities as *great* and *small*, except in a relative sense. From our point everything is great by comparison with things smaller, and small by comparison with things greater, and this is true even of the vastest and the minutest things we are able to imagine or to discover.

Similarly, the passage of Time is long or short only in a relative sense. The number of ether vibrations per second which constitute ordinary sunlight is far greater than the number of seconds which separate us today from the earliest civilisation, or even from the earliest known geological periods. And these vibrations are set up by processes occurring within the atom. So, to the atom, a second of time is an age, while, to us, it is but momentary. Again, to us, a thousand years is an age, while, in the history of worlds, it is but a flash!

THE UNKNOWN

But, you may ask, what practical significance have these facts for us? Are they not of merely academic interest? Before attempting to answer this question let us travel still a little way along other parallel lines of thought.

Our eyes are constructed to sense certain ether waves. They can easily distinguish between waves of 500,000,000,000 vibrations per second and those of only 400,000,000,000,000—(yet the materialist sees no proof of design in the construction of this wonderful organ!)—but we know that the total number of ether waves is very much greater than what we can detect with our senses. Indeed, there is no limit to the number and possible variety of waves outside those few which we call the colours of the rainbow. There may even be many colours known to other beings in the Universe of which we can form no conception, any more than a man blind from birth can know what we mean by *red*. We perceive therefore only a tiny fraction of reality, even here in our own world, while our world itself is but a speck of dust floating in the light of our Sun. He, again, is but one in millions that form the Galaxy, and the Galaxy called the Milky Way to which he belongs, but one among an unknown number.

Such thoughts as these should surely teach us humility and make us realise that we are in no position to make dogmatic negations. Of some few positive facts we may be relatively sure, but that anything is impossible or does not exist we can never be sure. There is room in this vast Universe for everything but dogmatism. There is room, that is, for an infinite number of marvels of which we at present have no conception. There is, therefore, no reason to suppose that what we cease to perceive has been destroyed. Certainly we cannot reasonably dogmatise that it is so. Let us then consider

what this means to us personally and individually. And here we shall find the answer to the question asked above.

SURE OF TWO THINGS ONLY

To each one of us the Universe is divided into two parts—the subjective and the objective. If, in what I have here to say, I speak in the first person, I may succeed in making my meaning clearer than by using the second or third; and the reader may apply the same words to his own personality as I apply to mine. I am sure of two things only, namely, that I exist and that I did not make myself. All the rest may be illusion, but these two facts I cannot doubt. Indeed one thing after another which had seemed real is recognised as illusion as I look ever deeper into the seeming facts of the material Universe. But no study of seeming realities or recognition of illusions can shake my conviction of my own existence and that of something outside me which has called me into being. The *seemings* of which I speak are the sensations received through my senses, and I study them with a view to extending my convictions with regard to Truth beyond these two basic facts. Such study leads me to believe in the material Universe and of kindred spirits to my own, and enables me gradually to build up a philosophy which appears to me reasonable, and explains to my satisfaction some at least of the mysteries by which I find myself surrounded.

Yet the more I study, the more strongly I feel that there exists for me a great fundamental difference between the subjective and the objective—between what I call *myself* and what constitutes for me the outside world. And the contemplation of this essential difference obliges me to regard my own existence as a *miracle apart*, never to be explained in terms of the objective.

The chances against *my* coming into existence—if I am merely one ephemeral consciousness among the millions who come and go—were literally infinity to one. But one chance in an infinite number is tantamount to impossibility. Therefore the fact of its happening I must regard as a miracle. Now, a miracle having been accomplished in bringing my individual consciousness into existence, I do not find it reasonable to suppose it mere futility, as it would be if that existence were destined in a few years to sudden extinction. And when I realise the stupendous significance of a boundless Universe filled with marvels of which I have no conception, unless with regard to some tiny fraction of what exists in one little corner of it, I feel that to assume the annihilation of the subjective, as part of the plan of the same Being who created it, is to assume, if not an absurdity, at least a thing extremely unlikely.

It is thus that the more I contemplate the marvels of the vast Objective and the miraculous creation of the Subjective, the surer I become of the immortality of both; and the more inspiring and glorious becomes the vista opening out before me of eternal existence and eternal progress in the boundless Universe.

[This is the twelfth article in the series "Scientific Philosophy of To-day".]

Opening a bazaar in aid of the Mount Christian Spiritualist Society, Purley, Lady Willoughby Carey spoke of her conversion to Spiritualism following wonderful proofs of survival. After her husband passed over, she kept in constant touch with him. She did not know how she could have borne the sorrow if she had not been able to see and picture him on the other side.

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SPIRIT HELP TO FIND BURIED TREASURE

THE MYSTERY OF COCOS ISLAND—CLAIRVOYANT AND TRANCE READINGS

By DR. NANDOR FODOR

THE "Az Est" of Budapest reports the arrival there of Capt. Hubert Merzinich, a German skipper and Fräulein Margot Schneider, a German authoress on their way to Constantinople via the Danube. There they intend to charter a sailing boat and to set out, with two other friends, for Cocos Island. They said that they were Spiritualists and have been in touch with the spirit of Benito Bonita, a pirate who, full of repentance for his past misdeeds, has chosen them to find the treasure buried on the island and to turn it to the service of humanity. He drew the map of Cocos Island which they have never seen, and marked with red crosses the places where the treasure is. The adventurers further stated that the Costa Rican Consul confirmed all the information disclosed in the messages and that his government, against a levy of 30 per cent., gave them full permission to search.

This story recalls to my mind some experiments which I undertook a few months ago. I had been discussing the problem of Cocos Island with a well-known personality who hunted for the treasure on the spot. I tried to impress him with the importance of mediumistic help in any similar future adventure. He objected, and not without reason, that the torrid heat of Cocos Island would knock out any Sensitive, and that long inhabitation and an army of native helpers would be necessary to unearth the fortune which is undoubtedly buried there. He was, however, quite sympathetic towards my attempts to gain psychic information and lent me his own map of Cocos Island on which he made pencil notes during the search.

PICKING UP THE SCENT

On June 12th, at the British College of Psychic Science, I consulted Miss Jacqueline. Before she saw the map (on which I had clipped a thick piece of paper over the name) she said: "Is it concerning a place? Is it an initial of H. or K.?"

I said that K. by sound was correct. Looking at the map, which hardly could convey more than that it was an island, she continued:

"I don't know whether it has got something to do with a thing hidden. I see three or four people trying to discover something, to look for something. I see very great possibilities now. It is almost as if I were going up to hidden treasure."

Pointing at various points of the map she asked: "Has there ever been any writing on this place? Nothing to do with Glastonbury Abbey? No name of any person like that?"

This was an error, but a good proof that the idea of the hidden treasure was not conveyed by telepathy. The spots at which she pointed were different from those considered by the owner of the map as the likely ones.

I told Miss Jacqueline nothing whatever. Two days later I saw her again. She said that almost instantly after I left she heard her guide say: Cocoa, Coco Island. Now she tried her divining rod over the map. It went into oscillation over some spots, indicating, she believed, gold. She pointed to the highest peak and said that some people are there. This was a curious agreement with the map owner's idea, derived from legends, that settlers of the ancient Incas might be still surviving on the inaccessible mountain top.

AN INTERVIEW WITH "JOHN KING"

I found the result encouraging. So on June 26th I took the map, carefully rolled up, to Mrs. Garrett. "Uvani" came through and I asked him, could he put me in touch with "John King," the old pirate. He said

he would try. After a little waiting he said that John King was there. Feeling the map he began:

"This contact gives him the impression of a great deal of adventure. This is a map. The map of an island. I want to go to the South of England, to Land's End. Off Penzance I feel an island to which this map takes me. He seems to know of this island. There is some idea of exploration here. He is glad to see that adventure is still left in the heart of some people. There is treasure. You have the feeling of buried treasure. This was a haunt of pirates in the old days, there had been many shipwrecks here and many nobles, fleeing from the Court with their jewelry and documents, give the impression that this island had a great history. Legends were current, it being even suspected that many of the royal fugitives had taken up residence here until they were taken off from this hotbed of treasure. I do not know if any treasure has been found, but he is definite that much has been put there, especially under the little Church that led up from the water front."

"UVANI" PUZZLED

I answered that there must be some mistake. The island is nowhere near England and is uninhabited.

"Uvani" appeared to be puzzled and asked me whether I was sure it was separated from the mainland and that there was no channel at all. Then, to my surprise:

"Is it anything like C.O.C.?" Then slowly: "Cocos. He speaks of Cocos Island as connected with the peninsula by an ancient civilisation. Peruvian, the habitation of the ancient In . . . (struggling) Inc . . . a religious sect, like the Aztecs which he calls white Indians. At one time it was the headquarters of the occult tribe of the Aztecs. . . . It was only approachable from two sides. There is an extinct volcano. The remains of a church. For a long time it was taught that there were inhabitants on that island on the other side of the volcano, on the west where there is no landing place. There are remains of habitation there, destroyed by the volcano. The western side is sheer cliff. In old days there was a port on the other side for traders between South America and the Southern Archipelago. The treasure was taken to the western side of the island. It meant days of dwelling there and carrying provisions. There was a time when it was a place of refuge. Many Inca pilgrims went there. No treasure has been taken off. He could help to find it. It would give him a great joy. Like old days. But one would have to make a safari and take it very seriously."

These latter statements throw some light on what seemed to be sheer confusion at the beginning of the interview. The court, the royal fugitives, and the church might fit into the picture of ancient Inca history. But Land's End and "off Penzance" remains a mystery.

Apparently, there was no tapping of the contents of my mind. I would rather have fancied the ancient Incas still living than killed off by a volcanic eruption. I know nothing of the unapproachable west side of the island and of the many minor geographical references which I have not included in the above narrative as they strike me as sheer jumble.

As regards the well-known personality, he was impressed by the account, but pressure of business prevented him from giving it a studious examination. Now that other adventurers, relying on mediumistic communications, are on their way to Cocos Island, there is no need to keep the story back. So I am putting it on public record as an example of supernormal disclosures.

The General Council of the Spiritualists' National Union have decided to ask the B.B.C. to provide an opportunity for the broadcast of a Spiritualist service.

SUBJECTIVE NATURE OF CLAIRVOYANCE

By HORACE LEAF, F.R.G.S.

THERE exists a great deal of misunderstanding about the nature of clairvoyance, which is not likely to be corrected merely by listening while various seers describe what they "see." The average clairvoyant is no more interested in the exact nature of his remarkable gift, than is the man-in-the-street with the question of how he sees. A close study of the subject reveals a very complex state of affairs.

Clairvoyance falls into the two well-known classes of subjective and objective; but it is not always easy to separate them, owing to some seers having the ability unconsciously to objectify what has apparently reached their mind telepathically from unseen communicators. I use the term "unseen communicators," as there is good reason for supposing that many clairvoyant visions, especially in the earlier period of the development of the faculty are caused by the seer becoming *en rapport* with living people. There is, as far as I can judge, no other explanation for the immense number of unimportant, bizarre and isolated visions seen by the budding clairvoyant.

If, after a group developing clairvoyance has sat for, say, thirty minutes in silence with eyes closed and bodies relaxed, each is requested to describe what he has "seen," a number of incidents will be related which seem in no way connected with anyone present. These visions may vary between seeing such widely different objects as a broken tea-cup, and a person sitting in a chair in a garden.

The first clairvoyant vision that I had was of three battle ships in a harbour, notwithstanding the fact that I was under the impression that if I had the faculty at all, I should necessarily see something purely spiritual, such as a discarnate being. In course of time, the individual aspiring to develop mediumship, and believing in the co-operation of spirits to this end, usually becomes able to "see" spirits.

It is, however, essential, in most instances, that the would-be clairvoyant believe in spirit-helpers if he is to develop that kind of clairvoyance. People who are not interested in seeing spirits and the spirit-world, generally develop "distance" clairvoyance, seeing past events, and foreseeing. In itself this is interesting, as it indicates how largely subjective the faculty is, and belies to some extent the belief among Spiritualists that the gift is dependent upon perfect passivity on the part of the seer.

There is nothing unnatural about this directive characteristic. Even when spirit-helpers are responsible for the unfoldment of the faculty they must work upon some natural foundation in the psychic. The faculty cannot be engrafted on the seer's mind. In other words, the faculty of clairvoyance is personal to the seer, in the same way that a good voice is necessarily a normal qualification of the singer.

The subjective basis of clairvoyance is, perhaps, one of its most significant features, and unless serious attention is paid to it, the student will go far wrong.

There is reason for supposing that a certain percentage of clairvoyant visions are actually objective, and due to what may be called a modification of (or in) space. Such cases are, I suspect, related to materialisations. I have had such visions, but very rarely. That some part of the optic nerve was operative, was shown by my shutting out the apparition when I closed my eyes, and seeing it again when I opened them. These forms have always been singularly clear, appearing invariably in the dusk, and seeming to radiate a soft light resembling that of the glow-worm. That they have not been composed of ordinary matter was proved by the fact of other people in the room failing to see them.

Apparently some clairvoyants see such apparitions frequently, but one is often tempted to discredit their

opinion owing to certain factors indicating that even these clear visions may be of a subjective origin.

What happens in such circumstances is, apparently, that an impression of a personality has been transmitted telepathically to the seer's mind, and he has visualised it so clearly that it has been precipitated, as it were, into the normal field of vision. This explanation does not seem so far-fetched when it is remembered that the dream-consciousness habitually does this sort of thing. May it not be that, when a Medium is developing clairvoyance, he gradually assimilates some of his dream-consciousness into his waking-consciousness? The reason why the co-operation of these two phases of mind are rigidly restricted, as a rule, to the period when the faculty for clairvoyance is being exercised, is because the seer has specialised for it to occur then.

A number of facts support this notion about clairvoyance, and they correspond with the results of tests in telepathy. For example, if a telepathic agent transmits the thought of "latch-key" to a percipient, and the percipient gets the impression, he will, when asked to draw the key he saw in his mind, very often draw one very unlike that which the agent thought of. Yet the percipient may have "seen" the latch-key impressed clearly in his mind.

This is similar to the clairvoyant who clearly sees an apparition of a departed person, but when asked to describe the features in detail, especially some scar that the dead man bore on his face, replies that it is not there. It may, however, appear as soon as the question is asked. This is a common defect in clairvoyance of the most vivid kind. I have noticed this in many different ways. Thus, the clairvoyant sees the figure of a departed person so clearly that he might have mistaken it for a living person. The recipient of the test then asks the seer to describe the dead person's watch-chain. In the majority of cases the seer will make a mistake. Obviously he is imagining the watch-chain. It is he who has placed it on the apparition.

That is why in most cases of veridical clairvoyance the seer is more correct in generalities than in details.

It is, however, seldom that clairvoyants see clear apparitions. Mostly they resemble memory-pictures of the ordinary type, where nothing is actually seen, although the picture can be described with fair accuracy. Undoubtedly the mental impression has been received telepathically. Because of this, one must not complain if the serious student of psychic science resorts to "natural" explanations before accepting "supernatural" ones, and telepathy is in danger of being strained, as, indeed, it has been, to account for clairvoyant visions.

The safest course for the unconvinced student to take is to study the principles governing telepathy as discovered by scientific experimenters. These are extremely clear. As far as my recollection goes, in all purely scientific experiments of this character the percipient has received only the thought dominant in the agent's mind at the moment of reception, or very shortly afterwards. There has been noticed a "lag" in some of these transmissions, but it was invariably of very short duration.

The situation becomes much less stable, however, when cases of spontaneous telepathy are considered. But even then the agent almost invariably has been thinking strongly of the thought which has "impacted" the mind of the recipient.

This does not closely coincide with the visions and messages of clairvoyants who have the unhappy knack (from the average enquirer's point of view) of seeing things other than those in the enquirer's mind at almost any time. The percentages actually run in inverse ratio as between telepathy and clairvoyance.

This points definitely to clairvoyance coming from other sources than the mind of the living person.

THE PROBLEM OF SUFFERING

By HARRY MERRALL, M.B.

THE existence of pain and all varieties of suffering has been a problem which has defied solution for thousands of years. This fact illustrates the wide difference there exists between education, so-called, and intelligence. We pride ourselves on the progress we have made, we speak of the dark ages and even refer to the middle of the nineteenth century as being—*early Victorian*. The term—"this enlightened age," is constantly on the lips of our leaders in the fields of religion, philosophy and politics. But an educated man is not necessarily an intelligent man. He has derived his information ready-made. An intelligent man only reaches his conclusions and forms his opinions after comparing the facts with which he has become acquainted, noting where they support and where they cancel each other.

It follows that those great faculties, wisdom and judgment are the very last faculties of all to be acquired.

Your anonymous correspondent in the issue of the 10th November last, whilst being, in the main, on right lines does not go far enough when he states: "God, in His infinite Love and Wisdom has in view the development of every man's spiritual nature." For reason clearly shows that not a single virtue of any kind whatever, be it physical, mental, moral or spiritual, can be gained in the absence of the so-called evils, including pain, loss, disease, injury, conflict and death itself.

Our spiritual leaders give it up. I have heard or read the following categorical pronouncement uttered by Bishops, Priests, Philosophers and Scientists, even so enlightened a scientist as Sir Oliver Lodge has expressed the opinion therein enunciated and in identical terms.

"The existence of evils," they say, "in a world constructed by an all-powerful, all wise and all-beneficent Creator constitutes a profound and impenetrable mystery!"

In view of this studied and emphatic utterance by worthy and respected leaders of religion it becomes obvious that all our so-called progress, the changes which distinguish us from our ancestors of centuries ago, all these social ameliorations and adaptations of the inventions of the few to the needs of the many, is purely material, and appeals in the main only to fleshly appetites and that these, our highly honoured and revered leaders, are satisfied that such a condition of affairs is inevitable.

I believe that reasoned consideration will show the above united pronouncement on the nature of evils to be false, perilously subversive, and so diametrically opposed to the facts that the exact reverse is true. Moreover I hold this view can be *proved* to the satisfaction of any intelligent human being.

EVILS ONLY IN NAME

Evils literally are, in their effect, evils only in name. Nay, the effect of their presence it is which alone makes for good in any field of endeavour, anywhere throughout the whole scale of creation and of evolution of all forms of life. Literally, it is not too much to say that their presence embodies and inculcates the whole spiritual message of the Bible and *proves* not only the existence of the Great Creator, His sublime wisdom, Beneficence and Power but also the existence of the Spirit in man and all other forms of life and of its survival of death. Hardship is indeed the very foundation of character. Let us consider a few of these so-called evils.

1. PAIN. In the absence of pain all life would cease. For various vital reflex automatic functions are only performed at the instinct of pain. It is the accumulation of CO₂ in our blood which causes the inspiratory muscles to draw fresh air into our chests.

2. Loss. S.W/N.E. Here is a slope leading upwards from South West to North East. Our present-day intelligentsia in their belief that people in the mass can be made good by act of Legislature or League would

have us be prevented from going down this slope, perhaps to Hell, by taking it away. They appear unable to grasp the fact that if they succeeded in removing by any imaginable conjoint effort, the possibility of falling or of failing they would inevitably also remove the possibility of rising and of succeeding. If we could not lose, neither could we gain. Nearly all games, indoor or outdoor, would be in such circumstances, impossible.

3. DISEASE. In the absence of disease there could exist no state which we regard as health. The term could never have even been invented.

4. DEATH. In the absence of death, the only gateway to Heaven, how could we even hope to succeed to an existence where, in the absence of the flesh, there can be no pain? For pain, as we know it, is a property of matter, of brain and nerves.

The same reasoning applies to all evils. It is an easy task to deal with them in a similar manner.

Is it impossible for us to realize that evils are indicative of God's purpose towards His creatures as well as of His sublime, His transcendent wisdom? Can we not see that conflict is a natural law? For it is only through conflict with evils, that virtues physical, mental, moral or spiritual can be gained.

Lacking conflict in the past, there could have been no evolution. Every form of life would have remained unicellular like a microbe. Every variety of life, including man himself, to this day commences its existence as a single cell—the ovum.

In the world of creation throughout the whole scale of evolution, fighting is a dire and inescapable necessity of life. If life commenced as a single cell, like a microbe, then the first of all commands to be issued by the nebulous entity which gave the materials life, after the command to divide and multiply, was kill and devour or be killed and devoured. This law holds good to this day from a tubercule bacillus to a Shakespeare. In one hour's tranquil breathing we slay or otherwise render inert the 1,400 to 16,000 deadly foes which enter our bodies with the air we breathe. Every meal costs the life or the food of some other fellow creature.

We have learnt that we cannot make a nation sober by act of legislature. Sobriety, like honesty, truth, faithfulness, physical strength and all other virtues can only be won by the individual entering into conflict with evils and vices. It is a matter of control, *spiritual control* and applies to individuals, families, societies and nations.

AT THE PLAY

THE "World of Light," (at the Playhouse) by Aldous Huxley, has been revived one may suppose, less for its intrinsic dramatic interest than because there are many, and an increasing number of people, who are interested in Spiritualism, a still uncharted field for the majority. The author's attitude is not, as one expected it to be, definitely hostile, nor is it flippant but rather implied a rationalistic trend which could only be disappointing to the experienced and actual believers in the subject. The play is clever and at times amusing, but is ill-knit and betrays imperfect technique; nevertheless it is well worth seeing and affords a satisfying evening's enjoyment.

We still await, however, the dramatist who can in a reasonable manner, present a play dealing with Spiritualism without at the same time suggesting futility.

The "World of Light" is admirably produced and the acting of all the characters beyond reproach. Mr. Aubrey Mather in his original part and Mr. Clifford Bartlett were excellent in their performance and Miss Cathleen Nesbitt managed to portray an unsympathetic character acceptably but we hope she will soon emerge out of the gloom into the light of comedy which is more suitable to her genius.

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.)

MR. J. A. FINDLAY REPLIES TO HIS CRITICS

Sir,—The storm of protest raised with regard to my book, *The Rock of Truth*, and my Grottrian Hall address, is largely due to a complete misunderstanding and ignorance of Christian history. Consequently, I have been misrepresented and accused of having written and said things I have never written or said at all.

The misunderstanding arises through confusing Jesus of Nazareth with the Theological Christ. I have tried to show, and so far my statements have not been proved wrong, that the Theological Christ is a man-made creation drawn from beliefs of previous religions. The Theological Christ (comprising the Virgin birth; the bodily resurrection and ascension; bodily sacrifice for the sins of humanity; being one of a trinity of three gods—to which beliefs must be added the doctrine of Hell for all unbelievers, and the rites of baptism and the eucharist) is a pagan creation and has nothing whatever to do with Jesus. Most of these beliefs have been drawn from Mythraism, and the rest from other pagan religions. These beliefs were consolidated at Nicaea in 325 A.D. In support of my assertions I have quoted some of the greatest authorities on the subject, including eminent Church professors and divines.

I, therefore, answer your correspondent, The Rev. William Bickle Haynes, by reaffirming my remarks—namely, that “Christianity was conceived in Alexandria and born at Nicaea.” Alexandria, the greatest Theological centre of the world in those days, was the place where the germ of what became orthodox Christianity took root, to grow over several hundred years, and ultimately be born a full-fledged creation at Nicaea. This is an historical fact, but Mr. Haynes does not need to remind me that there were Christians prior to Nicaea, as I refer to them and their beliefs from time to time in *The Rock of Truth*. These early Christians, however, were followers of Jesus, not believers in the Christ of Nicaea, the Orthodox Christ which the Church has preached from the year 325 onwards. The Christians prior to Nicaea held very different beliefs to those held by Christians after Nicaea.

St. Clement of Alexandria, about 170 A.D., stated that “the enlightened or perfect Christian is a Gnostic” one who believed in a human Jesus. Eusebius, 265 A.D., the father of ecclesiastical history, wrote in similar terms.

Never in my books or in my writings have I belittled or detracted from the human Jesus, who went about doing good, healing the sick, and directing his followers to a life hereafter as the real life for which to live. To be accurate, however, I have had to emphasise that Jesus cannot be looked on as an historical character, and that the evidence for his life is clouded in uncertainty. In support of this assertion I quote some of our greatest biblical authorities, including Professor Harnack, referred to by the Christian Evidence Society as “one of the greatest living experts in this branch of scholarship,” and also the present Professor of Divinity at Cambridge University, and the present Bishop of Gloucester.

The evidence for the life of Jesus is purely traditional, based on stories handed down from one generation to another. From these traditional stories I gathered that we might reasonably believe what was natural about Jesus, while ignoring the theological drapings which were added to the Gospels and the Epistles at a later date. In *The Rock of Truth* I therefore refer to Jesus as follows:

“If Jesus were on earth today, he would direct our thoughts forward to the life to come,” and again “Jesus was in close touch with a higher order of existence, and saw that this life on earth was a preparation for a better and a greater life hereafter. He went about doing good, trying to heal the sick with his psychic power, teaching forgiveness, love, charitableness and preaching against the errors of his own day.”

In all my remarks and in my books I adopt the same attitude towards Jesus, and the foregoing is just a sample of what I have written and spoken.

Why, therefore, I should be attacked as I am, and be told that I adopt a “contemptible” attitude towards Jesus, I am at a loss to understand.

I sent a personal challenge to each Protestant parson in Great Britain and Ireland, 28,630 in all, asking each to tell me any error I have made in my statements in *The Rock of Truth*, with regard to the evolution of Churchanity or Christianity as it is officially called, and not one has done so, though they have had now three months to answer me. I have had abuse in plenty but never a fact challenged.

If your correspondent, Mr. Horsey, had heard my remarks at the Grottrian Hall and not read just a summary of them, he would have heard that I believed in people assembling themselves together for worship. This in no way alters my view that Spiritualism cannot be adopted by the Church as at present constituted, as, if it were, the entire ecclesiastical organisation would collapse.

We can, however, still have churches without popes, cardinals, bishops, priests and parsons and all they stand for. The church of the future, I believe, will be run by an organisation similar to that of the Spiritualist National Union. The service will be lead by a layman or a laywoman, and the sermon preached, when good trance Mediums are plentiful enough, by a trance Medium. The Medium will slowly push the priest from his present position, and we shall hear direct from the other world about the other world, and not have the speculations of the priest or parson on something about which he is entirely ignorant.

I have not written “an obituary notice about Jesus,” as Mr. Harvey says, though this may be true of the Theological Christ.

To say, as Mr. Haynes says, that my attitude towards Christianity is “an exhibition of folly, ingratitude and false strategy” means nothing. It is only a loose stringing together of words, with no reasoned argument behind them to support what they imply. I have only told the truth about orthodox Christianity, which the clergy are not honest enough to do themselves, and so far nothing I have said has been proved wrong.

Because, therefore, I have told the truth on a matter of history I am accused by another of your correspondents of wishing to sweep away prayer and devotion, and again my “violent and crude attack will only influence superficial minds,” while The Rev. Walter Wynn labels me “a stark naked atheist.”

Abuse comes readily from the prejudiced, who never think deeply. What I am still waiting for is to be shown that in one instance I have not told the truth.

Stansted Hall, Essex.

J. ARTHUR FINDLAY.

* * *

CHILDREN AND SPIRITUALISM

Sir,—I should like to ask Mr. Findlay what he proposes to give the children instead of Christianity? If, in the future, Spiritualism is to be the only religion, how is it to be presented to boys and girls between the ages of—shall we say—four and fourteen? The Home Circle—so helpful to many of us—is obviously no place for them. Those who were not frightened would view the proceedings as comic or dull, according to their mentality and the type of phenomena presented to them. The same objections would apply to Spiritualist services at which clairvoyance is given. Psychical Research is not for children, nor—happily—do many of them need Spiritualism as a comfort in bereavement.

Children care nothing for an abstract ideal, but they can, and do, love their friend Jesus, because they know that He is a “real live person” who loves them. If some of His teaching is beyond them, much is not, and they can follow the story of His life, from His birthday, which they

celebrate so joyously, to the day He ascended into the Heavens, whither they are quite sure they will follow Him "if they are good." In this belief they are all Spiritualists, which is not surprising when we remember that their Friend said of them:—"For I say unto you that in Heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in Heaven." MAUDE HEATHCOTE.
Bartley, Southampton.

* * *

UNCONSCIOUS TELEPATHY

Sir,—A friend has sent me some back numbers of *LIGHT*, and I have just read, in your issue of November 24, Florence Hodgkin's letter on "A Double Introduction." May I say that the whole explanation of the incident, to my mind, is conveyed in the words: "When the Medium came out of trance, I asked if she knew a Dr. R——. She did."

Unconscious telepathy plays so large a part in our everyday conscious experience, that, even if the Medium had *not* known Dr. R——, a message from the *collective unconscious*—that basic world-old and world-wide reservoir of knowledge—would explain the occurrence without having recourse to spirit entities.

I accept all the phenomena verified by Psychical Research, but I often regret to read of sittings adduced as "proof of survival," and "evidential," when psychology could offer an explanation. If, as the late Dr. Geley said, nothing is ever forgotten, and if the passage of unconscious thought from mind to mind be a fact, as it undoubtedly is, then I think a more critical attitude should be adopted.

JOAN CORRIE.

[NOTE: This objection has been already answered by Mrs. Marjorie Livingston (*LIGHT*, December 15th) who says she told no living soul that the book she was reading in the astral library was a Bible.]

* * *

A PUBLICITY SUGGESTION

Sir,—As a student of Spiritualism and Psychic Research I am an interested and grateful reader of *LIGHT*, both because of the quality of the matter and also because it gives me the programme of the various leading societies which can supply information on the subject.

But there are a number of religious and spiritually-minded people who have not reached the stage of reading the psychic literature but who recognise in themselves or others some kind of psychic force which they do not know how to use to advantage, or to control. Many of these people could be reached and guided to obtain the information they need if the Associations who advertise their activities in your columns could do the same in a paper such as *The Guardian*, which sustains a reputation for generous breadth of outlook combined with a high-minded sincerity of spiritual conviction.

If this could be done, I believe the outlay to the Societies rendering this "First Aid" would be amply repaid by the widening of the circle of believers, and in some cases in the discovery of latent and valuable psychic gifts.

The large majority of readers of *The Guardian* are, I am sure, seekers after spiritual truth. Will the leaders of the greatest spiritual movement of the day give them the opportunity to come in, which they might otherwise miss? Bacons, Bradwell Juxta Mare, Essex.

B. GOOCH.

* * *

PSYCHOMETRY AND FORESIGHT

Sir,—I have had some wonderful readings from small articles sent by post to a clairvoyant living at a distance, which were subsequently carried out exactly as she predicted—her descriptions of places and rooms I had never seen previously being marvellously correct. This power of foresight entirely explodes the old theory of telepathy.

Once when sitting with me, she described to me my husband (now in spirit-life) accurately. She said: "He shows me a small box containing three small carved

"MARGERY" CIRCLE WORK INFRA-RED PHOTOGRAPHIC PROCESS TO BE USED TO OBTAIN PICTORIAL RECORD

DR. L. R. G. CRANDON, of Boston, U.S.A., lectured at the L.S.A. on Tuesday evening (December 19th) on "The Vindication of the Margery Mediumship," dealing particularly with the manner in which (as described in *LIGHT* last week) the allegations of fraud in connection with the "Walter" fingerprints had been refuted.

These allegations were that the "Walter" fingerprints were identical with those of Dr. Kerwin, a living man, and could not therefore be genuine. The answer given by the investigating Committee of the American S.P.R. was, amongst other things, that the "Walter" and Kerwin prints were *not* identical, and, in proof of this, lantern slides of enlarged micro-photographs of the two prints were shown side by side, when the differences were clearly seen.

Dr. Crandon gave many interesting details regarding the work of the "Margery" circle—which he pointed out was conducted on strictly scientific lines; and also regarding "Margery" (Mrs. Crandon). Answering a question, he said "Margery" was in trance during the whole of the time phenomena was being secured through her and she consequently knew nothing of what happened.

Answering a question regarding "Walter" (the deceased brother of "Margery," who is her chief control), Dr. Crandon said he was a very real and forceful personality. He "ran the whole show." It was sometimes said that he (Dr. Crandon) had the principal part in deciding the procedure at the sittings, but this was not the case. Very often his suggestions and proposals were vetoed by "Walter," and many sittings had been held at which he had not been present.

Dr. Crandon said that opportunities of securing photographic records of what took place at the sittings had been limited because they had to rely on flash-light photographs; but they intended to experiment with the infra-red process and hoped, by this means, to obtain a complete photographic record of all that took place.

Dr. Fielding-Ould (president of the L.S.A.) presided, and on his proposal, Dr. Crandon was asked to convey hearty thanks to "Margery" for her self-sacrificing work as a Medium.

ivory ornaments, something to do with the East." I couldn't recall these to mind, but she continued, "He says, 'never mind now, but you *will* remember later.'" This was in October. In February of the following year, I was staying with a friend in Ceylon close to my former home. One evening I felt very depressed, I fought against it but for a few hours I was unhappy. I wished I could receive some message of comfort. Had I been in England I would have gone to my clairvoyant friend.

The following day I was talking to my hostess in her pretty drawing-room while she arranged her flowers. I was strolling round the room and paused at a "specimen table" which contained several small treasures under glass. Two were ivory figurines, carved, representing Grecian goddesses. I asked what they were and my friend replied: "They are old pipe-stoppers, they belonged to G.'s grandfather, there were originally three, but one fell on the floor and the puppy mistook it for a bone!" Instantly "three small carved ivory ornaments, something to do with the East" rushed into my mind. I told my friend what the clairvoyant in Devonshire had seen and described. She said: "I showed them to your husband several years ago, when we had the *three* complete. I'm sure he wanted to make you understand he *knew* you were coming here to stay with me."

I had received my longed-for message and was content and happy again. There is *no* parting. Remembrance *lives*.

E. S. NORFOLK.

Light

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THE TRUTH ABOUT SPIRITUALISM

WE have listened many times to final judgments on this subject of ours, whether we call it Spiritualism or Psychical Science. We have heard it lauded to the skies by one and condemned to the bottomless pit by another. Neither of the judgments impressed us very much: it was so evident that those who delivered them spoke without any real knowledge of the matter. And this applies not merely to spoken opinions but to some of the books which purport to instruct the public. It was not for us a sufficient recommendation of some particular book that it took our side of the question, if we observed that some of its statements were exaggerated or misleading, if its facts were not set out with reasonable accuracy—if, in short, it were not a trustworthy guide to the subject. On the other hand, it was not necessarily a cause of offence that some other book which came our way should be in the nature of an attack or a destructive criticism if only the facts were fairly stated and the cases quoted against us well substantiated. Alas, books of this kind we usually found to be so untrustworthy, as being the production of writers with much theory and little real knowledge, that we regretted the waste of labour and money that had gone to the production of the volume, whatever it was.

Nevertheless, as we have already indicated, we were not on that account any the more predisposed in favour of books which might be almost equally misleading, simply because they spoke *for* instead of *against* us. The writers on either side of the argument might call their lucubrations "The Truth about Spiritualism"; the question for us was not whether it were *pro* or *con*, but was it the *truth*?

Someone said recently that nobody knows the truth about Spiritualism, which at least showed an impartial state of mind, for in earlier years it seemed to be generally understood that the truth about Spiritualism could be quite simply stated, i.e., that there was no truth in it what-

ever. We can recall those days, having, since then, observed the gradual change in the attitude of our critics and censors. It involved a great deal of hedging and trimming, and the admission of many saving "ifs" and "buts" which always have an enfeebling effect on the statement of a case. But then, the wholesale condemnation of older days was no longer a tenable position. It was inconceivable to the plain man that any subject could go on year after year, increasing in strength and numbers if it had nothing whatever behind it—no facts of any kind. When that state of affairs dawned on the minds of the opposition—when it became plain that phenomenal evidences and communications were not merely things peddled by professional Mediums for a living, but were obtainable in one's home and family circle, the argument was changed. These things, it appeared, belonged to some obscure form of psychology, and belonged to the realm of the medical profession. But that explanation showed signs of wearing thin with the discovery that some medical men were apparently afflicted with the same complaint! We then heard of "telepathy," which appeared to convey as much comfort to the unbeliever as the word Mesopotamia did to the old lady in George Whitfield's congregation. So, having been driven from pillar to post, from illusion and delusion to morbid mind-states, and from that argument to telepathy (which incidentally gives away the whole case for materialism!) the materialist took refuge at last in the plea that the subject was unscientific anyhow! We do not find the accusation at all disconcerting, remembering how many new ideas and discoveries came under scientific censure at their beginnings, but were afterwards discovered to be true and accepted by the very scientists who had at first denounced them. (We could cite examples in point, but it is not necessary—most of us are familiar with the facts.)

Now what *is* the general truth about Spiritualism put into a few sentences? It is that Spiritualism is an entirely human thing, reflecting in its own way all the vices and foibles, all the virtues and good qualities of the people amongst whom it manifests itself. In the last analysis, the essential truth, has to be found by every man and woman for himself and herself. Every one of us has a different experience of life, and it is much the same as regards truth. For there are many kinds of truth: as, for example, religious truth, philosophical truth, poetic truth, and scientific truth.

The firm conclusion of some of us is that survival and communication are (as the lawyers say) true in substance and in fact. The proof of it must be sought by each one for himself—that is, of course, if he feels the need of it. And it may be added that in this matter no amount of argument "about it and about" can ever take the place of actual experience.

BOOK REVIEW

By H. F. PREVOST BATTERSBY
DEATH AND THE PRIMITIVE

IT is a delight to meet Sir James Frazer once more, and the subject of his latest work is of an enthralling interest. However widely you cast the net, you can hardly enclose any primitive tribe without some belief in the survival of the soul. If that be evidence of a universal error, how, one would ask, has it arisen? Primitives are represented as having deduced a deity from the cataclysms of Nature but whence did they get their ghosts? There is nothing in Nature to suggest a returned spirit but the spirit itself; and is it not curious that all these hundreds of religious beliefs, agree on one point only—that the dead return.

For the most part they are afraid of them; in a measure from the conviction that death has affected "their character and temper on the whole for the worse, rendering them touchy, irritable, irascible, prone to take offence on the slightest pretext and to visit their displeasure on the survivors by inflicting on them troubles of many sorts, including accidents of all kinds, drought, famine, sickness, pestilence and death."

The necessity, thus involved, of keeping one's relatives complacent and amused on either side of the grave adds a strain to the manipulation of family life for the savage, and he is quite keenly aware of it.

He deals with the problem in two ways; either by conducting the soul back to the family mansion with elaborate ceremonial in the hope of kindly offices, or, perhaps, reincarnation in a grand-child; or by giving it a cheerful send-off, with any odds and ends required for the journey, to the land of spirits, and a fitting and emphatic injunction to stay there.

Some of the methods for bringing back the soul are almost incredibly funny. The Gonds go to the river side, call aloud the dead person's name, catch a fish or an insect from the river, and return triumphantly with what they believe to be the spirit of the deceased, and by a variety of rites with pigs and chickens give it the option of remaining in or leaving the village. Elsewhere, if the relative has died in a distant village, a trail is laid to guide his spirit home with leaves and rice, like a paper chase; and, if a river intervene, a cotton thread is stretched from bank to bank; since it is a wide-spread belief that without such assistance the ghost would be in grave danger of drowning.

The signs which are accepted as proving ghostly return are of an inconceivable quaintness, and it is impossible to imagine how they were devised.

Where the ghost is not feared it is a common practice to keep the skull in the house, or even some of the bones; and it is, or was, a practice with some tribes to bury the corpse in the house; probably in the hope of its spirit being handy for reincarnation in the next generation.

A belief in reincarnation is widely held; indeed the faith is, in places, carried so far as to assert that unless an ancestral spirit consents to enter a woman's womb she cannot conceive; a Kwotto woman will even make a pilgrimage to a haunted spot in the hope of persuading a ghost to enter her womb; a curious parallel to the persuasion that the commerce of the sexes is by no means essential to the birth of children.

Where the fear of the returning spirit overshadows remembered or expected benefits, the ritual takes the form of a mannerly but explicit farewell.

In New Guinea when the skull of the deceased has been finally buried, they say:—"Depart now for good and all. Never return to our village. All these bodies of pigs and dogs are for you; so, too, all these coconuts and garden stuff. Now I bury you under the ground.

* *The Fear of the Dead in Primitive Religion*. Sir James George Frazer, O.M., F.R.S., F.B.A. London. Macmillan & Co. 1933. 10/6.

You are done with for ever," a statement about which there is probably more Coué-ism than conviction.

In Northern Australia the phrase is:—"You lie down quietly, do not come back, lie down all right—if the children see your spirit later on they will be sick."

In Central Calabar they say:—"Come not back. You have no longer any brothers and sisters here, and we do not yet wish to follow you. Go straight on. Call us not, for we are still well off here."

"Soul, remain in the grave," say the Bana, a negro tribe of the Cameroons; "Come not out of it. Every man must die. Give us no trouble."

Almost everywhere one finds this disagreeable expectation from the dead; even from the dead who have been beloved while living; the likelihood of deterioration on the other side being a fixed conviction, which has lately been corroborated, curiously enough, by the control of a South African Circle.

To ensure the final departure of the dead every facility is provided. Food for the journey—and this acceptance of ghostly appetites seems to be universal—bridges for any stream that may cross his way, chairs at intervals along his weary road to the grave; little ladders to help him climb to heaven; a canoe, for an islander, to carry him over the water, which if he be a potent chief, may be manned by the corpses of his enemies, the crew having to be completed before the *tabu* is raised; also, the ghost being obviously a helpless creature, a dog, a hog, a fowl, a cow, or a horse may be sacrificed that the ghost, holding on to its tail, may reach the abode of bliss.

EXIT OF THE GHOST

The dead man's skull is sometimes cracked to facilitate the exit of the ghost—which agrees with the Tibetan practice of assisting, by peculiar noises, the escape of the spirit through the top of the head—a hole may be made in the thatched roof of the house, which corresponds with the Highlanders' half-opened door; in Tonquin duck's feathers are attached to the corpse to help its flight; money, in the classic fashion, may be put into its mouth to pay ferry dues across the mystic river; indeed almost everything is foreseen to assist the attainment of a bourne from which no traveller can return.

The return is feared for various reasons. The objection to ghosts flitting about seems evidence that such wraiths have been seen, so general is the belief in them, and that contact with them is unhealthy.

They come back for company; to hasten with ill-health the passage of relatives and friends to join them; or from sheer malice or jealousy to spread sickness abroad.

They can withhold the much needed rain, or refuse fertility to the crops. Pathetic are the appeals of a parched and starving people to these relentless shades. "Look, O Father, upon your beloved cattle and children; they suffer distress, they are so lean, they are dying of hunger. Give us rain."

This link of fear leads to worship, the propitiation of the ancestor. Ceremonies, sacrifices, offerings of all kinds, dances, prayers; and these, not to obtain remission only, but for counsel, forecast of the future, help in expeditions and in war.

Here and there the ancestor may be regarded as an intermediary, but any Divinity beyond him is in most cases a very shadowy creature.

Even phenomena which are supposed to have produced Deities for the primitive, are attributed by many tribes to the ancestral ghosts.

The Kafir regards lightning as the spear of a departed chief; in Peru thunder is thought the voice of the recently dead; Choroti Indians and others believe thunder and lightning to be caused by the great number of evil spirits rushing through the air to attack their village. Indians of the Andes hear in a thunderstorm a battle between the souls of their fellow countrymen and the dead Spaniards.

Earthquakes are thought to be caused by the spirits of the dead underground struggling to force their way up

to the surface : so, during a shock, the Timorese knock on the ground and call out :—"We are still here," and the Lushei villagers cry : "Alive! alive!" to reassure the people down below of their existence. Or the quake is due to the dancing of the dead receiving a new comer from the upper world, or to the spirits fighting among themselves as they did on earth.

One is reminded of the office assigned by Roman Catholics to unbaptised children in the seance room by the value the Eskimo sets on the souls of infants who have died at birth. Indeed, to secure such a ghostly helper, a man will kill a child, and, to conceal his crime, will dry the corpse, and wear it in a bag on his person ; the child's sharp eyes assisting him in the chase.

The generative virtue with which the spirits of the dead are believed to impregnate the ground, and their guardianship of the crops is acknowledged everywhere by the assignment of the first fruits for their consumption ; a consumption which is recognised as concerned only with the spiritual part of the offering.

It is impossible in a short review to give any conception of the wealth and fascination of folk-lore packed into this volume. That has ever been the author's way. He leaves us to form our own conclusions.

"The beliefs of primitive people on the subject of immortality," he tells us, "present a considerable variety of choice to any one who might undertake to found a new religion ; he might adopt the democratic doctrine of immortality for everybody ; or the aristocratic doctrine of immortality only for noblemen ; or the moral doctrine of immortality only for the good ; or the immoral doctrine of immortality only for the bad ; or, lastly, the blighting doctrine of immortality for nobody."

Even that catalogue does not quite cover the Lakher's belief that after a spell in Hades, the spirit dies again ; the chief's spirit is turned into a heat-mist that goes up to heaven ; the poor man's becomes a worm that is eaten by a chicken, and that is the end of it.

To our ideas those of primitive man are ludicrous ; but then we are not primitive men ; and our psychic senses are, probably, compared with theirs, a much blunted business.

The primitive ghost, also, may have ways and means with which our refined wraiths could have no commerce. We do not know. We do know that, in certain matters, the knowledge of the "savage" begins where ours ends. He may also know something more than we about his own dead.

THE SOUL'S FAREWELL TO EARTH

Captive no more, as to dream-life awaking
Soar I exultant, released from my chains,
Fresh as the morning, earth's languor forsaking,
On through these strange yet familiar domains !

Blithely I sing to the Lord of Creation,
He Whose Design has forethought us to this !
Pulses within me a sweet exaltation—
Thrilling denial of Nirvanic bliss.

Here, when the turmoil of earth is surmounted,
Into these regions of splendour arise
None but the living, for none is accounted
Dead till his urge for discovery dies.

Long were the seasons of fretful unfolding,
Slowly in secret His Purpose was wrought,
Here we, our harvested sowings beholding,
Prize all the perils with which they were fraught.

"Farewell, dear Earth ! — You that made us acquainted
With 'Loving' and 'Thinking'—twin reasons for birth ;
Wielding these Powers, controlled and untainted,
We come to your aid to create a New Earth.

WARREN ELLIOTT.

SCENE OF THE AFTER-LIFE

By HELGI PIETURSS, Ph.D., Geologist, Reykjavik, Iceland

I TOOK up Mr. FitzSimons' book, *Opening the Psychic Door*, in the hope that perhaps in this work by a biologist I might find something of exceptional interest. And I was not disappointed. On page 224, Amos, an inhabitant of "one of the very advanced spheres of spirit-life" gives some very important communications. He says : "We are not shadowy, intangible, unreal ; far from it . . . The term spirit is an unfortunate one to apply to us. . . because it conveys to the minds of people on your earth that we are not solid and substantial. We are anything but that. As the soul progresses, the body in which it dwells is still the same as yours, except that it becomes increasingly and continuously more beautiful to gaze upon."

Here we find it emphatically stated, by what we seem justified in calling an authority on the after-life, that it is wrong to call people in the Beyond "spirits," as they possess bodies that are no less physical than those lost in death. And, as hardly needs saying, this amounts to the statement that the scene of the after-life is some planet (cf. my book, *Ny'all*, and articles in this journal and in *Zeitschrift für Parapsychologie*). There is but one world, the world explored by the astronomer, the geologist, the biologist, and this world is the scene of life—both born and regenerated, both before death and after. We can read this all-important truth out of hundreds of communications from the Beyond.

And in Mr. FitzSimons' book we find some very fine samples of the sort. On page 164, the "spirit" Annie says : "You know our lives and surroundings are counterparts of those prevailing on earth. . . The flowers are glorious and their perfume exquisite ; the birds are like sparkling jewels, too beautiful to describe in earth language." Says the author, "Surely there are no birds where you are ?" "Why ever not," she (Annie) exclaimed, showing surprise. "What would our woodlands, our gardens, our ponds and lakes be without those lovely living jewels ?"

On page 83, the "spirit" Dr. Morgan says : "It is a curious fact that some people who come over here think that it is essential to eat ; and as long as they have that desire they satisfy it. There are great varieties of fruits and flowers here."

On page 151, Dr. Morgan says that the evil powers thwarting the efforts to make the condition of mankind satisfactory will not be defeated "until belief in a future life becomes a proven fact in Science, and the nature of our lives after death is known." And on page 158 : "When you are satisfied that your personality survives death, the essential thing is to learn all you possibly can of life over here."

The above is something I would ask Spiritualists to take to heart, because even among those who are convinced of survival the interest in after-life conditions seems but slight.

Curious it is that biologists who are interested in what is called Spiritualism should be so rare, when it is considered that survival in reality is a biological subject, and it would be difficult to name a more interesting biological fact than the total regeneration of the body after death. But of course this lack of interest must be ascribed to the circumstance that the indubitable fact of total regeneration has not thus far been recognised.

How stupendous and always exceeding all expectations will be the progress of our subject when once its true nature and importance has been recognised by science. How enormous will be the advance of the art of healing ! How incredibly interesting the descriptions of after-life adventures ! In fact, such stories will become a great and exceedingly important branch of the literature of the future—and a near future it will be if Spiritualists will not tarry to recognise the true nature of survival and the life after death.

WHAT PHANTOMS ARE MADE OF

TRACING THE MEDIUM OF PHYSICAL AFTER-DEATH MANIFESTATIONS

WITH reference to a review in *LIGHT*, November 3rd ("Physicists on Track of Astral Body") of the Bulletin of the Dr. Bernard William Johnston Foundation for Psychological Research, of Reno, U.S.A., the question has been raised what the phantom of grass-hoppers, photographed in the Wilson Expansion Chamber at the moment of death, actually was. Was it a vestment of a surviving element, or only a more subtle but empty husk?

Applied to human beings, the question in the Spiritualistic age has been first answered by Andrew Jackson Davis in *The Philosophy of Death*. His description of the emergence of the soul from the body of the dying is too well-known to be repeated here. But Miss Helen A. Dallas calls our attention to a note in her translation of Gabrielle Delanne's *Evidence for a Future Life* in which she quoted the following statement of Kapilla, an Eastern seer who lived some hundreds of years B.C. and was the founder of the Sankhya system of Philosophy.

"From the moment of its emanating from the spiritual essence and its union with matter, the soul was supposed to be invested with a subtle body which it never quits, till the moment of final emancipation or till the entire dissolution of all matter takes place. This body, called the *linga* or *linga-sbarira*, is the vehicle in which the soul is borne from one region to another."

Miss Dallas has traced through various sources of Spiritualistic literature the recognition of a substance which is not *linga* or psychic body but which accompanies the psychic body at death as a medium of physical manifestation—a medium which does not always cling to it, however, for as the spirit progresses it frees itself from this grosser substance. "This is in accordance with the indication given by George Pelham, through Mrs. Piper, to the effect that it became more difficult to use the medium for communicating as he advanced; he says: 'I am getting farther away from you each time. I am going on. It is too bad in one sense, but it is all right for me.' It is not improbable that this *aura* or *linga-sbarira* or *nerve-spirit* lingers for a time in the objects which have been handled or worn by individuals, also, probably, it may cling to the decaying vesture that the soul puts off, and this may account for the fact that Mr. Stainton Moses seems to have got into rapport with spirits by passing their graves, and that a Medium often requires to handle some article which has belonged to a departed spirit in order to get into rapport with it. This necessity is intelligible if the medium by which the spirit can manifest physically is itself a physical substance which emanates from its material body whilst in the flesh, and which still accompanies its psychic body in the first stages of its new life. These facts are worth considering in relation to one another, there are other occurrences of great importance which thus become considerably elucidated."

THE "CALAMITY HOWLER"

Those prophets! I was lately reading some terrible predictions given in 1925 and supposed to apply to the United States in the year 1926. There were to be floods—there usually are, but these floods were to wipe out two-thirds of the population in one of the States. Then extinct volcanoes in Alaska were to become active and the poisonous gases thus spread abroad were to destroy forty per cent of the population! This prophet, who called himself "Jet-all-red-din the Third" (by which I judge he was a humorist), spread his horrors with a lavish hand and no doubt scared many silly people out of their wits—not that people who could believe such nonsense could possess much wit.—D.G.

RAYS AND REFLECTIONS

DEATH A PHASE OF LIFE

That was an excellent sentiment which occurred in a letter I received from a contributor who wrote, "How could we live if it were not for death!" It contained much truth. It was true even in the physical sense, for if death did not remove us there would be no room for the new-comers into life. And when we look at death as a phase of life instead of its terminus, the saying has its full justification.

* * *

THE VICAR AND THE GHOST

The rector of a parish in which crowds of people assemble to see a ghost alleged to haunt the place is reported to have said that the story was "absolute rot." He believed "no one has ever seen a ghost or ever would!" Doubtless the vicar spoke under extreme provocation and is to be excused—unruly crowds of ghost-seekers are a severe tax on one's patience. And I suppose that, in one sense, no one has ever really seen a ghost just as no one has ever seen *steam*. In either case all that is visible is the material effect of an unseen cause.

* * *

"COSMIC CONSCIOUSNESS"

One of the phrases which has become soiled with ignoble use is "cosmic consciousness." It became almost as hackneyed as reincarnation. Doubtless there is a revelation of cosmic consciousness, but it comes to most of us in hints and gleams or flashes. I recall the case of a lady, now departed from this life, well known to us as an author, who claimed to have had a phase of cosmic consciousness which gave her the impression of profound gloom and depression. I put it down as probably due to an attack of indigestion, but I did not say so, for people who take themselves seriously do not usually welcome banter however amiable.

* * *

GHOSTLY MONKS OF BEAULIEU

I see that the Rev. R. Powles, vicar of the Abbey Church of Beaulieu, Hants, testifies to many ghostly manifestations at the Abbey Church there. He has, for instance, seen the monks of ancient days sitting at their meals in what was once the refectory. There are many similar stories concerning old religious foundations. In other days such tales were accepted without inquiry by the populace. To-day, being unable to dispose of the cases, there is a tendency on the part of critics to challenge the *reasonableness* of the ghostly activities—e.g., why should the monks be eating in their refectory centuries after they have passed to another world? There is an explanation. It has been given many times in *LIGHT* and elsewhere. These manifestations belong to the world of mind, to dream and vision, to projections of thought from another world—thought that takes semi-objective forms, and is not to be accepted too literally. These considerations are truisms to the instructed Spiritualist and Psychical Researcher; but to-day there is a tremendous incursion of everyday folk who, while disposed to believe do not yet understand, and must be taught either by instruction or experience what to accept and what to reject. D.G.

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(NEW SYLLABUS READY IN NEW YEAR.)

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"MAISIE" OF MRS. MASON AND "UVANI" OF MRS. GARRETT MANIFEST AS PROMISED, IN AUSTRALASIA

By (MISS) PETRONELLA NELL

I HAD my first sitting with Mrs. H. Mason at the L.S.A. on the 13th February, 1930. My mother, who had passed over four weeks previously, spoke through "Maisie" for forty-five minutes. She, my mother, advised me to go to Australia for a change, and to spend the following Christmas there with her brother, Christian.

The following October 10th I sailed for Australia. My last sitting with Mrs. Mason was on the previous day; *Maisie* said to me: "I shall come to you on the other side of the world."

In Christchurch, New Zealand, in April, 1931, I was informed at a sitting with Mr. Nortontaylor that a little Zulu girl had been present and had desired her greeting to be given me, and that she had come from London to keep her word to me.

On May 27th, 1931, at a circle at Mr. Nortontaylor's while I was being addressed by a materialised figure, standing in front of me, I felt a hand caressing my head; involuntarily I jerked my head so as to see who was there; the hand caught in my spectacles, and I felt the fingers gently disentangle themselves, replace the arm over my ear and glide away. I asked the spirit still standing in front of me who had been stroking my hair? She replied: "A young girl called *Maisie*, of an African tribe; she is very pleased at your knowing she came to show you her love."

A little later one of the other sitters described an entity with golden hair, whom he was seeing clairvoyantly, and the controlling spirit said it was a Greek maiden named *Aurita*, known to me in London. I remembered the name perfectly as being that of the control of Mrs. Rous, with whom I had had a sitting on September 25th, 1930.

On March 12th, 1932, in Christchurch, at a Direct Voice sitting with Mr. Lancelett Brice—at which only he, Mrs. Brice and myself were present—a high-pitched, very clear voice with an Eastern inflection, called out: "I am here! *Uvani*!" (This is the Arab control of Mrs. E. Garrett, with whom I had sat in London on June 18th, 1930.)

He continued: "It's the first time I've spoken in this part of the world! Your mother and friends said to me to come." I asked how Mrs. Garrett was. *Uvani*: "Well, thank you. I love Mrs. Garrett! How are you, Miss Nell? — You remember when I was talking of your going to the Antipodes?" I: "Perhaps you remember, *Uvani*, you brought a friend to me, who wished to take my hands? Mrs. Garrett did not move, but I felt that electric shock right up my arm. How did it happen?" *Uvani*: "Shut your eyes, clench your hands, and lean your head back. I'm going to touch your forehead. Do you feel that?" I: "No!" *Uvani*: "I am touching your left hand; do you feel that?" I: "Yes! Try the right now. — Oh yes! I feel it quite strongly now. Thank you!" *Uvani*: (his voice quite close) "Good-bye. God bless you."

The following November 1st, 1932, again with Mr. and Mrs. Brice, *Uvani* announced himself in the same individualized, clear, vibrant tones: "*Uvani* here!" I: "Welcome, *Uvani*! How is your friend?" *Uvani*: "She's tired; she has done a lot of sitting lately. I'll be there (in England) when you come. I will speak to you." He took his leave after a short talk.

I returned to London this year and sat with Mrs. Mason at the L.S.A. on the 10th July, 1933. At once I heard *Maisie*: "Hullo, missee lady! *Maisie* are pleased to see you. *Maisie* came to New Zealand to see you." She then used the Medium's hands to stroke her hair, saying: "Just like that," in response to my query as to whether she remembered doing it there, and added: "That was a very nice man, very nice indeed! I liked him and the conditions. A long time since *Maisie* talked with you through that Medium! Seven months since I was over there." (I left Australia in January, obtaining news and greetings from *Maisie* in Sydney and Melbourne up to Christmas.) "But I speak once or twice since. I came to see you, and you were trembling a bit at your knees; you had people to talk to and to tell them what you had found in other countries, and when you first got up you said: 'What am I to say?' You said: 'Good God!' And we made you take notice and I made you say about the Voices!" (This was said in a pleased tone of triumph, preening herself over her success, and reminded me vividly of the occasion she referred to.) She went on: "I promised you, you know, that I would come to see you, didn't I?" — She then began to describe accurately two circles I had attended in different cities in Australia; she described the incidents with great vivacity and detail; she strongly disapproved of both: "They got up and flung their arms around and came over to you and stroked you. I told them to sit down! I said: 'You silly fools!' I was angry. When we come back from our life here, we are just as natural as on earth, and do you know, it is not the higher spirits they said they were, who come through at those sittings. Conditions there are not conducive to spirits from the higher planes getting through. We closed the sitting for you!" She went on, her tone changing to one of pleased reminiscence: "But the little circle in a room looking into a garden—I liked that one! — and *this* lady was there!" She turned to a friend I had with me who had been in Sydney at the same time as myself, and who had been present at a small circle held in the house of my hostess, with Mr. Alfred Rayner as the Medium.

She then went on to describe as being present and wishing to greet me through her, *Chikko*, the control of Mr. Rayner, and Dr. Peacock, who, while speaking in New Zealand through Mr. Nortontaylor, had so often mentioned *Maisie's* presence there! I have since obtained confirmation of this from the countries mentioned.

On August 18th, 1933, I sat with Mrs. Garrett at the L.S.A. and *Uvani* confirmed his speaking in the Direct Voice at Mr. Brice's in New Zealand: "I remember on both occasions when we talked in his circle. I think it is always very good to verify, where conditions provide.

(Continued on Page 842)

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(SOCIETY ARRANGEMENTS CONTINUED ON PAGE 843)

AURA CHANGES ASSOCIATED WITH AGE

By MISS JACQUELINE

A BABY shows me very little surrounding "aura," just a barely distinguishable silver "outline" quite near the body. Radiations appear to be flowing into the little form—not away from it. When it lies on its back and stretches up hands and feet in happy play I see, bending in love above it, "spirit faces" which it attempts to pat and to stroke, or iridescent bubbles and other attractions which it tries to catch, much as a kitten does a feather or a leaf sporting in the breeze.

There may be "interference" by humans with the "beams" of love and joy linking the child with these ethereal radiations and the child itself suffers if such are roughly or suddenly shattered or swept aside. One sees, as it were, patches of blackness entering the psychical organism, if these ethereal radiations be interfered with. This "blackness" may reappear many, often *very* many, years later in the auric emanations of the adolescent or the adult.

During babyhood and childhood the inflowing beams and rays gradually disappear, their places being taken by the early outflowing ones. The predominant colouring in normal, healthy childhood is a lovely shade of rose-pink.

Before fourteen, all inflowing "waves" have vanished, and more and stronger outflowing ones have appeared. These gradually strengthen outwards, more or less rapidly according as the adolescent matures, and by twenty-one the aura should have become fixed or settled. Those whose lives have been over-sheltered may not reach this point of stabilisation until later, if indeed ever. Definiteness of demarcation between the various individual colourings provides a standard by which one may gauge the degree of personal responsibility already accepted by the youth or adult.

The aura remains stationary for thirty-five years or so; and then, at about fifty-six, it usually begins to incline forwards, as though the outside edges were being drawn together.

I must explain that to me the aura appears as practically two-dimensional: I see it as a plane form, not as an ovoid; I see nothing radiating out from front or back. At times there are "veils" of colour over different parts of the body, but these are of a different nature from the "radiations" with which I am at present concerned. The shape of an ordinary coffin, viewed from the front, has much the form of the aura as I see it, and leads me to ask whether possibly the earliest makers of coffins had this same "aura" in mind.

That forward drooping I explain as due to the natural man's desire to hold on, still to grasp, to draw to himself those full experiences of maturity which he feels are beginning to slip from him. Somewhere in the neighbourhood of sixty-three, however, one begins to realise more definitely that the end of life is approaching, and there starts a drawing back of the aura, in consonance, possibly, with some "tug" from old Mother Earth, into whose receptive arms we throw our bodies when we have done with them. This backward movement continues through the early, upright, vertical position of the aura until the edges are as far behind this as before they were in front of it. This happens normally at three score years and ten, when there usually sets in a second period of stability, this time probably one of quiet waiting.

In the case of sudden death (from either accident or disease), the edges of the aura clash together in a manner reminiscent of lightning passing between clouds during a thunderstorm. Such a clash affects a "sensitive" forcefully. I think that when, on first communicating with Earth after Death, a soul describes the shock experience at the moment of passing, it is this clash of auric "colours," this abrupt "interference" with auric "radiations," that is being described rather than the

material conditions, though these do play a part, but a less important part, in the manifestations.

I have found something of like nature in the conditions surrounding one who has been severely disappointed in a search after truth regarding the possibility of establishing communication with a dear one "beyond the veil." The "colours" of such an one appear at first inextricably mixed, and it may require some hours of mutually helpful work on the parts of "sitter" and "sensitive" in order that the various "threads" may be "untangled" and straightened out into the clear and definite "rays" characteristic of psychical health.

THE PROCESS OF DEATH

During the process of dying, one's aura gradually shrinks until, at the moment of actual death, it completely disappears: nothing whatever of the "aura" remains.

Those variations in position described above explain why the aura, when seen directly from the front, appears smaller at the later ages than it does during maturity. Also then it is decidedly duller in tone, markedly less vivid in colouring, except with those few happy folk who possess, or are possessed by, the Spirit of Eternal Youth.

Then there comes a radiance far surpassing anything seen earlier in the life, but only once have I seen an actual halo. That was around the head of a wonderful lady of seventy-eight, whose long life had been one of devoted service to another whom she dearly loved. That other had been one who, though crippled physically from early childhood, had led an active intellectual life and one filled with determined forgetfulness of her own disabilities but continued interest in and for the lives of others. In this case, no "aura" was visible elsewhere, but the "halo," surrounded the head, extending from shoulder point to shoulder point, rising high at its centre and bending forward, as though in blessing, over the crown of the head. Its silver sheen was as brilliant, but more transparent than, autumn sunshine on a steel-grey sea, and set carefully here and there and glowing richly, were iridescent "gems" which, whilst they mirrored clearly the surrounding shimmering beauty, themselves suggested unplumbed depths of pure steadfastness and sweet serenity.

Mr. J. Arthur Findlay (author of *On the Edge of the Etheric* and *The Rock of Truth*) has been invited to become an honorary Vice-president of the Spiritualists' National Union.

"MAISIE" AND "UVANI"

(Continued from Page 840)

I know the man very well, as five or six years ago Abdul Latif had manifested with him and in that connection I was asked to look at him. I would have no interest in speaking unless there were someone there in whom I had interest."

These incidents militate against the theory sometimes put forward that the personality called "spirit control" is a dual presentment of the Medium's own personality, a projection of his subconscious into his conscious mind. Out of hundreds of sittings I have had, I have learnt to know when the Medium is using his or her own mind, either partially or wholly, and when such is not the case. When, however, incidents such as the above occur, and can be further verified, we have a fascinating field open up; I should like to suggest that the means used in America recently to tabulate the reactions of *Uvani* as distinct from those of his Medium, Mrs. Garrett, could be further extended to register his reactions when he speaks apart from her, supposing he could be persuaded to attempt the control of some other Medium than his original one, in the interests of scientific investigation.

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