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AM I A SPIRITUALIST? AUTHOR-INVESTIGATOR'S FRANK EXAMINATION OF A GREAT PROBLEM

By J. ARTHUR HILL

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

IN my book, *Letters from Sir Oliver Lodge*, I quote a remark of Sir Oliver's to the effect that he would be interested to learn why I did not consider myself a Spiritualist. He himself did not feel that he could repudiate the label; and, knowing my opinions pretty thoroughly, he was rather surprised that I disclaimed it. I thought at the time that my reply was adequate: I do not attend any Spiritualist meetings regularly and am not a member of any Spiritualist society except the London Spiritualist Alliance, and membership of this body does not imply any creed. But I am not so sure that I was right in my disclaimer.

Let me think it out; as Oliver Wendell Holmes used to say. There's nothing like talking or writing for finding out what you think about this question or that.

The dictionary definitions of the word "Spiritualism" and its derivatives are not very helpful, for they give all the meanings which the words have been used to convey, and leave us to select the one we like best. But I suppose there are two principal meanings. Spiritualism is:

- (1) Belief in human survival and the possibility of communication with the departed in one or other of the ways studied by psychical students.
- (2) Membership of a society or body which functions as a religious group.

I am a Spiritualist in the first sense, but not in the second, though I am not hostile, and should quite possibly be a member of a Spiritualist church if there were one at hand. The nearest one to my home is some miles away.

I am bound to admit, however, that I have not been much edified by the meetings I have attended when opportunity offered. The inspirational addresses and the

like are often rather tedious, and the clairvoyance is usually vague—descriptions being such that someone in the audience is pretty sure to claim the spirit as a relative or friend. I agree that there are exceptions, but I have never yet had anything evidential at any of these public meetings.

Still, the existence of these meetings and these bodies is proof that they satisfy or have satisfied some need on the part of their founders or present supporters; and therefore I should be the last to deny their usefulness. I merely say that they have not helped me personally; I am glad that they help other people.

In the other sense, I am a Spiritualist whole-heartedly. I have been convinced of survival and communication by years of careful investigation. I am as sure of it as I am of most things. "Nothing worthy proving can be proven," said Tennyson, and we must admit that it is not possible to prove even the existence of the external world—it may be a gigantic hallucination, but we assume its reality, and the assumption works, so we are justified in accepting it.

I cannot prove the existence of atoms or electrons; I have never seen them, nor has anyone else, so their reality is a step further removed from perception than is that of the grass and the flowers. But we infer their existence from the behaviour of matter, and the inference works.

So with the minds of departed people. *I infer their existence from phenomena that I have observed, and I am as sure of their reality as I am of the reality of electrons.* The evidence is sufficient for me, though I do not expect other people to believe because I do. They have not had my experience.

Well, I believe in survival and communication, and that is the basis of the Spiritualist's system of philosophy.

There seems also to be good reason to believe that the next stage is one of progress. We are at present in one of the lower classes of the universal school, and we shall

learn more about its seemingly harsh discipline when we get into one of the upper classes.

Further, it seems absurd to suppose that human intelligence is the highest that exists. We find orderliness and comprehensibility out there in nature, and it is reasonable to infer that a great Mind—something like our own but greater—is behind the veil of phenomena. There may be many intermediate grades, and accordingly a belief in angels is not at all absurd. This, however, is perhaps going a little beyond the evidence, though it is a reasonable belief.

So I suppose that I ought not to object to the Spiritualistic label.

There are of course many difficulties. There are difficulties in all systems of belief.

For example, I am rather bothered about the number of souls that the universe must contain, if all human beings have survived. There are nearly two thousand millions of people alive on the earth to-day, and in half-a-century or so they will all have departed; and this has been going on for no one knows how long—say two million years, if that is the period in which human beings can be said to have existed, though of course the numbers were formerly smaller than is the case now. It would seem that the celestial regions must be getting rather crowded. Still, Space probably does not mean the same thing to discarnate beings, and perhaps there can be no such thing as crowding. Or it may be that the cave-men have been melted down, so to speak, and new souls forged out of the stuff that they were made of. That would keep the numbers reasonably manageable.

Well, these are difficulties, but they need not worry us. Survival, individual continuation, is the main thing, and this is reasonably proved by the evidence. Further knowledge will come in due time.

On the moral and spiritual side, I turn back to the simple and direct teaching of the Christian Gospels. I confess that, when I read them, I am continually astonished that these Gospels should have led to the Christianity of our own day. There seems little relation between the noble simplicity and goodness of Jesus and the complicated ceremonial and the magical practices of the Roman Church, or even of the ecclesiasticism of orthodox Protestantism.

I think that Christ would not recognise Christianity as being the religion which looks to him as its founder—unless, indeed, he found it in the Society of Friends. Not only the ritual, but also the outworn creeds, of the churches, are foreign to His spirit.

When we read the Gospels we feel a friendliness, a kinship, with the central figure, and we agree to all that He says, or practically all; He was the product of His time, and would naturally reflect its opinion in some matters. We reverence His character to the uttermost, and wish we could have known Him personally, far below Him though we may feel ourselves to be. His teaching, carried into practice, would save the world, and in this sense He would be a Saviour if we would let Him. But theology has made His salvation a very different thing from that.

The set creeds may have had their uses, but they are worse than useless now. They prevent the intelligent and honest young person from joining the Church. He says that he would have to do so much mental reservation that it would seem to him duplicity. He would have to say that he believes in the resurrection of the body, in which no one now believes. In order not to be lying,

he has to say to himself that he means the spiritual body, or something like that. Similarly with other items of the creeds.

In all this we feel in a different atmosphere from that in which Christ lived and worked. He was all for conduct, for character, for realisation of the Fatherhood of God; for kindness and sympathy and peace. He was against the set forms of the prevailing religion, and he was murdered by the priests because of His heterodoxy.

If Jesus were here now, He would be among the Spiritualists or some of the other simple and despised sects, rather than among the ecclesiastical great ones, and I fear He would be outlawed again, if not executed.

But He commands the reverence of all honest souls. And indeed we must not be too hard on organised religion. Institutions are necessary forms; they furnish a permanent framework, as the generations change and pass. It is inevitable that they should to some extent fossilise. An institution is the lengthened shadow of one man, says Emerson, as Methodism of Wesley, and Quakerism of George Fox. The institution keeps the spirit alive as long as it can, but the form becomes a fossil in the end, unless another great spirit arises to keep it alive.

It is a remarkable testimony to the greatness of Jesus of Nazareth that so much of His spirit remains in the Churches, in spite of the ritual and creed with which they are overlaid and encumbered. He is still the central figure of Western moral and spiritual thought. Perhaps the Churches will gradually divest themselves of their theological trappings, and will turn to Christ and be saved.

I have said nothing about the mystical side of religion, for I have no first-hand experience of the kind. But I have read with interest the experiences of many who have been thus favoured, and it is obvious that in any complete philosophy of religion these experiences must be considered as William James considered a selection of them in his *Varieties of Religious Experience*. I even agree with him that Truth probably lies in the mystical direction. But these experiences are usually described in the terms of the prevailing theological system, and perhaps ought not to be taken altogether on trust. The experiences were real, but is their interpretation necessarily true in any ultimate sense? We must subject these accounts to our rational and intuitive criticism.

My own desire is for a rational religion which all normal people can share. That is my tendency; but I do not deny the vision of those who see what I do not. I merely say that I must formulate my own faith, such as it is.

STRONG EVIDENCE OF SURVIVAL

STRONG evidence of survival was given by Mr. Vout

Peters at a recent meeting at the Lewisham Spiritualist Church—evidence which entirely eliminates the “sub-conscious” hypothesis offered so frequently and glibly by so-called “critics” of the phenomena of Spiritualism.

Mr. Vout Peters gave a detailed description of a young man who, he said, had passed as the result of a motor accident. The description was immediately recognised, and several names given absolutely confirmed identity.

The lady who claimed this description, however, thought that this individual was lying in hospital in a dangerous condition as a result of the accident, and *had not the slightest idea of his passing*. Upon arrival home, she was informed that the passing had occurred a little less than one hour prior to the giving of the description!

GEO. J. SWIFT, *Hon. President.*

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“POWER” ON TOUR: [WEEK-NIGHTS] SOCIETIES AND CHURCHES PLEASE APPLY.

SPEAKING IN "TONGUES"

HINDUSTANI AND JAPANESE USED IN MESSAGES DURING A PRIVATE SITTING

WE were informed recently that at a private sitting, with Mr. Ronald E. Cockersell (of Victoria Psychic Research Society, London) as Medium, parts of two messages were given in Hindustani and Japanese. In response to our request for particulars, Mr. H. C. Taylor, of 5 St. Stephen's Road, Hounslow, sent us the following description of the sitting, which took place at his house.

MR. TAYLOR'S STORY

"In response to your request," Mr. Taylor writes, "I have much pleasure in giving you a few particulars of clairvoyance given by Mr. Ronald E. Cockersell at my house on the evening of November 24th, 1933. There were present at the meeting (in addition to Mr. Cockersell and myself), Mr. H., Mr. K., and Mr. M. Mr. Cockersell had met Mr. M. once; the other two were strangers to him; and until the start of the meeting, Mr. Cockersell did not know either the number or the identity of those who were to be present.

"I may say also that Mr. H. and Mr. K. (who, by the way, is Japanese) had never attended any gathering of the kind before and were, I think, a little sceptical, and consequently the conditions were not very favourable.

"A minute description was given to Mr. M. of his Great-Grandfather. His features, dress and mannerisms were given in detail. His occupation was said to be connected with shipping, and his Christian name, Jesse, was given. (All correct.) M.'s Grandmother was also described, as well as the room she chiefly used, down to ornaments consisting of ebony elephants and an inlaid casket in which she kept papers. Mr. M. states that all these details were absolutely correct.

"In my case, my Father was described in detail. Places to which my Father had been and events which occurred during the years he lived in India were described, some of which I was able to confirm; of others I had no knowledge or recollection, but they were quite likely to be correct.

He spoke to me in Hindustani. Unfortunately, I know practically nothing of this language, but was able to recognise a few words.

"My Father's Christian name, Robert, was also given. *As it is exceedingly unlikely that Mr. Cockersell could ever have heard of my Father, known he had been in India or could speak Hindustani, I think the above is a conclusive test of clairvoyance.*

"He also gave me a good description of my Grand-

father, both personal and characteristic, and his Christian name, Benjamin.

"With regard to Mr. K., the result was not quite so satisfactory, owing no doubt to the difficulty of the European tongue adapting itself to the Japanese language. Mr. Cockersell said Mr. K. had been in Singapore (correct). He also attempted several Japanese words with partial success, and gave the beginning of the name of Mr. K.'s brother. I understand the name is rather lengthy, so it is hardly surprising he became rather tangled.

"I would like to say that I have known Mr. K. intimately for the last thirty years, and this is the first time I have heard of the existence of a brother.

"With regard to Mr. H., he was told that he lived with two ladies, that his family came from the north of the Clyde, and that he had passed Gibraltar more than once. Mr. Cockersell also said he could see Calcutta but was not clear as to whether this referred to the past or the future. Mr. H. says he has never been to Calcutta but all his people have. All the other statements are correct.

"Many other matters were alluded to during the course of the evening, and these notes are only the gist of a very interesting and evidential test of Mr. Cockersell's powers."

A REMARKABLE INCIDENT

Mr. Ronald Cockersell paid a visit in the offices of LIGHT on Tuesday, February 20th. He kindly gave a demonstration of his clairvoyant powers. He described to me a gentleman who would have been "a grandparent condition." He made several attempts at his name, spelling the first part as follows:

"Fried . . . singer . . . stringer . . . slinger. Two dots on one letter. He is one of this. Twenty-five years ago in this world."

This statement is very remarkable. It is not known to my friends in England that I had a half-German grandfather, born in the Napoleonic age and that his name was Friedländer. This grandfather died almost a centenarian, twenty-five years ago as near as I can remember.

Mr. Cockersell also gave me a number of German words (he says the language is totally unknown to him) but I failed to place them owing to my scant knowledge of my grandfather's life. I did place, however, some important personal statements which are of a private nature.

N.F.

MARION'S GIFTS

DEMONSTRATIONS in telepathy and psychometry were given, with amazing success, last Thursday (Feb. 22nd) at the Grotrian Hall, London, by Marion, 'the human bloodhound,' as termed in the Press. He found hidden objects without knowing who had hidden them and found the hider as well. He gave correct readings from letters of strange people and from scripts of members of the audience picked at random from a heap of envelopes by a stranger.

This is how he read one: "Powder . . . crash . . . red all over the sky . . . explosion."

The script, written by Mrs. Fraser-Harris, contained this: "Blowing up a munition ship during the war."

Of another script, in a sealed envelope, he said: "Suspicion. Something wrong. Unjust. I don't like it. I won't have anything to do with it." A member of the audience opened the envelope. It contained this: "Shall I be afraid that my son-in-law is a legacy hunter?"

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STOPPING THE SUN

SUGGESTED EXPLANATION OF THE BIBLE'S
GREATEST MIRACLE

By DR. NANDOR FODOR

"THEN spake Joshua to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the Children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day." (Joshua x. 12-13).

The greatest miracle in the Bible! The one on which, with justification, even the orthodox throw doubt. But a negative attitude can never put a positive claim out of court. Something must have happened, something genuine must underlie that startling narrative. What was it?

Obviously, the sun could not have stopped. Did Joshua then work a spell on his army? Did Israel on that momentous day suffer from an illusion of the senses?

Supposing that Joshua knew, either from the secret handed-down knowledge of his clan, or by psychic intervention, of a herb like the mixture of mescal and hasheesh? Opium was known 4,000 to 5,000 years ago and used as a drug. It is by no means impossible that Joshua would know of another drug which had a strange effect on mental states: which appeared to slow down time so that minutes dragged on as hours, and the sun seemed to stand still.

The speculation is not so idle as it may appear. Hereward Carrington actually recorded experiences which bear it out. In *Higher Psychical Development* (pp. 118-119) he writes:

"I was experimenting with a mixture of drugs, hasheesh and mescal, and two or three other things—the object being to watch the psychological effects upon my own consciousness. The second time I took this drug—after four hours of very intense and beautifully coloured visions which ensued—the sense of time and space left me completely. I know we were walking up Sixth Avenue about four in the morning, four of us—all rather 'wobbly'—and that we went into a restaurant. We had a sandwich and some coffee. In the middle of the sandwich I put it down on my plate, and said, 'I won't finish that!' The others said, 'Oh, yes; go ahead! We will wait for you.' And I said, 'Oh, no! No! No! I couldn't do that! It would take *years* and *years* to finish that sandwich!' They laughed, of course, and said, 'Go ahead; it will only take a little while.' To me it seemed that between each 'chew' hours elapsed—hours and hours of time—and they could not induce me to finish the sandwich—it would take too long.

"So we went out; the elevated railway station was about a block and a half away, but miles and miles up the street I saw the station! We started to walk to it. We walked and walked and walked, hours and hours apparently, before we finally arrived at the station! On the way, I had this very curious experience: between the time my foot hit the pavement and the *sensation* of my foot striking it, *hours* elapsed—although, of course, it was but the fraction of a second. If I took out my watch and noticed the second hand, between every second, hours and hours and hours would again elapse.

"This only shows that my sense of time had completely 'gone to smash'—in other words, a mental change had taken place in myself, in which my time and space senses had been completely upset—for me they had all changed—as they often do in dreams, in delirium and in other states."

Had the sense of time of Israel "gone to smash" in a similar manner? No one can prove it. But the speculation gives a rational explanation to that most baffling miracle of the Old Testament.

A MYSTERIOUS HELPER

MAN SAVES A LADY FROM DEATH AND THEN
FADES OUT OF SIGHT

WRITING from Nice, a lady who has been a regular reader of LIGHT for many years, describes a wonderful experience.

"I have never been to a seance," she writes, "but as a child and a young woman I have often seen spirits, some in spirit-garb, others in usual clothes; on one or two occasions they have spoken to me—a curious voice like through a telephone or a tube. I have never been afraid of them. Four years ago I lost my husband, who was also very psychic. He has appeared to me four or five times and on two occasions has spoken to me. Once I met him in my etheric body and was convinced that I had died, and was so pleased; but he explained to me that I had only slipped out of my body, but must return, as I still had work to do here.

"I have always realised," she continues, "that I was guided and protected. More than once I have been saved from accidents—just a smart blow on my forehead to warn me of danger, though I saw no one. The other day, however, I had a more remarkable experience.

"I was out doing some errands, about three o'clock on a bright sunshiny afternoon. I was just stepping off the pavement to cross a street, and about two yards from the pavement, when my left arm was suddenly seized in a tight grip and I was pulled back violently four or five steps. At the same moment a racing-car, driven by a young fellow at a breakneck speed, whizzed round the corner of a street close to me; he never hooted, and had I not been dragged back I should certainly have been killed. One gentleman was nearly knocked down by the car and was hurt, but he was ahead of me and beyond the most dangerous spot.

"Realising that some very kind person had saved me from a terrible accident, I turned round. Close to me stood a man whom I did not know; not very tall, a fair moustache (not usual nowadays), a slouch hat, and an Inverness cloak.

"I expressed my gratitude in French, but he did not utter a word, which I thought strange. I repeated my thanks in English—but again, no answer came. Then slowly, as I looked at him, his form became less and less material and faded gradually away; the last thing I saw was the eyes, which were very kind; then those, too, faded out.

"I was so dumbfounded that it seemed impossible to realise what had happened; but my arm still felt the strong grip which had dragged me back. I had never seen this man before, his face was quite unknown to me. The dress and general appearance were old-fashioned."

B.B.C. TALKS ON "THE UNKNOWN"

T-O-NIGHT (Friday, March 2nd) at 9.20, Sir Ernest Bennett, M.P., Assistant Postmaster-General (Vice-President of the L.S.A.), is to deliver a broadcast address on "Ghosts and Haunted Houses." According to the *Radio Times*, Sir Ernest "will emphasise the certainty that men and women with sound minds and bodies do from time to time see phantasms of both the living and the dead; but it is Ghosts in the ordinary sense of the word (*i.e.*, the apparitions of dead persons) which he will discuss at length."

Dame Edith Lyttelton, G.B.E., President of the S.P.R., was the speaker last Friday evening and her subject was "Premonition and Prevision." She told several interesting stories to show the reality and the usefulness of prevision, and pointed the moral that human personality was greater than was generally known and that there was another world with which occasionally contact was established. Quoting St. Paul's words that "we see through a glass darkly," she said the glass *was* dark "but we do see through it."

PERSONALITY'S SUPERSTRUCTURES

DOMINATING INFLUENCES TO BE RESISTED

By FREDERIC H. WOOD

THE article on "Multiple Personality," by Dr. Nandor Fodor (LIGHT, Sept. 1), dealt with that problem in relation to Survival. I shall try to show that it goes further than simple Survival, which is now so definitely proved that no intelligently informed inquirer can honestly deny it.

Dr. Fodor quoted two discarnate authorities, one of whom, "the Lady Nona," has contributed much of the teaching to my former articles in this journal. Her reply to his question—written in his presence and without any sort of preparation—showed that she did not accept "multiple personality" as a fact. She believed there was "an inward mental and basic personality which is the spirit. Around this are the *superstructures* which have been acquired through experiences and through contact with other spirits. The influence of these seems to cause what is known as "multiple personality."

A glance at my Index of the 18 volumes of *Rosemary Records* down to date shows several other allusions to this problem. But before I discuss some of these, let me remind our readers that many students have worked in this field since R. L. Stevenson wrote on dual personality in *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. Campbell Holms' comprehensive book on *The Facts of Psychic Science* quotes many actual cases of dual and multiple personality, obsession, and insanity. In America, Drs. Carl Wickland and Titus Bull have each done much valuable medical research work of a very practical kind, driving out obsessing spirits—as Jesus did, but in a different way—who were "housed" in the personality of the unfortunate patient. On the other hand, many students in England have contributed to the discussion on surviving personality. Some hold the view that it disintegrates after death and becomes absorbed by other personalities; part of it entering A, part into B, and the remainder, perhaps, into C. Others regard the many human spirits who pass over in an undeveloped condition as "monads," which, after a period of post-mortem loneliness, become united in a sort of group-soul to form a new personality.

The case of Lady Nona, which naturally interests me most of all, appears to prove that in some cases individual personality persists: for this spirit, who claims to have lived in Egypt over three thousand years ago, has revived memories and 150 language-phrases of that country and period. These have been confirmed as correct, and translated by an expert, Mr. Howard Hulme. Even the experience of lives on other planes during the long interval—and Nona claims to have lived many such—has not obliterated this potential, subconscious memory. It does not follow that *all* humans would share her experience, but the language-tests appear to prove that the "Nona" who now writes and speaks through Rosemary is still the individual she was 3300 years ago, with a colloquial knowledge of a dead language utterly unknown to the Medium. Signor Bozzano, in the July issue of *La Ricerca Psicica* considers it one of the best cases of "Xenoglossy" (speaking in unknown tongues) on record. We might state it, humorously, as a syllogism:

1. Only a person who had lived in Ancient Egypt could speak its language fluently.
2. Nona speaks it fluently.
3. Therefore Nona lived in Ancient Egypt.

This fact would also suggest that whatever "superstructures" may have been acquired by this spirit during its intervening lives have not apparently disintegrated its own "inward mental and basic personality." "Lady Nona" is still the "Teleka" of Ancient Egypt. She gave both these names accurately through the clairaudient Rosemary and through Mrs. Mason's guide "Maisie," under circumstances which made the possibility of

collusion absurd. "Teleka" was apparently the name she bore in Egypt in the reign of Amenhotep III.

Indeed, it was her reference to that Pharaoh, and to the fact of her alleged reunion to him after ages of separation, which enabled me to follow up this question of "superstructures" a little further. In narrating their story, she wrote: "He had much to unlearn, and much to re-learn, and a long way to travel up when he left the Earth, where he did much violence. But now he is all of himself, and no other."

I recently asked Nona to explain this statement in more detail, and there followed a trance-talk of exceptional interest. She had meant, apparently, that this once-powerful monarch had by now "cast off all subject-personalities, as you, too, will have done some day, Doctor."

Nona, who seldom misses an opportunity to apply her forceful spiritual teaching, went on to say: "Always cast out every thought which you feel to be unworthy of your best self. If you do, you should one day reach a stage when you would be invulnerable against such thoughts, which actually come to you from lower minds. Christ, for example, must often have been terribly unhappy as a result of thoughts which impinged on His mind from the inferior minds around Him."

Nona explained that it was not an obsession. If it were, many people on both sides of the veil would have to be accounted obsessed. It was merely the effect of external and dominating influences around us, which, though unseen, often sought to obtain a foothold in our consciousness.

Nona has also urged the necessity for purifying our personalities of these "superstructures" *before* death. She states it as one of the main reasons for earth-existence. We do not recognise them as such, as a rule, since they take the form of some weakness in the character, either a "besetting sin," or some objectionable trait less harmful but nevertheless inimical to our spiritual development.

They are imperfections which, says Nona, "you were intended by God to overcome, and which *must* be overcome before you leave the earth-sphere, or else your passage here will not be complete. But in some natures—the type of mind which has no strength to forge ahead on its own—these attendant spirits can actually find a lodging. They attach their personalities to the spirit of the one obsessed, and cause general deterioration of the individual concerned. Now, taken in time, they can be shaken off, but believe me, Doctor, it is worse to come over to the spirit-side obsessed in this way than in any other condition."

Of course, there is the reverse side of the picture. In the foregoing, Nona has indicated the real nature of Temptation, which the clergy of all denominations would do well to study. But she has also given us many glimpses of the brighter side of this question of spiritual superstructures. I have not space for them here, and moreover this aspect has already been adequately stated by Jesus Himself: "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." (S. John XIV. 23).

Inspiration and Temptation thus appear to be the opposite extremes of the working of the same spiritual law. Between these extremes are the countless impressions (generally innocuous) which from external spirit-sources appear to influence our daily thinking, and help to determine our general conduct. If Nona is correct, they come from "superstructures," distinct from the "inward, mental and basic personality." Not being of "the fundamental growth" as she told Dr. Fodor, these "will gradually fade away after death, as mist dissipates before the sun."

[In a subsequent article Dr. Wood will discuss "Multiple Personality in relation to Reincarnation."]

MISS FLORENCE MORSE

SUDDEN TRANSITION OF FAMOUS MEDIUM

MISS FLORENCE MORSE, the famous trance and clairvoyant Medium, passed away suddenly at Manchester on Monday morning (February 26th), as the result of a heart attack. She had been in London and returned to Manchester on Friday apparently in good health. In the *Richmond and Twickenham Times* for February 24th there appeared a long description of a gathering in connection with the Richmond Psychic Centre at which she gave clairvoyant descriptions.

Mr. Ernest Oaten officiated at the funeral which took place yesterday (Thursday).

Miss Morse had travelled extensively, visiting America, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. Commenting on her work as a speaker, the *Encyclopædia of Psychic Science* says Miss Morse was "not only conscious of her inspirational delivery, but that one of her Controls, who had a fund of dry humour, frequently kept her amused by his droll remarks on some feature of the proceedings, especially when it was a case of answering questions."

AN APPRECIATION

Mr. Leigh Hunt writes as follows regarding Miss Morse and her work:

"From early years, I was brought into close contact with Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Morse and their daughter Florence, the news of whose sudden passing has come with such painful surprise. As an inspirational speaker, Miss Morse's services were much in demand, and her clairvoyance was marked by a lucidity of expression which brought quick recognition.

"The only child of Mr. J. J. Morse, who was one of the greatest trance speakers in the movement, Miss Morse was from early years one of 'Nature's' Mediums. In addition to her psychic gifts, she was possessed of a sweet soprano voice, and this gift she often used, particularly during her father's lifetime, at concerts and at-homes held by the Marylebone Association and other societies.

"The work of Miss Morse for the Lyceum Union is well known. She was beloved by the children and deeply respected by all her fellow-workers. She enjoyed the friendship and warm support of many leading Spiritualists, of whom none was more loyal and helpful than Mr. E. W. Oaten, the Editor of *The Two Worlds*."

DEATH OF LORD SANDS

Lord Sands, the distinguished Scottish High Court Judge, who died suddenly in Edinburgh on Monday, at the age of 77, was deeply interested in Psychical Research and was President of the N.L.P.R., South Kensington. He took a large part in bringing about the union of the Scottish Presbyterian Churches.

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"CHANG'S" FIRST GREETING

MR. G. P. SHARPLIN ON HIS MEDIUMISTIC EXPERIENCES

LECTURING on "Thirteen Years With a Chinese Control," at the British College of Psychic Science, South Kensington, on Wednesday, February 21st, Mr. G. P. Sharplin said the first intelligent expression by his now famous Control was "Me Chang, me speak English, good night."

"Chang" gradually learned English; and, in giving healing treatment with an average 85 per cent. cure, he also gives significant mental and spiritual assistance to the sitters. He never promises ridiculous cures. If he finds that the case is not responding to his treatment, says Mr. Sharplin, he is quite candid about it and tells the patient that perhaps another healer working through different vibrations might be more helpful. But generally he can tell from the aura of the patient if there will be a sympathetic reaction or not. There is no need for the sitter to have faith; honest scepticism is no obstacle. After a few sittings, faith comes from the influence of "Chang's" personality. He has a fund of humour and his wisdom is profound.

Mr. Sharplin said he was, for a long time, very sceptical about "Chang." When clairvoyants described him, he thought they knew of him. When others spoke of his (Mr. Sharplin's) healing power, they made no mention of "Chang." When "Chang" commenced to prescribe herbal remedies he was frightened and looked up a book on herbs. He found the advice correct. In a direct voice sitting, the trumpet moved close to him and "Chang" spoke. "What can I do for you?" he asked. "When you remove your doubts, you remove my limitation," was "Chang's" answer.

Mr. Sharplin said he does not remember what passes in trance. Once or twice, however, he brought back recollections of his own wanderings out of the body. His eyelids are closed and it was noticed that the eyeballs turned upwards. On coming to, he feels chilly. "Chang" explained that in trance certain brain centres are held in abeyance, and it is the rush of blood to these centres which chills the body.

HYPNOTISED INTO GIVING AWAY A FORTUNE

THE strange case of a Scottish Laird, Mr. C. W. Fulton of "The Glen," near Paisley, who declares that he has been hypnotised into giving away a fortune, was described in the *Sunday Dispatch* (February 25th), details being given in words said to have been used by Mr. Fulton himself.

A relation of the Laird who lives in Brook Street, London, W.1., said: "My brother was a brilliant inventor and a good business man. We have tried to help him to cut this influence. It passes our understanding and puzzles all the doctors as well. It is clearly a case of one mind having another in complete control. My brother's individuality seems in complete abeyance sometimes. Of course, we are standing by him."

Sir Ernest Wallis Budge, who, besides being an Egyptologist, is an authority on hypnotism as practised in the East, said when questioned on this particular instance:

"I have known of stranger cases than this. I have met people who can make you believe that they can vanish before your eyes. They don't vanish, but for the time being you are hypnotised into believing that they do. The Laird's only hope is the firm realisation that he will never free himself from hypnotic influence until he calls on the power that is in himself—and indeed, in all of us. That power is the strength to say: I WILL. And man has no greater power than that."

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).

THE "WALTER" THUMBPRINTS

Sir,—Forgive me if I persist. I assume that you allow honest discussion of real difficulties. Mr. Thorogood, an official of the A.S.P.R., was confronted by the fact that not only Mr. Dudley, Mr. Goadby and Mr. Carrington, but also the police experts of Boston and New York, were fully convinced of the identity of "Walter's" right thumbprint with that of "Dr. K." What had these gentlemen before them? They had an undisputed ink-print of "Dr. K's" thumb, and a number of wax impressions, reproduced scores of times, of what "Walter" clearly said was his right thumb. Even if they had nothing but the enlargements in *Psychic Research* (the A.S.P.R. Journal) for April, 1928, these would have abundantly sufficed for the identification. Mr. Dudley's 27 points of identity constitute evidence which in a murder case would have sufficed to send the accused to the gallows.

The identification of the left thumb is equally clear. "Walter's" is figured in *Psychic Research* (Oct. 1928, p. 564) and confirmed by an impression obtained independently (see Mr. Fife's testimony, *Psychic Research*, Nov. 1929, p. 579). The left thumb is now repudiated; but why?

Mr. Thorogood, I submit, simply evades and confuses these plain issues by introducing the question of "Walter's" hands and fingers. On this he appealed to Professor Cummins, who has specialised in palmar dermatoglyphics. But Professor Cummins, treating the thumb question separately, pronounces for the identity of "Dr. K's" right thumb and "Walter's." Moreover, when fresh material and arguments are submitted, he reaffirms his previous conclusion, on Jan. 25 1933, in even stronger terms.

I did not write without having taken note of the passages of which Mrs. McKenzie speaks. (LIGHT, February 3rd.) But the damage which some of the wax impressions are alleged to have suffered, etc., can surely have no real bearing on the case. The photographs were taken when the impressions were fresh, and they were reproduced in *Psychic Science* at the time, now five or six years ago. Has Professor Cummins changed his opinion since Mr. Thorogood's "discovery"? I fancy the discussion will not rest where it now stands.

(Rev.) HERBERT THURSTON, S.J.

[Note—In a previous letter (LIGHT, February 16th), Father Thurston wrote: "For my part I am quite prepared to believe that these and other 'Margery' phenomena are of supernatural origin, but I also submit that the entity, whom we agree to call 'Walter,' has for some reason found it convenient to reproduce Dr. K's thumb as his own." This should be kept in mind in reading the above.—EDITOR.]

* * *

MR. DINGWALL STILL ON THE FENCE

Sir,—I find it a little difficult to understand the point of Mrs. McKenzie's letter in your issue of February 23rd. Dr. Cummins finds *forty-four* points of identity between two exhibits. One of these is said to be the impression of the *right* thumb of "Dr. X"; and the other the impression, if I mistake not, of the *right* "Walter" thumbprint of the so-called *standard* type. The question of the changed impressions has no relevance whatever to these similarities.

Further Mr. Thorogood admits (p. 120) that the *left* thumbprints of "Dr. X" are identical with those pre-

viously claimed by the American Society for Psychical Research in their publications as being those of "Walter."

Now in your leading article "Proof Positive" you are adopting the position that not only was the technical director of these seances guilty of a series of fraudulent manipulations, but that the A.S.P.R. itself, in the persons of its Research Committee, was so incompetent and careless that it allowed these gross substitutions to be thrust upon it. Yet at the same time you say that the "crucial test" is contained in the microphotographs, and about this "there can be no argument."

I confess I do not understand this position, for the obvious reply for the unbeliever to make is the one you yourself have made in the other direction namely that the exhibits are not authentic.

Since, therefore, the case rests upon the testimony of a number of persons *all* of whom *cannot* be telling the truth, I am at a loss to know what to do except to retire to my fence, where I have remained seated for almost a quarter of a century, and from which I shall not budge until much better evidence has been produced by Messrs. Dudley and Thorogood.

E. J. DINGWALL.

[NOTE.—When Mr. Dingwall has read Mr. De Brath's comments on the finger-print problem (page 137 in this issue) he should have no difficulty in deciding that the time has come for him to get down from the fence on which he has been seated so long.—EDITOR.]

* * *

BODY, SOUL AND SPIRIT

Sir,—Just as the clothing of a person is the expression as well as covering and protection of the body, so is the body the external expression of the soul. The soul in turn, is the vehicle of the Spirit that contains the nucleus, ego, divine unquenchable flame—the spirit-atom of life.

MABOU.

* * *

ACCESS TO MEDIUMS

Sir,—I was greatly interested with the remarks of "Unfortunate Sufferer" in your issue of February 16th and thought that it would be of interest to your readers to know that the following resolution was forwarded from this Church to the London District Council of the S.N.U.:

"That the members and committee of this Church are of the opinion that it would be in the interests of Spiritualism generally and of benefit to all Churches affiliated to the S.N.U. if an organisation be brought into being to provide equal facilities for accredited members whether of high or low material estate, who may be in spiritual or material distress or earnestly investigating the truths of Spiritualism, whereby they may be afforded the opportunity of either individually obtaining the services of *bona fide* Mediums or collectively experiencing phenomena of which they have heard only.

"It views with concern the growing tendency of the services of the best Mediums being reserved for a comparatively privileged few, which is contrary to the laws of justice and right."

JOHN FRANKLIN,

President, South London Spiritualist Mission.
Lausanne Hall, Peckham.

MR. GRAHAM MOFFAT AT GLASGOW

Mr. Graham Moffat, actor and playwright, spoke at the two services of the Glasgow Association of Spiritualists on Sunday last (February 25th). In the evening, the Church which accommodates seven hundred was crowded out, and over one hundred people had to be turned away. There was no clairvoyance. On Tuesday, February 20th, Mr. Moffat addressed a crowded meeting at the Town Hall, Airdrie, under the auspices of the recently formed Airdrie Spiritualist Association.

Light

All communications for the EDITOR should be addressed "The Editor of Light, 16, Queensberry Place, South Kensington, London, S.W.7." Phone: Kensington 3758.

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A PATHETIC CONFESSION

HOW far belief in Survival falls below knowledge in practical usefulness is well illustrated by a pathetic confession made by the Rev. "Dick" Sheppard in a contribution to the *Sunday Express* (February 25th). The article is headed "I Believe." In it he tells of a letter from a woman whose seven-year-old son had died and who refused to say in the accustomed words: "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." Sorrowfully, Dr. Sheppard admits that, in such a case, "death has not lost its sting nor the grave its victory," and he adds: "What are we to say when we must reply to human documents like these?" What indeed! Only the ability to explain from actual knowledge the fact of Survival, the certainty of continued development and the possibility of loving personal communication can make Paul's immortal words intelligible and acceptable in such a case. Had Dr. Sheppard been able to say "I know" instead of "I believe," he would in all probability have found himself able to give the bereaved mother effectual comfort by assuring her that, although his dear body was lost to her, she could have the assurance that her boy's life and personality continued unbroken; that he, in full consciousness, would be often with her; that she might sense his presence or even see him if her psychic faculties were opened; that on the "other side" he would be cared for and grow to gracious manhood; and that in due time she would meet him and discover that in reality they had never been far apart.

Dr. Sheppard, it seems, could not tell her these things. What he proposed to tell her was this: "For the little chap himself, one who knows life can hardly be sorry; he has had his peep into the world and seen just its sunniest hour before the shadows begin to lengthen." That, we fear, would bring small consolation to the bereaved mother; and, in any case, it is scarcely a sufficient message for one who is an

accredited and highly-respected servant of Him of whom it was said that He "brought life and immortality to light."

GLANDS AND CHARACTER

"CHARACTER, just as much as mental energy, depends on our glands." So says Mr. Gerald Heard in an article in a Sunday journal. If he is correct, then no man or woman should be blamed for bad character or praised because they are good. Instead of being sent to gaol, the malefactor should be sent to hospital for gland treatment; and instead of being sent to Church or Sunday School, children should have character-drill in the form of pills for gland development.

No doubt there is some truth in this gland-theory, but it is not the whole truth. Man is more than a physical organism. He is a spirit; and although the process by which the spirit affects the body is not fully known, it is becoming more and more certain that there is such a process and that it is very important.

"A DEMONSTRATED FACT"

"DO we Survive?" is the title chosen for the talk to be broadcast next Friday evening (March 9th) by Sir Oliver Lodge. There can be no doubt as to how Sir Oliver will answer the question, and there can be no doubt as to the interest with which his pronouncement will be received in this country and in America—for the talk is to be relayed to American listeners by the National Broadcasting Company of America. He will proclaim to the world that we do survive; and that proclamation, in view of his acknowledged position as one of the world's greatest scientists, is bound to have a profound effect on the minds of thinking people. He will speak as a scientist, and—as becomes a scientist—he will speak of what he *knows* and not merely of what he believes or hopes. As in the Foreword of his book, *Why I Believe in Personal Immortality*, he may say:

"I do not really wish to argue at all. My whole contention rests on a basis of experience and on acceptance of a class of facts which can be verified at first-hand by others if they take the trouble. I know how weighty the word *fact* is in science, and I say without hesitation that individual personal continuance is to me a demonstrated fact."

To such a declaration from such a man, listeners must and will pay heed; and it may well be that a great impetus will thus be given to the serious study of the evidence of Survival.

There has been much criticism of the B.B.C. series of talks on "Inquiry Into the Unknown," some of it, no doubt, deserved. On the whole, however, the talks are serving a good purpose. They are introducing the subject of Psychical Research to a wide new audience, and introducing it on an ascending scale, of which Sir Oliver's address will be the climax.

THE "WALTER" FINGER-PRINT REPORT

WHY IT SHOULD BE ACCEPTED AS FINAL AND CONCLUSIVE

By STANLEY DE BRATH

SO much has been written by unprejudiced persons and by others, on this subject, that the main points have been obscured rather than illuminated by them; and it is not easy to revert to the basic differences between wax impressions and ink-prints.

The long, meticulous, and exhaustive analysis contained in Vol. xxii of the *Proceedings* of the American S.P.R. by Mr. Brackett K. Thorogood, must now be taken as final and the ensuing lines are based entirely upon it. Earlier comments, when not referred to in this document, will be ignored.

To anyone who is not a finger-print expert (as very few are) this exhaustive analysis will appear extraordinarily complex, as indeed it is; but that should not absolve anyone who wishes to get at the truth from reading it with care.

In the first place, the distinctive characteristics must be clearly borne in mind. The pattern of skin-mouldings on a natural hand is a "normal positive relief"; it is the pattern on the actual flesh-and-blood hand. The impression of that hand on wax is a "normal negative"; the ridges appearing as furrows on the wax, and the furrows as ridges. An ink-print of the hand is made from the ridges of the skin, and is a "normal positive" imprint.

Some of the Walter wax imprints are positive, and some are negative. *Which* they are must be determined by the ridges and furrows. In addition, some of these are "mirror" impressions; in these the slope of both positive and negative imprints are reversed, just as may be seen in the reflection of a normal hand in a mirror, or on an ink-print.

Anyone can produce a normal negative by pressing his finger on a plastic surface, or a normal positive by inking his finger and pressing it on a sheet of paper. *But no one can produce by direct action, a normal positive on a plastic surface.* If such are produced, they must be either supernormal or the result of long and deliberate fraud, by the manufacture of a negative normal relief in flexible material. This is not impossible and an impression from one such artificial die is shown opposite page 14 in the Report.

These distinctions must always be kept in mind. The basic questions may be reduced to two:

- I. Is there evidence of supernormal production of the imprints?
- II. Are the Dudley prints authentic copies of the thumbs of Dr. X and of Walter?

I.—SUPERNORMAL PRODUCTION

The evidence for supernormality lies in three directions:

- (1) the locked sound-proof box;
- (2) the production of entire Walter hands as positive reliefs; and
- (3) the identification of normal positive and negative imprints with Walter's "standard" hand.

The sound-proof box is first alluded to in the March, 1932, issue of the *Journal Am.S.P.R.*, and it was used to obtain a thumb-print of Walter by the President of the Society, as certified in the *Journal*, under very strict control. This thumb-print is photographed on p.135 of the March *Journal*. The box is photographed facing p. 12 of the Report; and another paler photograph is given facing p. 10. But the supernormality is undeniable, under the signatures of Mr. Ralph G. Adams, Mr. John W. Fife, and Mr. B. K. Thorogood. The impressions were made on plasticine.

The sound-proof construction of the box was made to test the supernormality of Walter's voice. A delicate

microphone was placed inside the box and electrically connected to a loud-speaker in a distant room. The characteristic Walter voice was heard in the distant room, recognised by all who heard it, while no sound was audible to those who sat in the room where box, microphone and Medium were located. (p. 6).

(2) The Walter hands as modelled in relief. Photographs of the right and left hands are given as Figs. 5 and 6 (p. 16). These were obtained after several more or less successful attempts. The full detail of control in this seance is given on pp. 24-25. Each was made at one operation. We have already noted that a positive relief could not be made normally by any direct method.

The Mediums were Mrs. Crandon and Mrs. Sarah B. Litzelmann ("Sary"); Mr. Adams, Mr. Fife, Miss Barry (stenographer) and Mr. Thorogood being the only other persons present. Adams controlled Margery's right hand and her right knee with his left hand; Fife in a similar way controlled her left hand and knee. Mr. Adams similarly controlled Sary's left hand and Fife controlled her right, she being seated somewhat behind Mr. Thorogood who manipulated the water and the wax. The Mediums and their apparel were searched both before and after the seance, as were the room and equipment, all with negative results. The door was locked and the key kept by Mr. Thorogood.

Observing the finger impressions critically, we find that on the original waxes the ridges are clearly raised and the joint-lines depressed, while the pore structure appears substantially as it would on a normal hand. (p. 16.) They are therefore replicas of Walter's hand in relief. Another series of hand-prints shows the fingers all bent backwards in a manner impossible to a normal hand.

(3) Identification by comparison with "standard" Walter prints. Facing page 28 are two photographs of Walter's left and right thumbs, taken June 6th and June 9th, 1932. Concerning them Mr. Thorogood remarks:

"The core of the left thumb, like that of the right, is of the ulnar loop type, but consists of a spike somewhat curved at its upper end and bifurcated at its lower end. One very noticeable characteristic of every authentic left thumb which we have in relief (and there are ten of them) is the definite scar which cuts clean across the thumb at an angle of about thirty degrees with the joint-line, pointing upwards towards the index finger and cutting the bifurcation of the spike about 5 mm. from the tip. For these and other reasons, the actual supernormality of all these prints is to be considered as certain.

II.—THE DUDLEY PRINTS

Are the Dudley prints authentic copies of the thumbs of Dr. X and of Walter?

"The Research Department naturally first looked into the question of the technical classification theretofore made by Dudley, of the particular right thumb-print of 'Walter' used by him as part of the basis of the claim, and it became quite apparent from the evidence, that instead of being a negative print as Dudley maintained, the print is a positive print. If this be true, the supposed identity of the print with the right thumb of the living man, Dr. X, fails entirely. In regard to the left thumbs there is a great similarity between the photograph of the 'Walter' print used by Mr. Dudley and the print of Dr. X; but the left print of 'Walter' used by Mr. Dudley seems to be unique in the series of left thumb-prints produced by 'Walter,' the other contemporaneous left thumb-prints of 'Walter' bearing no resemblance to Dr. X's left thumbprint. The authenticity of the wax print of the left thumb shown in the photograph used by

Mr. Dudley is therefore open to question." (p. 267. *Journal*, July 1932 and p. 160 of the Report.)

Chapter XVII of the Report is devoted to the elucidation of this question. Four ink-prints of the entire hands of Margery and of Dr. X were obtained and these were very carefully compared with the Walter standard hands. Not only are the palms of all three markedly dissimilar, both in size and details, but a comparison of all six impressions was made by using normal negative thumb impressions in wax of Margery and Dr. X, thus producing them all by the same method. Care was used in taking these impressions to select waxes that were smooth and even, in order to avoid distortion, and transfers were made from these negatives to a paper surface by means of a special wax. These transfers were somewhat latent, and in order to bring out the ridges for photographic purposes, they were carefully dusted with very fine carbon black. Comparison of all six (right and left) shows them markedly different. (See p. 106).

But the crucial point of difference is seen in what is technically known as the "delta" of the skin-marks of the thumbs. Photographs of these, much enlarged under the microscope, were published in *LIGHT* of January 26th and need not be further alluded to here.

THE CHANGED PRINTS

There remains the similarity between Dr. X's fingerprint and the alleged print of "Walter." For this we must refer to Chapter XVI. After showing that some accidental inaccuracies appear on Mr. Dudley's account on p. 204 of the *Journal* for April, 1928, Mr. Thorogood goes on:

"But no theory of accident can account for the fact that prints of historical and scientific importance have been so changed by some means or other as to render them valueless and lead us to the almost irresistible conclusion that someone must have deliberately tampered with them. . . . Some of the waxes, while still agreeing as to contour and general marks of identification, show now a different orientation of the actual thumb impression from that shown on the original photographs, the photographic negatives of which in the five cases we are about to mention are, and always have been in the custody of Mr. William H. Kuntz, specialist in photography. How these impressions have been changed we do not know."

These five examples are shown by photographs of them in their unchanged and changed forms.

"Experimentation on original waxes may at times be necessary and legitimate, but to obliterate or change markings on waxes of importance, for any reason whatsoever, without definite disclosure and record of changes, is certainly indefensible and compels suspicion, if not conviction, that whoever was responsible for these changes, had a fraudulent purpose to serve."

"A most regrettable circumstance in connection with these changed prints," Mr. Thorogood goes on to say, "is that several of them were included in the group which the writer sent to Dr. Harold Cummins of Tulane University for comparison with photographs of Dr. X's impressions. It was not till some time after Dr. Cummins' report was received that the fact that some of these waxes were of questionable origin was discovered."

The element of uncertainty above mentioned does not, or may not, refer to the photographs produced by Mr. Dudley; but on p. 126 Mr. Thorogood states that "the photograph of the alleged 'Walter' print is not in agreement with what we have shown to be the standard 'Walter' left thumb, it naturally does not belong to the authentic 'Walter' group, and may well be that of Dr. X."

On July 30th, 1926, Dr. X had showed Margery how wax impressions might be made on dental Kerr. "These normal negative wax impressions of Dr. X were given to Mr. Dudley. When it was time to leave, Mr. Wendell P. Murray, a lawyer, who was also present, and Dr. Brown, drove Mr. Dudley to his home, and both men distinctly recall that Mr. Dudley took the waxes with

him. Of what became of them after this, there is no record, but apparently they were never returned to Lime St. Since Mr. Dudley had these Dr. X waxes in his possession before any 'Walter' prints appeared, we fail to see why he should not long ago have noticed the similarity to which he is calling attention as a discovery made in March 1932, and consider that there is abundant evidence to believe that the original Dr. X impressions may have been confused with authentic seance-room waxes." (p. 130).

This summary of evidence appears conclusive that Mr. Dudley's photographs are *not* replicas of Dr. X's and "Walter's" thumbs; but more probably are a comparison of ink-prints of Dr. X's thumbs with wax negatives of Dr. X himself. In which case the resemblances are fully explained.

"MARGERY'S" HONESTY SUBSTANTIATED

There is much more in Vol. XXII which does not refer to the two points above mentioned; more especially two photographs of Margery in trance with a most remarkable and very clear hand (apparently a *left* hand) holding a stool over Margery's head. "Walter" states that this hand was his *right* hand, which appears as a "mirror" image of what it was when in our space. This is very difficult for us to understand, but it is only one instance of the space-phenomena so abundantly evident in the thumb and hand impressions given in Mr. Thorogood's meticulous and highly technical Report.

That Report fully substantiates Margery's complete honesty and opens up endless possibilities that complicate phenomena which are of no value unless we use them as material for reasoning.

It would seem that all phenomena are given to arrest our attention and to lead to an inference of Survival. The next step is to realise that, as we survive, the character we have developed in earth-life will be a vital factor in the life we live "over there."

This is the essential fact from the human point of view. Unfortunately only a minority of researchers seem to give it its due weight.

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FROM ALL BOOKSELLERS.

EXPERIMENTS WITH MR. JOHN MYERS

MR. M'INDOE TELLS HOW SKOTOGRAPHS WERE OBTAINED

MR. J. B. M'INDOE, Secretary of the Glasgow Association of Spiritualists and President of the National Spiritualists Union, sends us the following detailed description of a series of experiments with Mr. John Myers, which resulted in the production of a number of skotographs, copies of which, now in our possession, agree accurately with his description.

The experiments were held at the rooms of the Glasgow Association of Spiritualists on Sunday, February, 4th, the experimenters being: Dr. John Cranston, D.Sc., Dr. G. Dunlop Robertson, Mr. W. T. Shields, Mrs. Shields, Mrs. M'Indoe and Mr. M'Indoe—all members of the Association.

Mr. M'Indoe's signed description is as follows:

"At lunchtime I asked Mr. Myers to give the sitting, suggesting as one experiment that two plates should be simultaneously exposed to bright light, after having asked the control to protect one of them for actinic effects of the light. Mr. Myers said the idea was mad, but agreed to sit. There was no further discussion then.

"After the private sittings I asked Mr. Myers if he would try for a 'thought photograph,' to get on a plate a replica of a photo he had looked at, selected at random from several I had provided. He refused, saying a living person could not be got on a psychic photo and if he got a deceased person, his future sitters might demand that he got for them some particular person they desired. He apparently did not appreciate the significance of the experiment, but as time was very limited, the matter dropped.

"I had in my pocket three Wellington 450 plates in original box. I had suggested trying some of these plates at sittings in place of the usual 1,400 plates and these had been purchased by me in Mr. Myers' presence. The remainder of the packet had been used for earlier sittings." *At no time had Mr. Myers had any opportunity to tamper with these plates.*

"The slides used were Myers', taken at random from those used at the private sittings.

"I had also a broken packet of gas-light printing paper in the original wrappings. Mr. Myers had used the remainder for prints and had therefore the packet in his possession in the dark room for a few minutes.

"Little over an hour elapsed between the experiments and my first mention of them to Mr. Myers. He was with me practically all that time and evinced no desire nor had he any opportunity to prepare for them in advance.

THE EXPERIMENTS

"The party sat round a small card table covered with green baize—Mr. Myers at one side, myself on his left and Dr. Cranston on my left.

"I had decided not to expose two plates to light as originally suggested, but to substitute:

"EXPERIMENT No. 1. In Red light, I handed a plate to Dr. Cranston which he loaded in slide and placed it on table. Mr. Myers was asked to try to get half the plate blackened, by holding his hands over it. In bright light he went in trance at 3-37 p.m. 'Blackfoot,' the control, says he understands, but 'it will be difficult.' Light rays can be penetrated through the ether and it is possible to mask half the plate. It depended on their ability to control the Medium to stand the extra strain, but since the Medium was willing, they would try.

"Mr. Myers held his hands above the plate for a very brief period 2-3 seconds and immediately became normal. Time 3-40 p.m. Dr. Cranston took the slide

to the dark room and watched Mr. Myers develop it.

"Result. Half the plate blackened in triangular form. Those of the sitters who had been thinking of it agreed that they had thought of a rectangular blackening.

"EXPERIMENT 2. Mr. Myers was asked to try to imprint a piece of printing paper through a negative laid on top of it, in red light. He laughed at the idea, did not go into trance and the paper when developed had no result.

"EXPERIMENT 3. The two remaining plates and the packet of printing paper were used. These, in red light, were placed on the table in front of Mr. Myers. Dr. Cranston having loaded one plate in slide, this was placed end on to the Medium towards his right; the other plate was laid film upwards on the table and the broken packet of printing paper was between them. All were covered with the dark camera cloth. Mr. Myers held his hands over them.

"In trance, 'Blackfoot' said he understood and would try to put suns on the plate in the slide, and pictures on the papers and on the other plate. I asked 'What kind of suns?' He replied 'There are more suns in the Universe than the one you are thinking about.' Within about three seconds the Medium came out of trance with surprising quickness, giving a sharp clap of his hands. The trance lasted only about two minutes in all. I had intended to use bright light during the experiment, but it was over before there was time to move to switch on.

"Dr. Cranston took the slide, papers and plate to the dark room and developed them himself in Mr. Myers' presence.

"Result A. On the plate in slide, three white discs almost exact diameter of pennies (about 1/250 of an inch less). Remainder of plate dark.

"Result B. On top and on third top piece of printing paper, faces. Other papers all black. One of the faces has very fine screen markings—about 230.

"Result C. On the plate not in slide—faces and other markings. All these results came as negatives.

"Glass positives and then negatives were made from the results on printing paper, so as to allow all to be reproduced as positives."

AN EXPERIMENT AT PURLEY

MR. C. W. BENTLEY, president of the Mount Christian Spiritualist Society, Purley, sends us a description of a test carried out with Mr. Myers at the Lecture Hall, Purley, on February 21st. Plates were bought by Mr. Bentley and Mr. Myers at the Army and Navy Stores, Victoria Street, London. The packet was not handled by the purchasers but was delivered at the Hall by a uniformed messenger and received by a Committee chosen from the audience. Mr. Bishop, a professional photographer, and "professed sceptic," supervised the examination of the camera, loading and developing in company with Miss B. Farquhar Black and Mrs. S. M. Pillion. The plates were numbered by the Committee. Mr. Myers then stood three or four feet away, went under control and signalled to Mr. Bishop when to load, photograph and withdraw the slide. Three photographs were taken, one of which "was rendered useless owing to the camera lens being partly uncovered."

Mr. Myers and the committee took the plates into an anteroom, and a few minutes afterwards Mr. Myers returned and proceeded with his lecture. On one plate there were five very clear "extras," three faces of women and two of men (a print of this is in our possession.)

Each of the committee of witnesses gave their assurance that fraud was entirely absent and gave permission for their names to be used in connection with this statement.

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March 8th. MISS OLIVE PIXLEY on "The Law of Transmutation."

Chair: DR. FIELDING-OULD.

March 22nd. MR. CYRIL SCOTT (Composer) on "Some Occult Aspects of Music." Chair: LADY HARRIS.

SYLLABUS ON APPLICATION.

THE AURA AND ITS USES

THE Aura formed the subject of Mr. W. H. Evans' address at last Tuesday evening's Free Public Lecture. The word aura, as used by Spiritualists, he said, means the atmosphere surrounding objects and persons. The evidence for such an atmosphere is based upon the observations of clairvoyants and the experiments of Dr. Kilner, who, with screens composed of certain chemicals, had obtained evidence of the truth of the statements made by clairvoyants. It is, to many people, a strange idea that everything should have its own atmosphere, for we are prone to rely upon our own experience, and if we have not had the privilege of seeing the atmosphere around things, we are apt to doubt the testimony of those who have. To such minds, the experiments of Dr. Kilner will appeal, and receiving some scientific warrant for the idea, they are more likely to accept the statements made by those who see the aura without the help of chemicals.

Sir Oliver Lodge has put forward the suggestion that we have a permanent etheric body, and this is borne out by those who see the aura. This etheric body emits lines of light, or rays, which stand out from the body. If the body is healthy, the lines are rigid; but if there is disease anywhere in the body, at that point the rays droop so that they look like tangled string. To the trained eye, this is a valuable means of diagnosis, for it is very sure, though the sight of the disturbed lines does not always convey any intimation as to the best form of treatment. In some forms of psychometry, such as medical psychometry, not only symptoms are conveyed, but also suggestions of appropriate treatment of disease. Indeed, the exercise of the psychometric faculty seems to demand some theory of auras, and it is thought that it is the aura of objects which retains impressions, which, being sensed by the psychometrist, are by him translated into understandable speech.

There are, however, different degrees of auric manifestations such as the psychic, mental and spiritual; the etheric aura is physical. The function of the aura is to

protect the organism and the individual. Through auric contact, impressions come to us and give warning which arises in consciousness either as a feeling of discomfort, unrest, disquietude, or as a definite intuition. It is, of course, possible consciously to build up an auric shield which will shut out what is undesirable and only allow what is of use to us to pass into our being. Indeed, spiritual development may be regarded as a means whereby we build up such a shield, for the aura is strongly affected by our thoughts, desires, and aspirations. To a well-developed clairvoyant, the aura of any person will reveal to him his standard of spiritual growth.

It will be seen from this, went on the speaker, that our auras differ very much according to the degree of our development. They differ in texture and colour, being coarse or fine, dense or clear, according to the unfoldment of the individual.

DR. OSCAR PARKES ON HEALING, ORTHODOX AND UNORTHODOX

"HEALING and curing are not the same thing," stated Dr. Oscar Parkes to an interested audience on Thursday last (Feb. 22nd) at the London Spiritualist Alliance. Healing applies to diseased tissues, curing to diseased conditions. We heal a cut, we cure a pain. But in a wide sense healing is used both as regards tissues and conditions.

In his student time, over 20 years ago, Dr. Parkes said, psychology was relegated to a single lecture, including the subject of lunacy. They did not even pretend to listen. He slept right through it. No one could afterwards tell him what the lecture was about. The dogmatism and errors of one generation were handed down, with the lamp of truth, to another generation without challenge—yet significant progress has been made since the days when the *Lancet* refused to print Dr. Elliotson's lecture on Mesmerism, saying that were they to publish it, it would be the darkest day in the annals of medical science.

Dr. Parkes quoted instances from his own experience in which hypnotism had been successfully employed to open up the subconscious mind, to start a train of curative suggestion, to perform an operation without pain, to control bleeding and temperature and to banish nightmare dreams.

He had some amusing adventures with spiritual healers who claimed to work on the occult plane. They tried to make him clairaudient. And a strange thing, indeed, came about.

"Whether I fancied it or not," he said, "occasionally I seemed to have a definite message from someone we christened Jackie. He was not very complimentary. He always called me 'you fool.' He never told me what I should do. But he always pointed out the main symptom I had got to tackle. In that respect this inner voice was very useful. It came to me time and again in all sorts of difficulties. So that when I am laid up in deep trouble, I am now in the habit of saying: 'Jackie come along.' I don't know if this is clairaudience, but it is distinctly helpful."

Dr. Parkes spoke on the laying on of hands which is on the dividing line between orthodox and unorthodox healing. He had two distinct experiences in which it appeared as if the simple method of passes effected a cure. He never experienced loss of vitality, but once, when desperately ill on board ship, he distinctly felt something coming to him from the doctor's cool hand.

"The line between orthodox and unorthodox healing is getting more and more indistinct," he said, adding: "There do exist, to my knowledge, two groups of doctors in London studying healing by the unorthodox methods."

A lively discussion followed, in which Mr. Frank Romer, Mrs. Elizabeth Severn, Mrs. Hewat McKenzie, Dr. Fielding Ould, Dr. Laughton Scott, Dr. Nandor Fodor and Miss Mercy Phillimore took part.

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11 a.m.—Mr. Frank Wall.

Clairvoyante: Mrs. Annie Johnson.

6.30 p.m.—Mr. Harold Carpenter.

Clairvoyante: Mrs. Hirst.

Sunday, March 11th, at 11 a.m. Mr. HORACE LEAF
Clairvoyant: Mr. Horace Leaf.

Sunday, March 11th, at 6.30 p.m. .. Rev. C. DRAYTON THOMAS
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WEDNESDAY, MARCH 7th

—Speaker: MRS. HEWAT MCKENZIE
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6.30 p.m.—Open Meeting in the Grotrian Hall.

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8 p.m.—Mr. Hendry's class for development of the
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Tuesday. 2 p.m.—Mrs. Gray's Private Healing Treatment.
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6.30—Mrs. Stella Hughes.

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6.30—Miss Lily Thomas.

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TWO of the strangest calls ever carried by the Edinburgh telephone service were described by Mr. G. L. Hadden during an address given by him on "The Direct Voice: Its Nature and its Message," at a well attended meeting at the Edinburgh Psychic College, Heriot Row, Edinburgh, on Friday, February 16th—Dr. Barker presiding.

After defining the "direct voice" as a voice or voices produced independently of the Medium; a voice produced by an entity using a vocal mechanism created from matter temporarily abstracted from the Medium's body and built up apart from the Medium, though linked with and *en rapport* with the nervous system of the Medium, the speaker went on to give an instance of the reality of such voices.

At a seance held in Edinburgh recently, he said, there was in the seance room an ordinary Post Office telephone. Voices spoke in the usual way for some time, and then one of these direct voice communicators expressed his regret that a friend of his was not present at the seance. A 'phone call was thereupon put through to the absent person at his home. A man's voice, which, said the speaker, did not come from any of the six persons present at the seance, then spoke into the mouthpiece of the telephone, and said, "Hello, So-and-so speaking." The person at the other end of the telephone wire heard that voice, and there followed a coherent, intelligible conversation, which lasted several minutes.

Later in the same seance, a second call was put through to a woman subscriber on the telephone, and another direct voice, clear and well-defined, carried on a conversation with her.

The parties spoken to in this way had confirmed the fact that objective voices, recognisable from characteristic tone and accent, had carried on conversation with them.

Now one could not hypnotise a man over the telephone. Hypnotism depended on delusion; ventriloquism depended on illusion, but a telephone conversation such as this depended on the actual sound vibration produced close to the mouthpiece of the telephone.

When a direct voice spoke, said the speaker, it meant that the process of birth had been imitated and speeded up to an almost incredible degree. Formless matter was moulded in a few minutes under the influence of mind and will into a highly organised structure that in the normal field of physiology would take months. That same matter was reduced with equal speed to a primal state at the end of a seance, and re-absorbed and reorganised as part of the Medium's body.

The phenomenon implied by such a claim opened to the physiologist and the psychologist the richest field of research that was ever offered to them in their respective departments. One could not wonder that scientists should be sceptical at such claims; but surely the everyday powers of the human body were sufficiently wonderful, and even in these days mysterious enough, to allow a loophole for further discoveries not yet included in scientific text-books.

If scientists were apt to stand aloof from psychical phenomena with the excuse that such "impossible" conditions as darkness and subservience to novel rules made the phenomena impossible to study in the usual manner, he could offer them a hint. Let them, as a hobby, develop mediumistic phenomena in groups drawn from their own circle of relatives, friends or colleagues. In many cases they would obtain phenomena, but in every case they would run up against laws which they were at present apt to look upon as mere smoke-screens thrown out by Mediums and their supporters. (Edinburgh *Evening Dispatch*.)

HINTS FOR PSYCHIC HEALERS

"POWER" ON THE FUNCTIONS OF THE ETHERIC
BODY

"POWER'S" discourse at the Æolian Hall on Sunday, February 18th, through Mrs. Meurig Morris, was the concluding one of a series descriptive of the course of life and the microcosmic structure. In this talk the etheric was described with considerable detail, and it was shown how one or more of its four subdivisions were essential to all types of physical manifestation. In the simpler forms of life, such as the mineral, the etheric, organisation is rudimentary; but as the form evolves, the etheric structure necessary to carry and transmit impulses of different kinds becomes more and more complex; until in the human type it is well organised and linked on the one hand to the immature but growing astral body, on the other, to the physical province. So well, in fact, is it linked to the latter, that "Power" says it should be considered as a part of it. The physical body derives much of its nourishment through the etheric structure, and any injury to the latter must bring about a lessening of physical health.

This part of the talk was very instructive to those interested in psychical healing. In conjunction with what was said later about the influence of the "thinking principle" in increasing the etheric flow to any diseased parts of the physical body, together with its formative and constructive power over etheric matter, it would seem that some helpful contribution was made to the technique of healing. The etheric flow was said to enter the physical body in the neighbourhood of the spleen. Anaesthetics apparently have considerable influence on the etheric body and, in excess, inhibit the flow completely and hence cause physical death. "Power" declared that research in this direction would revolutionise medical thought—and that suggestion would be used to eliminate pain.

One wonders to what extent alcohol, foods, etc. stimulate or inhibit this etheric flow, and if it is of really basic importance in all things appertaining to physical health. "Power" seemed to imply that, in all cases of disease, it is the physical etheric structure which should be considered and treated. The discovery of the circulation of the blood was of great importance. Is there a circulatory system of still greater importance yet to be disclosed?

It was urged that the etheric world should not be confused with the astral world, nor the etheric with the astral province of man. This is essential if there is to be a right appreciation of both and if misunderstandings between students is to be avoided. Agreement on technical terms is hardly to be expected just yet, and "Power's" subdivision of the ether into the chemical, the life, the light and the reflecting ether will no doubt be questioned. However, their functions and the way they function was explained with considerable detail. But as with all studies and explorations beyond the purely physical, the key lies in the expansion of consciousness and the re-education of the "thinking principle" in the light of the new knowledge. With this expansion "Power" declared there need not be a controlling entity.

At this point "Power" said that the discourse he had given might seem somewhat unsuitable for a service like that. But the wonders of God and the beauty of Nature can be perceived and known in all realms of this universe and not least in the etheric. All paths lead to God and the questing soul will find the way. The artist in contemplation of a sunset—the mystic in an all-absorbing love of the source of his own being—the scientist in his worship of truth!

Laurence Cowen presided and was supported by General Sir P. Holland-Pryor, K.C.B., and Mr. E. W. Oaten (Editor of *The Two Worlds*). There was a large audience, the hall being full.

T. H. WILSON.

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