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SEERSHIP AMONGST QUAKERS

MESSAGE OF AN "INNER VOICE" THAT SAVED A PRISONER'S LIFE

By MRS. HEWAT MCKENZIE

WITHOUT doubt the Quakers, or "The Society of Friends," as they are known to-day, were the repository of the spiritual and psychic gifts in English-speaking communities in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, conserving what had been well-nigh lost by the materialism and neglect of the established Church. Their founder, George Fox, was himself a famous Seer in nearly every aspect of mental phenomena, and the general simplicity of life insisted upon, the "silent" mode of worship, and the "all week" holiness which are involved in Quaker practice, stimulated latent gifts in his followers.

Spiritualists may be grateful to these godly people, not only because they have over nearly three centuries consistently made their testimony, in the face of the greatest persecution and suffering and death, to the virtues of peace and goodwill among men, but because they have never denied the "power of the Spirit," though they have not come into the open about it for propaganda purposes, this being against their principles. I believe that among members of the Society to-day there is a clearer understanding that these spirit monitions are of the same kind as the happenings recorded in the name of psychic facts, and that this knowledge will bring new strength and trust in their unique heritage, for the gifts have sometimes been in danger of sterilization through lack of right understanding in face of modern tendencies.

John William Graham, M.A., a cultured Quaker who died last year, prepared the substance of a brochure* as a Presidential address to the Friends Historical Society, but was unable to deliver it. It has been put in order for publication by another Friend, F. E. Pollard, M.A., who queries in a preface: "Are we [as a Society], whether from a lack of certainty or whatever cause, more reticent of our spiritual needs and experience than were our

predecessors?" and "Are Friends neglecting a gift, a means of insight" in losing these spontaneous messages? Spiritualists would undoubtedly answer "Yes."

The author was for many years a member of the S.P.R. and had given close attention to the psychical experiences recorded in Quaker history, particularly those of George Fox, and dealt with these in other works, *The Divinity in Man* and *The Faith of a Quaker*. In the present essay, he is concerned with happenings recorded in diaries kept by many leading Friends in the 17th and 18th centuries, still extant. He notes that there is an abundance of psychical experiences in these up till 1850, particularly from U.S.A., but after that date they diminish in quantity. Did the outbreak of Modern Spiritualism, we may ask, (which coincided with this date and which flooded the Eastern states of U.S.A. the very stronghold of the Quakers) diminish the value of similar experiences among Friends, usually very conservative, and did they decline to associate the happenings amongst themselves with the rather loud and controversial aspects into which Spiritualism was plunged from its inception? Or did the "closing down" coincide with the end of the "quietist" period among Friends and the emergence of a new intellectual standard?

All may have a bearing upon the point, but the power has never been lost, and I have many times both seen in others and experienced in myself, a powerful dynamic force in a "gathered" Friends meeting which has resulted in "messages" fitting and appropriate to the "sense of the meeting," and perhaps also to individual needs, although not definitely allocated as in the manner of the early Quakers.

The author queries why so many of such records are from the U.S.A. Did the simpler pioneer spirit assist, or was there something in the air of the States which stimulated the gifts? We should answer both. Simplicity of outlook undoubtedly keeps a way open to psychic impressions; and clairaudience, which is a gift

most likely to be associated with messages suitable for a Quaker meeting, is a better-known gift in U.S.A. than in England, and probably is facilitated by the more stimulating atmosphere. Not that English Friends lacked "spirit guidance"—far from it; but for the purposes of this study, the material from U.S.A. records is more abundant.

The author has some wise things to say as to the value of psychic states in relation to religious exercise. "The visions of the Saints are in the sequence of their other spiritual attainments." "There must be a link between our Spirits and the Infinite Spirit, and we have found it, in the gate of prayer and the way travelled by the wheels of inspiration," and he agrees that all the gifts may be found in quite ordinary people, and in children, without any religious preparation.

He has no witness beyond the Quaker diaries for the facts he narrates, but he counts upon the well-known scrupulous honesty of the recorders, and that the facts were first-hand and known to their contemporaries. To us, they bear the stamp of reality, both as to the facts themselves and in the circumstances of reception, and can be endorsed by a wealth of modern incident fully substantiated in Spiritualism.

Take this instance from the diary of a Vermont farmer, Joseph Hoag (1760-1846). From the time he was ten years old (and it is noted that the gift often dated from childhood) his dreams in relation to family and neighbours' affairs were premonitory, and were fulfilled in detail. Thirty-eight such experiences are mentioned. Very often they related to coming deaths. On one occasion, he was impressed to prophesy death in a strange house twelve miles from his home, and to say to the residents, "Set thy house in order, for thou shalt surely die and not live." He refused to deliver the message, in case he was deceived, and suffered mentally, severely, in consequence. A year later, he found that the mother and seven children had died of a fever. They were not religious people, and he reproached himself that he had not delivered the message. It is noted that later in life he became involved in disputations, in a Quaker schism, and lost the gift, a well-known result.

The writer discusses the strangeness of such premonitions; he mentions S.P.R. records on the matter and concludes: "We are in Time, but there does seem to be a sphere where time is not: and the religious life seems to be favourable to our dipping occasionally into it, shall we say, into Eternity?"

The gift seems to have been continued in the Hoag family, for in 1853 a descendant, Lindsay Hoag, while in America, had a vivid dream in which he seemed to be in Norway, noting details of the landscape and enjoying a meal of fish. Later, he visited Norway for the first time, and by some "guidance" brought his friends to a valley unknown to them. There they found a young man who had been seeking spiritual enlightenment and who had in a vision been told that help, badly needed, would be sent to him. Hoag was able to give this in a very definite way, and as he stood on top of a hill nearby, saw the landscape of his dream, and from a man whom they met by chance, bought the fish which provided their first meal.

Of Thomas Holmes, a Kendal weaver (1654-66), it is recorded that he experienced such "power," while in a miserable prison, that he sang praises, while his fellow-prisoners were "shaken in their beds." All, for four

nights, saw a glorious light, and once "there was an appearance as of three men" in it.

With this, we can compare George Fox's constant experience during his various imprisonments. A light remained with him, and while it stayed he knew he was needed there, but when it went he recognised the near approach of freedom. John Woolman, the Quaker saint, had similar experiences.

Of Thomas Foster, of London, it is recorded that in 1659 he prophesied the Fire of London and persuaded his family to move, and so saved their lives. Other Friends seem to have had warnings of this great catastrophe.

Of John Long, of Jamaica, it is recorded that he told a magistrate, before whom he was haled, that on a day named his dinner would be ready but he would not eat it. The magistrate derided this, but on the very day indicated he left his dinner to go into his yard, when an earthquake swallowed him.

Among the Quaker "Publishers of Truth" (itinerant missionaries who thought nothing of making lengthy journeys to deliver messages and to visit other Friends) "guidance" seemed to be constant. One inspecting a ship ready to sail to U.S.A., saw only "death and darkness" and refused passage. The ship was wrecked with seventy passengers. Another, similarly looking at ships bound from Hull for Holland, had a "horror of darkness as if it were death." Nine of these were lost, with all on board. Mystical visions of Heaven and Hell, of God and the Devil, were numerous, for Friends were often in spiritual conflict, and these visions solaced or warned them.

Sometimes the gift was used to save life—as with the Plymouth Friend, who waked one morning with an inner voice saying, "Go to Launceston." He rode off twenty-one miles, and found a man condemned to death for some crime, whose only *alibi* was that he had met a man, a stranger, while in Plymouth on the date of the crime, who had made a note of their interview in a red pocket-book. The Quaker recognised the man and produced the book and the note, and so saved his life. Another must needs go in a hurry to a neighbour and warn him of a possible landslide in a quarry which would cause death. He was just in time.

We are rather timid to-day of allowing the exercise of these gifts in children, but the early Quaker communities seem to have had no such inhibitions. One story relates to a boy of nine, Eli Yarnall, of W. Virginia, and there is a good record made by a Friend of this in 1797. The boy's clairvoyance, which seemed very frequent, was eagerly sought for by many, though his mother consistently refused the often proffered money. "Not only can he see outward events, but inward intentions and designs," says his biographer. So much was this in evidence, that he became 'offensive to bad characters,' who on several occasions tried to injure him bodily. He was investigated by a special committee of Quakers, who endorsed the reality of the gift, which it is said did not continue to adult life.

Such bygone records strengthen the Spiritualistic case, and, coming through the known reliability of Quaker testimony, we see that the "light" has never been withheld from men, that only ignorance and prejudice have obscured it.

* "Psychical Experiences of Quaker Ministers," pub. by The Friends Historical Soc., Friends House, Euston Rd., N.W.1, Price 2/-.

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SANCTITY OF SPIRIT COMMUNICATION

By W. S. MONTGOMERY SMITH

IF sittings with Mediums were more generally regarded as sacred occasions, communications of value, not only to the sitter but to humanity at large, might become more common and the movement which is known as Spiritualism might gain substantially in the estimation of the public at large.

In the course of a series of sittings with Mrs. Osborne Leonard, the writer has amply proved the importance of due preparation for what should be regarded as solemn occasions. It is no trivial matter to come into intimate contact with those spheres of Spirit whose inhabitants have risen above the grossness of earth and have gained a clearer vision of the realities of Being than is available to us. Generally speaking, prayer and fasting may well precede our attempts to achieve contact with spiritually-minded communicators who can be a real help to us in our earthly life.

The writer's habitual communicator, in a series of trance sittings with Mrs. Leonard, and also in ouija-board sittings with a mediumistic friend, is his Wife, who has frequently admonished him of the need for purification of mind and spiritual aspiration on the part of the sitter, if right conditions are to be established. For example, at one sitting with Mrs. Leonard, he received the following message:

"You are meeting me on a more spiritual plane than ever before. You asked that it might be so. You asked that you might reach upwards into my plane, instead of my coming down to yours. We can come to your plane, we do—but oh! the difference when you aspire and come to ours. What a difference! We hold out loving hands to you. Sometimes people take them, but the weight of their ignorance and selfishness draws us down to the earth plane. When we contact someone of this calibre, we are only able to endeavour to be with them for a little while. We pray for them, think of them, even see and hear them with that telescopic vision I mentioned before. We lose that close personal touch which I am so fortunate in having with you."

UNDESIRABLE CONDITIONS

Results of several "circle" sittings have convinced the writer that those on the other side who express high spiritual ideals and insist upon the fulfilment of conditions which shall be in harmony with these and eliminative, as far as possible, of all that appertains to the lower nature, may decline to take part in any sitting where the vibrations fail to rise to the high standard which they demand. The writer has on several occasions attended "circles" where he hoped to receive a message from his Wife, only to be disappointed at finding no indication of her presence. Invariably at subsequent private sittings with one or other of the two Mediums mentioned, she has referred to these disappointing "circles," explaining that, although present, she had found the conditions to be of a type which made her unwilling or unable to communicate. Her criticism has been outspoken and sometimes even scathing. This did not mean that she was implying the presence at the "circles" in question of anything definitely evil, but that the mental atmosphere was such as to preclude the participation of any Spirit holding pronounced views upon the need of a spiritual attitude of mind on the side of both Medium and sitters.

For instance, she explained her reasons for failing to manifest her presence at a certain "circle" for the direct voice, in these terms:

"I hated that circle. What a waste of power! Poor people, if they only knew how much better results could have been obtained!"

"How could they have been?" she was asked.

"All people who sit in such circles should drink water first. Incense should be burned to purify the air. Power

should be gathered by a few moments of silence, and the Medium should fast and not smoke before a 'circle.' What people will not understand is that we have to draw from your bodies to make material sounds. To lift a trumpet we need much substance and strength. I did not wish to draw from you and I did not, and I did not wish to mix with the ectoplasm of any other people."

It is well known what a help it is to the vibrations when those present unite in singing. The writer has been impressed by the unsuitability of many of the songs which seem to be in favour at sittings for the direct voice. Choruses such as "John Peel," or "There is a tavern in a town," excellent in their own place, seem scarcely adapted for lifting the mental atmosphere to the spiritual level required. At the only direct voice sittings (private ones) which the writer has yet found entirely satisfactory and productive of manifestations on a high spiritual plane, no songs other than those of a sacred character have been permitted. This is not to say that humour and laughter were wanting. Far from it indeed. They were a definite assistance in keeping up the vibrations. One soon finds that, on however high a plane the communications may run, our friends on the other side have by no means shed their capacity for enjoyment of the humorous.

A really good sitting with a first-class Medium, for which the sitter has made earnest preparation, will be found to have much of the character of an intimate and delightful talk with a very dear friend by one's own fire-side.

We can only derive hope and comfort from the Resurrection of Christ if Christ, like us, was human, and if there was in His Survival of bodily death no contravention of natural laws—laws which in our own case would not be suspended. (*Torchbearers of Spiritualism*, by Mrs. St. Clair Stobart.)

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AN UNSEEN GHOST

BOYS' UNSUCCESSFUL EFFORTS TO TRAP AN INTRUDER

SIR GEORGE GILBERT SCOTT (1811-1878), the architect of the Albert Memorial in Kensington Gardens, London, the foremost representative of the Gothic School, and famous restorer, refers in his *Personal and Professional Recollections* (1879) to a ghostly experience.

"On one occasion," he says, "we took another house there (at Shanklin), the grounds of which extended to the very edge of the 'chine,' and which proved to be haunted." To this Mr. Gilbert Scott, his eldest son, as editor of his father's autobiography, appended the following note:

"I well remember the circumstances. Every evening, after dark, footsteps, as of a man pacing slowly up and down on the verandah upon the garden front of the house, were distinctly to be heard. We at first took it to be the gardener. Finding that this was not the case, we boys used to lie in wait and when the footsteps were heard, leap out into the verandah. I can well recollect doing this upon a bright moonlight night, and our amazement at finding no one. This failing, we stretched things across the track so as to render it impossible for anyone to walk there in the dark without stumbling; but these interfered in no way with the even regularity of the strange footfalls.

"Another time we strewed the flagging with sand, and when the footsteps were again heard, we went out with a lantern and carefully examined the sanded pavement: not a trace of any kind was to be found.

"I do not remember that we ever thought of there being anything supernatural in the matter, only the noises were unaccountable and so strongly piqued our curiosity.

A GHOSTLY FEMALE FIGURE

"Our groom, who slept in the house, came one morning about this time to my mother and asked for leave to go to his home. When pressed for his reason for this sudden wish, he stated that he had in the early dawn seen by his bedside a ghostly female figure, from which he inferred that his mother, his only female relative, was in danger. He was with some difficulty persuaded to wait the result of a letter to his mother, who, of course, was found to be well enough. We thought no more of this, judging it, in spite of the extraordinary impression which it had evidently made upon him, to be nothing but a dream of indigestion.

"More than a year after this, we happened to meet some friends of ours who, as we found, had occupied the same house during part of the following season. They asked us whether we had not been disturbed by ghostly noises and so forth, and told us that they had themselves been so annoyed that they had had to leave the house, and that after giving it up, they had ascertained that everyone in the village knew the house to be 'haunted,' but the fact was carefully kept secret lest the letting value of the villa should suffer.

"The village story goes—I know nothing of the truth of this—that in that house, in about the year 1820, a wicked uncle murdered his niece and ward in a cellar which is accessible only by a trap-door in the floor of the room in which our groom slept. The old gentleman is said to have been accustomed to pace up and down that verandah after dark for many years, during which the crime remained undetected. I attach no particular value to these facts myself, but as my father has referred to them, and the evidence is first-hand, it may be worth while to give it.

"The footfalls, the attempts made to discover their cause, the fact that the groom made that statement to my mother, and that he was without a doubt sincerely alarmed, I can vouch for."

ITALIAN NOTES

By ISABEL EMERSON

EXPERIMENTS IN THOUGHT-PHOTOGRAPHY

"MONDO OCCULTO" gives an interesting resumé of the steps by which the new science of thought-photography is slowly but surely advancing, so that we may confidently look forward to the day when human thought will be manifested in pictorial form on a sensitive plate and a new means of expression will be found.

The first to make this important discovery was Major Darget, a Frenchman. His experiments were made in a dark room, where a Medium concentrated for half an hour on some object, before a specially prepared photographic plate, which on development would reproduce the image. Hundreds of plates were spoilt before a satisfactory result was obtained.

The experiments were continued by Prof. Ferhow of Vienna, who had to face the scepticism of his colleagues. Finally a Roumanian, Dr. Istrati, succeeded in photographing a thought-image at a distance of 100 kilometres.

AN IMAGE BLEEDS

La Nazione reports an extraordinary fact which has caused great excitement at Asti in Piedmont. On two separate days, blood was seen flowing from a wound in the side of a wooden Christ belonging to the Hospice of St. Joseph in that town. The blood was collected and submitted to a chemical analysis by a group of doctors, who pronounced it to be human blood. The Ecclesiastical Tribunal has affirmed the reality of the fact. As soon as the matter became known, large crowds gathered to pray before the miraculous crucifix, which was carried in procession to the cathedral and exposed in the Chapel of the Passion.

FLORENCE ENGLISH-SPEAKING GROUP

Miss Helen MacGregor and Miss Margaret Underhill are gradually collecting round them in Florence a group of English-speaking people interested in psychic and philosophical subjects. On their suggestion, Dr. Jarsink, a well-known scholar resident in Florence, whose vast culture includes a knowledge of oriental languages, literature and philosophy, consented to give a series of Talks at the British Institute. These are largely attended, and discussion is invited.

The first course, on "The Functions of Great Men," included such a remarkable resumé of the Buddha's life and teaching, that Dr. Jarsink was unanimously requested to give a course on Buddhism, a subject with which he is intimately acquainted and which he treated in the most illuminating manner, stressing the more spiritual aspects of this great eastern religion. A course of talks on "The Will" is now in progress.

INTERESTING NEW BOOK

At the end of 1931, Hoepli of Milan published a volume by Gino Trespioli on modern Spiritism, entitled *Ultra-fania*. It was much read in Italy and has now been translated into Spanish. Another volume by the same author, *I Fenomeni*, has just appeared. It contains a large collection of phenomena of all kinds: table sittings, apparitions, healing at a distance of 1,200 kilometres, materialisations, hauntings, etc. The reality of so-called "miracles" is explained in a scientific manner, and it is shown how to distinguish between true spiritistic phenomena and the productions of the subconscious and of pathological states. The author utters a warning against the ignorant or fanatical tampering with these matters; he even suggests the creation of an Institute of Biopsychics, under the control of Church and State. The volume is full of interest from cover to cover and is profusely illustrated. (*Mondo Occulto*.)

Letters to the Editor are on page 218.

"ANCESTRAL MEMORIES"

CHILD WHO REPRODUCES HER MOTHER'S EMOTIONS

By ROBERT A. WHITMORE

A PURELY hypothetical suggestion was recently put forward by Dr. Nandor Fodor (LIGHT, February 16th) that recollections of ancestral memories might be construed into a rival hypothesis to Reincarnation. Mr. Robert A. Whitmore of Botesdale, Diss., sends us the following communication bearing on this theory:

"I was very struck," Mr. Whitmore writes, "with Dr. Fodor's article about 'A rival hypothesis to Reincarnation.' 'A spark of the ancestral spirit may go on in us,' he says. Oddly enough, I was discussing this very possibility with my grand-daughter (who is a teacher, and lodges with us) just before I picked up my LIGHT and read the article.

"She is herself, in an unconscious sort of way, a curious instance of—how shall I put it?—a child obsessed by the memories inherited from her (living) mother. She owns that she lives almost more in her mother's early life than her own. Once I said to her 'I suppose you don't know much about Hims?' [Hims was a cat her mother had as a child.] She at once replied 'Oh, yes, I know quite a lot about Hims.' Of course, her mother has talked a lot with her about her girlhood; but, oddly enough, in talking to her one feels that she is quite experiencing her mother's emotions when a child.

"I once met a man who gave me an illustration of Dr. Fodor's theory. It was about 1913. He was Manager of Collins Stores, Bury St. Edmund's, and his name was Ruddock. He had a little girl of seven. She was staying either in Oxford or Cambridge, and was in a boat with her father and others who were rowing down the river. She said, 'When we go round that bend we shall see a hill; behind the hill is a house.' She proceeded to describe it *inside* as well as *out*. They turned the bend—there was the hill—behind it was just the house the child had spoken of. Her description proved accurate. She had never seen it before, or been in those parts. *But her grandmother had lived in that house!*

"I have a dream which comes at intervals, in which I find myself in a great palatial old mansion. Directly I am in it, I recollect it and all about it, and say: 'I am in that old house again.' There are long corridors, and it gets dark, and I hear moaning sounds, and say to myself 'Ah! the haunted room!' In a great old drawing room, there is a quantity of ancient furniture—very dusty—and covered with chintz dust-protectors. On one of the chairs sits a silent motionless female figure—always there—obviously a phantom.

"I mentioned this house, etc., to a retired gentleman named Browne Clarke, who quite recently lived here, and he said: 'Mr. Whitmore, you have exactly described a certain Hall—(in Suffolk I think)—the seat of —family—I know them well—and the phantom is that of so and so—always seen sitting there even in the day time. You must have heard about it.' But I never *had* heard a word about it, and I have had that dream for years!

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON AND SPIRIT-RETURN

"That the dead are seen no more, I shall not undertake to maintain against the concurrent testimony of all ages and all nations. There is no people, read or unlearned, among whom apparitions of the dead are not declared or believed. This opinion, which prevails as far as human nature is diffused, could become universal only by its truth; those that never heard of one another would not have agreed in a tale which nothing but experience could make credible. That it is doubted by single cavillers can very little weaken their general evidence; and some who deny it with their tongues confess it with their fears."

(Dr. Samuel Johnson.)

A HEALING ANGEL

THE following extract is from E. R. Appleton's *Outline of Religion for Children* (page 75) (Hodder & Stoughton), and follows a discussion upon Mental and Spiritual healing:

"Early one Saturday morning, my wife and I were very miserable because our baby, Joan, was very ill. I do not suppose that she was dangerously ill, but she was so ill that she had not been able to take even albumen water (water mixed with the white of egg) for several days. Of course she was very weak, and we were nursing her in turn.

"Suddenly there was a ring at the front door and in came an old friend of ours who lived several miles away. She said: 'I don't know why I've come. It may seem silly, but when I was saying my prayers this morning I saw myself on your doorstep, and I knew that I had to come to you.'

"Of course, we said that we were pleased to see her, and we told her about Joan. So then our friend said: 'Let us pray for her.' And this we did.

"Just as we had finished saying this prayer, there came round Joan what seemed to us a beautiful blue light, but our friend saw the angel of the light as the Son of Man.

"What exactly happened I do not know, but I do know that Joan was well within a few minutes and asking for something to eat. Within another half-hour she wanted me to play the piano whilst she danced.

"It is strange, for instance, that we so often sing about angels in our Church hymns, and yet we do not welcome their help—or even believe in it.

"Angels do come to us, and often do appear to us, at times of great crisis. Also, of course, at the time of death. I remember a famous Englishman—famous also as an agnostic—once writing to me and telling me that all his agnosticism was swept aside by the angels he saw attending his mother at her death."

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by

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FROM ALL BOOKSELLERS.

Light

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PRIESTS AND MEDIUMS

WRITING from a Canterbury Rectory, S. B. Macy (presumably a clergyman's wife), makes the extraordinary statement that "God has no use for Mediums." Why then, she might be asked, did God make so many of them?

Preaching one of his interesting and instructive expository sermons in London recently, the Rev. Campbell Morgan gave an explanation of the word "priest" which might interest Mrs. Macy. He said that the Hebrew word translated "priest" in the Bible meant "one who mediates"; and, according to Webster's Dictionary, "one who mediates" is "a medium." Can it be that originally "priests" were "mediums," and that in the course of time their true function has been forgotten? There are at least some reasons for thinking this may be the case.

Certain it is that the function of a true "medium" is to "mediate" between people in two states of existence—the physical and the etheric; and certain it is that the Hebrew prophets claimed to "mediate" between the spirit-world and their fellow countrymen.

If our modern "priests" were also "mediums"—as in the highest sense they ought to be—it is possible that their message would be much more effective.

AN ALLY—NOT AN ENEMY

SPIRITUALISTS are still very frequently accused of being anti-Christian. Of a few, the accusation is wholly or partially true; of the many (in this country at any rate) it is definitely untrue.

There is nothing anti-Christian in acceptance of psychic proofs of survival. On the contrary, such proofs are in line with psychic incidents recorded in the Bible—including the visible and audible "return" of Samuel when he spoke to

Saul, of Moses and Elias when they spoke to Jesus on the Mount, and of Jesus Himself when he spoke to His disciples after His crucifixion and burial.

There are, however, some interpretations of Christian doctrine to which Spiritualism undoubtedly gives a flat denial—such, for instance, as that survival depends on belief of a certain religious formula; or that "the dead know not anything" (a saying written by an ancient Hebrew agnostic); or that resurrection of the physical body on some far-off "last day" is "mankind's only hope of survival."

If spirit-return is a fact—and we confidently assert that it is—then such beliefs cannot possibly be true; and those who regard them as the essence of Christianity (and some do) may be excused for saying that Spiritualism is anti-Christian. It is certainly "anti-" this form of Christianity, but then this form of Christianity is "anti-" other forms of Christianity which have a better claim to general acceptance.

What can be truthfully said about Spiritualism is that it substantiates the basic Christian doctrines of survival and the "communion of saints," and that it provides standards of fact by which other doctrines—some of them very debatable and the cause of deep divisions amongst Christians—can be tested. In both these respects it is the ally of true Christianity, and not its enemy.

POSITION OF "LIGHT"

SINCE the price of LIGHT was reduced from 4d. to 2d. (on October 6th last year), the net sale has nearly doubled, and new readers are being obtained every week. By almost every post and from many parts of the world we receive letters commending the contents and policy of the paper, so that we are assured it does really continue to hold its place as "The Times" of Spiritualism and Psychical Research.

What LIGHT now needs is a further period for sale-development. When the circulation is *again* doubled—and that is well within the bounds of possibility—financial difficulties will to a large extent be overcome.

Will readers help towards this very desirable end by securing new readers? In many cases, a year's subscription to LIGHT would be a welcome present; in other cases, personal recommendation would be effective.

During the period of sale-development, further financial assistance will be needed, as, owing to the reduction in the selling price, expenses have outstripped income. Rigid economies are being made—without affecting the quality of the contents of LIGHT—so as to bring expenditure as near to income as possible, but there remains a gap which we hope readers will help us to bridge by contributing to the Sustentation Fund which is now re-opened.

The indications are that more prosperous times are ahead. LIGHT has been seriously handicapped by the period of trade depression. When the better times come, LIGHT will benefit. In the interval, we depend confidently on the loyalty of our readers to supply the help that is needed.

Will those readers to whom fortune has been kind, start the new Fund with generous donations, and so give a lead which will ensure success?

MALACHI'S SOCIAL MISSION: PENAL LAWS

[In last week's issue of LIGHT, Mr. Godfrey Burchett began an interesting and important study of "Malachi's Social Mission" as expressed in "Spirit Teachings" and "More Spirit Teachings," which are selected from the inspirational writings received through the hand of the Rev. William Stainton Moses, M.A. (Oxon.). Malachi is named as the leader of the band of advanced spirits who inspired the writings. To-day, Mr. Burchett continues his study.—EDITOR.]

By GODFREY BURCHETT

YOUR legislation must be punitive, but it should be remedial too." (S.T., p. 23.) "You are blind and ignorant in your dealings with those who have offended against your laws and the regulations, moral and restrictive, by which you govern intercourse among yourselves. You find a low and debased intelligence offending against morality or against constituted law. Straightway you take the readiest means of aggravating the capacity for mischief. Instead of separating such an one from evil influence, removing him from association with sin, and isolating him under the educating influence of true purity and spirituality, where the more refined intelligences may gradually operate and counteract the baleful power of evil and evil ministrations, you place him in the midst of evil associations, in company with offenders like himself, where the very atmosphere is heavy with evil, where the hordes of the undeveloped and unprogressed spirits most do congregate, and where, both from human associates and spirit influence, the whole tendency is evil." (S.T., p. 18).

"Into your dens of criminals we cannot enter. The missionary spirits pause and find their mission vain. The good angels weep to find an associated band of evil—human and spiritual—massed against them by man's ignorance and folly. What wonder that you have gathered from such experience the conviction that a tendency to open crime is seldom cured, seeing that you yourselves are the plainest accomplices of the spirits who gloat over the fall of the offender. How many an erring soul—erring through ignorance as frequently as through choice—has come forth from your jails hardened and attended by evil guides you know not, and can never know! But were you to pursue an enlightened plan with your offenders, you would find a perceptible gain, and confer blessing incalculable on the misguided and vicious."

"YOUR OWN WORST ENEMIES"

"You should teach your criminals: you should punish them, as they will be punished here, by showing them how they hurt themselves by their sin, and how they retard their future progress. You should place them where advanced and earnest spirits among you may lead them to unlearn their sin and to drink in wisdom; where the Bands of the Blessed may aid their efforts, and the spirits of the higher spheres may shed on them their benign and elevating influence. But you horde together your dangerous spirits. You shut them up, and confine them as those who are beyond hope. You punish them vindictively, cruelly, foolishly; and the man who has been the victim of your ignorant treatment pursues his course of foolish, suicidal sin, until in the end you add to the list of your foolish deeds this last and worst of all, that you cut him off, debased, degraded, sensual, ignorant, mad with rage and hate, thirsting for vengeance on his fellows; you remove from him the great bar on his passions, and send him into spirit-life to work out without hindrance the devilish suggestions of his inflamed passions.

"Blind! Blind! You know not what you do. You are your own worst enemies, the truest friends of those who fight against God and us and you." (S.T., pp. 18, 19.)

THE DEATH PENALTY

"In no circumstances should the death penalty be allowed. The soul, suddenly severed from the body, is thrown back and becomes grievously dangerous to humanity. The guardians cannot draw near, and great difficulties are set in the way of its progress. It is only those who have passed away that know what evils follow from this rude and barbarous punishment.

"To punish by the withdrawal of what you call life is an act of senseless folly. It is a remnant of an age of blood belonging to the Jewish dispensation. Reform or seclude the criminal, but never kill the body, as you sever from a body a spirit that has not fulfilled its time in your sphere of being." (M.S.T., pp. 40, 41.)

MARRIAGE

"Some of your more advanced reformers have seen the vast importance that attaches to the subject of marriage; and we have endeavoured to put forward such views as you were fitted to receive. Much remains to be said when the world is ready, but that is not yet. We do but allude to the subject as being intimately bound up with the great question of disease, crime, poverty, insanity, which vex and disturb us in our dealings with men. To this folly, and worse, to the criminal recklessness, and not less criminal and more foolish conventional law which governs the marriage customs among you, very much is chargeable. And this no less among those whom you call the educated and refined than among the ignorant and uncultured—rather, perhaps, does the greater sin rest with the rich. You must unlearn much that men have dreamed; you must undo much that society has sanctioned in the trafficking that goes under the name of marriage; and you must learn truer and diviner rules for happiness and progress than you now tolerate, before you wipe away the great original source of deterioration and retrogression. Mistake us not! We are no advocates of license—no apostles of social freedom so called. Liberty ever degenerates with the foolish into license. We spurn such notions with contempt, even with more than we view the infamous buying and selling, the social slavery into which you have degraded the holiest and divinest law of life." (S.T., pp. 234, 235.)

WAR

"Wars are but the product of your lust for gain. your ambition, your angry, proud, vengeful passions. And what is the product? God's fair works destroyed and trampled under foot; the lovely and peaceful results of man's industry destroyed; the holy ties of home and kindred severed; thousands of families plunged into distress; rivers of blood shed wantonly; souls unnumbered sent from their earth-body to rush unprepared, uneducated, unpurified, into the life of spirit. Bad, all bad! Earthy! Evil sprung from earth, and resulting in misery." (S.T., p. 22.)

"Nothing is more dangerous than for souls to be suddenly severed from their bodily habitation, and to be launched into spirit life, with angry passions stirred, and revengeful feelings dominant. It is bad that any should be dismissed from earth-life suddenly, and before the bond is naturally severed. It is for this reason that all destruction of bodily life is foolish and rude: rude, as betokening a barbarous ignorance of the conditions of life and progress in the hereafter; foolish, as releasing an undeveloped angry spirit from its trammels, and endowing it with extended capacity for mischief." (S.T., p. 17.)

[Next week, Mr. Burchett will conclude this study by setting out the guiding principles of Malachi's Social Mission.]

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April 19th MR. GARLAND ANDERSON (Dramatist and Author) on "Inspiration."

May 3rd SIR ERNEST BENNETT, M.P. on "More About Haunted Houses."

May 17th REV. C. DRAYTON THOMAS on "An Amazing Experiment." A remarkable incident in recent researches of the Lecturer, showing how convincing messages from their deceased child were transmitted to distant strangers. Lantern Illustrations.

May 31st REV. CRUWYS SHARLAND (formerly Public School Chaplain) on "Inferences of Spiritualism as Specially Applicable in Teaching the Young."

June 14th MR. FRANK LEAH (Artist): "Portraying the 'Dead.'" (Lantern Lecture).

June 28th MR. H. E. HUNT on "The Great Law."

NEW SYLLABUS ON APPLICATION

MY FIRST MEDIUM

[In this article, W.H.T. describes, with interesting frankness, the first impressions of one who has turned to Spiritualism for personal help and instruction.—EDITOR.]

IN 1924 I retired from the government service of India, where I had been a Civil Engineer. I had been forced to take an invalid's pension, as I was suffering from certain disabilities which I had derived from a shikar accident and various falls at riding, although I had really nine more years to go before I completed my full service. The shikar accident was due to having been mauled by a tigress. The last riding accident I had was as late as 1922, when I took a fall in a steeplechase.

My wife and I took a house in the county of Dorset, where we stopped for about four years. Then I found that I was spending more than I could afford, and so we left that part, and I did a lot of travelling from place to place, and in 1930 got very bored with things after the strenuous life I had been accustomed to lead. The result of all this was that I determined to do a thing which I had never done before—viz., see a Medium. I was a sceptic in this respect, like nearly everyone else of my generation, and did not expect anything to happen.

Well, the Medium came one day at my request. I found that she was a lady of over fifty years, and she had not been in my room very long before I began to "sit up and take notice," as they say. She was evidently a woman who could see and hear things which an ordinary person cannot.

The first thing she said was that my room was full of people—or at least of the spirits of friends of mine. Of course, I

thought nothing of this; but, as she went on talking, she demonstrated beyond doubt to my mind that she could communicate with the spirits and evidently could see them quite plainly. She gave me certain names and facts which I proved to be correct, although I did not think so at the time.

The result was that from that time I could do nothing else but believe in the existence of spirits. I asked her to give me another sitting, and she frequently came to me after that. She would go into no apparent trance but, nevertheless, was only half-conscious all the time. I proved this afterwards by asking her to check certain of my notes which I had taken during a seance, which she told me she could not do for this reason.

This was, of course, a great revelation to me and changed all my preconceived ideas about life, although formerly I believed more in spirits than most people, I suppose, ever since the time, some years ago, when Sir Oliver Lodge—whom I have always revered as the greatest intellect and scientist of my time—had brought out his book *Raymond*, (in 1917, I think.) That this great man should believe that he was in touch and held conversation with his young son, Raymond, impressed me very much at the time.

Nevertheless, I did not expect much to happen the first time the Medium came to see me. However, as I have said, I was converted there and then to believe that there are such things as spirits of the dead and that we go on in the next world much as if we were here.

It will be noticed that I make no attempt to reproduce any evidential matter. Goodness knows, this has been done often enough in the past by people much more qualified than I. However, I must relate one incident which interested me considerably at the time.

I had engaged the Medium to come and see me, as usual, and the spirit of my brother Jim turned up as before. We had been great friends, as he was about the same age as myself, and he always seemed to be there when the Medium came. He was killed in 1914, near Ypres, with the 2nd Life Guards, and for two months we could hear nothing of him. I knew that the Germans had brought up some especially big guns for that salient just about then, but I always had a fear that brother Jim had perhaps been taken as a prisoner of war.

One day, therefore, I asked him, through the Medium, what happened, and he replied: "No, I certainly was not taken a prisoner at any time. I and about half a company of men were blown up at that time. We suddenly found ourselves in another land"—Summerland, he called it.

WITCH BURNING IN 1874

THE Religio-Philosophical Journal of Chicago printed on June 6th, 1874, the following account of witch-burning in Mexico:

"City of Mexico, May 18th, via Havana.—Senor Castilla, Alcalde of Jacoba, in the state of Sinaloa, has officially reported to the Prefect of his district, that on April 4th he arrested, tried and burned alive, Jose Maria Bonilla and his wife Diega, for sorcery, it having been proven that they had bewitched one Silvestre Gacarias. The day before the execution, Citizen Porras, as a final test, made Gacarias take three swallows of blessed water, whereupon the latter vomited fragments of blanket and bunches of hair. The Alcaldé states that the people were exasperated against sorcerers and demanded that they be burned, and the sentence was executed with his approval. He adds that he has his eye on other sorcerers, against whom complaint has been made by the citizens.

"The *Official Diario* of this city confirms the report of the outrage and says that several families in the town have since compelled the officer to burn another old woman and her son for the same cause. The general Government has asked the authorities of Sinaloa to send a detailed report of these proceedings and to take measures to protect the lives of persons threatened with similar violence."

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Wednesday, April 11th, at 8.15 p.m. Mr. H. ERNEST HUNT
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Sun., April 15th, at 7 p.m. Speaker: Mr. H. ERNEST HUNT
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SUNDAY, APRIL 8th, 1934

11 a.m.—Mr. Percy Scholey

Clairvoyante: Miss Lily Thomas

6.30 p.m.—Mr. R. Dimsdale Stocker.

Clairvoyante: M.s. Hirst

Sunday, April 15th, at 11 a.m. Major N. LEITH-HAY-CLARK

Clairvoyante: Mrs. Rose Livingstone.

Sunday, April 15th, at 6.30 p.m. Mrs. ST. CLAIR STOBART

Clairvoyante: Mrs. Annie Johnson.

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Clairvoyant: Mr. Horace Leaf

WED., April 11th—Speaker: Mr. J. R. W. GREEN

Clairvoyante: Mrs. K. Fillmore

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Monday. WEEKDAY ACTIVITIES

2.30—4 p.m.—Mrs. Livingstone, by appointment.

2.30 p.m. Mrs. Bird's Ladies' Healing Circle. For
appointments write to Mrs. Moysey (Hon. Secretary).

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

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

7 p.m. Mrs. Bird's Ladies' Healing Circle. For appoint-
ments write to Miss Robertson (Hon. Secretary).

8 p.m.—Mr. Hendry's class for development of the
healing faculty.

Tuesday. 2 p.m.—Mrs. Gray's Private Healing Treatment.
For particulars, write to Mrs. Gray.

Wednesday. 12.30—1.30 p.m.—Open meeting in Grotrian
Hall.

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

Thursday. 7 p.m.—Mrs. Bird's Mixed Healing Circle.
For appointments, write to Miss Michell (Hon.
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6.30 p.m.—Students' Class under the direction of Mrs.
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April 11th. 2.30—Mrs. K. Fillmore.

6.30—Mr. C. Glover Botham.

April 18th. 2.30—Mrs. Rose Livingstone.

6.30—Mr. Thomas Wyatt.

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(SOCIETY ARRANGEMENTS CONTINUED ON PAGE 219.)

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.)

RASPUTIN'S HYPNOTIC POWER

Sir,—The March 2nd number of *LIGHT* has a most interesting article on "Stopping the Sun." A curious coincidence happened the day before I received it.

A friend called on me, an English lady, married to a Polish doctor. They lived in Petrograd all through the Rasputin time and the Revolution. We were talking about it, and the lady said that a friend of theirs, a young aide-de-camp of the Czar's, was one day telling them how he hated Rasputin, and what an evil influence he had at court, adding: "But he will never have an influence over me."

Some days later, he was "de service," and so was lunching at the Palace. Rasputin was there too, as he lived at the Palace. After lunch, they were all on the balcony which overlooked the principal avenue of the town which was swarming with every sort of traffic and people passing to and fro. Rasputin came up to the officer and said: "I know you do not believe in my hypnotic power; just look into my eyes for a few seconds." The young man felt *compelled* to obey, and after about ten seconds he looked into the Avenue: all the traffic and the people were as if petrified—not a sound, not one movement, complete stagnation. In about two minutes, Rasputin passed his hand over the officer's eyes, and all was as before, teeming with life and movement, a whirl of traffic and the noise of a crowded avenue. He was so impressed that he went to my friends' house and told them what had happened, and said that he never wished to meet that awful man again.

The next day after I heard this, *LIGHT* came with Dr. Fodor's article, and I was greatly interested. Joshua might possibly have had this power of arresting the sense of motion and so giving the illusion of a prolongation of the sun's light.

(MRS.) E. GAGE MASON.

Rue du Maréchal Goffre.

Nice, France.

* * *

A CASE OF PREVISION?

Sir,—A while ago I had occasion to refer to a little book on "Spiritualism," written by Mr. J. Arthur Hill, and published by Messrs. T. C. & E. C. Jack in August, 1913. My copy was purchased early in 1914. The book was written in a more detached, and indeed semi-facetious, spirit than I am sure Mr. Hill would now choose to adopt. On glancing through it I was arrested by the following paragraph which appears on pages 44-45, in the chapter on Automatic Writing:—

"Quite recently I received a long series of communications from an American automatist, whose controls included Professor William James, Dr. Richard Hodgson, Professor Lombroso, W. T. Stead, and the late King Edward! These famous entities had a somewhat alarming tale to tell. They inform us that there is going to be some sort of geological upheaval and subsidence on a gigantic scale in Western Europe, and that the British Isles will sink bodily below the level of the sea. The date of this event is fixed at July, 1914, or thereabouts; and we are warned to flee while there is yet time. Probably my readers, being—like myself—of an incredulous and stiffnecked generation, will neglect the kindly warning, and will continue to take thought for the morrow, even for morrows extending beyond July, 1914. Perhaps the messages were the result of telepathy from the mind of some Canadian or other emigration agent!"

The interest of this passage will, I think be obvious. Change the adjective "geological" to "geographical," and regard the reference to the anticipated subsidence as

figurative, and the message has a peculiar applicability to actual events.

I believe that in a subsequent edition of the book Mr. Hill did not repeat this passage. I wonder if he would kindly let us have his observations upon it? I, for one, would be extremely grateful if he would be good enough to do so.

(REV.) HERBERT CRABTREE.

* * *

DOCTORS AND HEALING CIRCLES

Sir,—I should like to comment on Nurse Jacob's letter in your issue of March 9th. The medical aspect of Spiritualism will grow in importance as the years go on. If more Doctors took an interest in healing circles, they would be able to do two things—first, to instruct the members in the principles of anatomy and psychology; and secondly they would learn to appreciate the importance of messages which come from Spirit Healers from time to time, and which are often lost sight of by members of such circles because they have not what has been described as the medical mind.

On the other hand, those of us who have practical experience of treating patients under the direction of spirit-doctors will be glad to describe our experiences to any group of medical men who would be interested.

ARTHUR BARKER,

Chairman, Ipswich Psychic Society Healing Branch.

* * *

THE REINCARNATION IDEA

Sir,—In the opening paragraph of his article on "Multiple Personality and Reincarnation" Dr. Frederic H. Wood states that he accepts the fact of reincarnation as true.

I am aware that Reincarnation is accepted by Theosophists and that it is also a teaching of Brahminism. I would not presume to air my personal opinion on such a subject, but, in the cause of absolute Truth after which we all are seekers, I should like to give publicity to the fact that Reincarnation upon a physical earth is flatly denied by those on the spirit side who are in a position to talk authoritatively on such subjects.

The explanation given from the more interior states, as to the origin and persistence of the idea of Reincarnation is that, in the descent of the Spirit-atom through various states of conscious (but not self-conscious) being prior to its ultimatum on the earth-plane, it contacts ideas given out by entities on the ascending scale subsequent to their departure from the physical plane who have a more or less hazy recollection of an earth life. It is this dim recollection of pre-existence on the part of those in the ascending scale that gives rise to the idea of repeated incarnation.

The actual truth is, however, that one ultimatum only, on a physical earth, is all that is requisite for any Spirit entity to gain experience necessary for the development of its inherent self-consciousness on this plane.

Wood Green, London, N.22.

WM. BLAIR.

* * *

SKOTOGRAPHS—INFORMATION WANTED

Sir,—I am desirous of enlisting the co-operation of those of your readers who possess the gift for obtaining skotographs (photographs obtained without a camera).

Information is desired on (1) Duration of mediumship and frequency; (2) Comparison of conditions in early stages; and when mature; (3) Is any other form of mediumship present?; (4) Kind and make of plate preferred; (5) Envelope or dark slide used, metal or wood; (6) Used in light or total darkness; (7) Is magnetisation necessary; (8) How held during impression of image; (9) Time necessary; (10) What indication is given when impression is completed; (11) Effect of weather conditions.

All information and prints will be gratefully welcomed by the undersigned, and will be of great assistance to him in his study of psychic photography.

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