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A MODERN "MIRACLE"? THE STRANGE STORY OF MRS. GUPPY'S TRANSPORTATION

By DR. NANDOR FODOR

IN the concluding passages of a letter to the Editor of the *Listener* (April 11th) the Reviewer of my *Encyclopædia of Psychic Science* refers to Mrs. Guppy's famous transportation from her home at Highbury Park, London, to Lamb's Conduit Street as a marvel "which is still cited by the credulous."

Seldom has there been such a wonderful chance opened up for a fresh and lovely "scrap" as by this remark. For, while Mrs. Guppy's aerial ride is certainly open to hostile criticism, it presents so many facets of absorbing mystery that its light dismissal is a sin against pragmatic research.

It is related that on June 3, 1871, Mrs. Guppy, scantily dressed and bare-footed, disappeared, in the presence of Miss Neyland, her companion, from her home, where she was making up household accounts; and, with the book in one hand and the pen with wet ink in the other hand, dropped down three miles away on the centre of a large oval table around which, in the apartment of Herne and Williams, eleven people were sitting in a dark circle. This is the story in a nutshell.

The fact of Mrs. Guppy's sudden arrival was accepted even by the writer of the *Daily Telegraph's* leading article of July 5th, 1871. The attack began at the point that "there is no miracle in a lady getting on a table in the dark." The evidence was said to be wanting "that she was in the flesh at Highbury at an hour that would make her travelling by ordinary means impossible."

This is the weak point of the case. Miss Neyland, the companion, little suspecting the important inquiry which followed, did not look at the clock when her employer vanished, leaving a thin haze near the ceiling. There was, therefore, a possibility that Mrs. Guppy had stolen out

of the room and arrived at Lamb's Conduit Street by perfectly normal means.

The question, "How could she have got into the seance room?" is more complicated but not insolvable. The account of the seance (*The Spiritualist*, June 15, 1871), hastily drawn up so that the participants should not miss their trains, leaves several points foggy. But from what it contains and from all that subsequent inquiry and previous history revealed, one thing is obvious: If the phenomena of transportation, witnessed in that room on earlier and later occasions, were fraudulently produced, there must have been a trap-door in the ceiling opening into the room above, which also belonged to Messrs. Herne and Williams, partners-in-ghosts.

For, when Mrs. Guppy recovered consciousness and calmed down, the sitting was continued. In the course of it, Williams disappeared from the room. By the light of a match "Herne was seen by four persons falling from above on to his chair." If this was not levitation, he must have been pulled up through the trap-door by slings under his arm.

It is recorded that it was a frequent occurrence for both Herne and Williams to disappear in turn from the locked room, apparently through the ceiling, as the noise as of a heavy body falling was heard from the room above.

On June 20, 1871, J. J. Morse and Mrs. James Burns saw Williams suspended from the ceiling in a long stream of light, his feet being about two feet from the floor. Before vanishing, these Mediums always rose in the air sometimes with the chair, which fell afterwards with a clatter. The disappearance therefore must have been effected through the ceiling. With a trap-door there, it would be easy to understand how Mrs. Guppy's slippers, after the memorable seance, could have dropped in full

light from above, and how a basketful of clothes, belonging to her, to Mr. Guppy and to Miss Neyland, had been also precipitated into the room.

But . . . *there was no trap-door*. For a considerable time, the house was besieged by engineers, architects and other visitors who were all looking for a solution of the mystery. It is quite safe to assume that the trap-door between the two rooms was the first thing they looked for.

Another puzzling feature of the case is that the kidnapping of Mrs. Guppy took place in answer to Mr. W. H. Harrison's request. He asked "Katie King," not seriously, if she could bring Mrs. Guppy. Over the protest of "John King," "Katie" replied: "I will, I will." In about three minutes Mrs. Guppy alighted on the table with a thud.

Does a remarkable coincidence explain her timely arrival? Or was Harrison's request due to suggestion from the Mediums? The idea will hardly impress those who know Harrison's record. An electrical engineer, one time private secretary to Cromwell Varley, F.R.S., a scientific writer and a Fleet Street journalist, the editor of *The Spiritualist* was not an easy dupe.

NOT QUITE UNEXPECTED

Again, the miracle of Mrs. Guppy's transportation was not quite unexpected. It was "in the air." Two weeks before, in the shadow of a large building near Caledonian Road, Islington, Herne was "caught up and carried away." The next scene was laid in the breakfast room of Mr. and Mrs. Guppy, about a mile and a half away. Mrs. Guppy saw a dark bundle fall from the ceiling and she screamed. Mr. Guppy rushed in from the next room. The "dark bundle" disclosed Mr. Herne sprawling on the carpet. It was rather early for any visitor to "drop in," and Mr. Guppy addressed him in strong language demanding to know his business. But Herne was too dazed to answer. The windows and doors were found locked as left for the night, and no servant had admitted him.

It appears, therefore, as if Mrs. Guppy's aerial excursion was a return visit which might have been anticipated. Actually, it was suggested by Benjamin Coleman to Herne's spirit-controls the very night of Herne's morning call. "You know, I have predicted," Coleman wrote to Mrs. Guppy the next day, "that the spirits would some day carry you away." Then he proceeded to inform her of the marvellous things that had happened. By way of preliminary arrangement, an evening dress of Mrs. Guppy dropped from the ceiling with a private letter addressed to her. This letter, it was found, was taken from a locked box in Mrs. Guppy's bedroom.

There was no special excitement about this. Such interchange of private property was daily taking place between the homes of Mrs. Guppy, Herne and Williams, Mrs. Berry, the Spiritual Institution of James Burns, and Mrs. Makdougall Gregory. The sceptic will undoubtedly seize upon this incident to prove that the transportation was not only premeditated by the parties concerned but also rehearsed in parts.

But would a lady of 33 be callous enough to make a public exhibition of her corns from the top of a table? Would she, by choice, appear apparessed in a way which would lay her taste open to criticism? The miracle of her transportation could not be heightened by theatrical effects. Showmanship was entirely alien to Mrs. Guppy. She was no professional Medium, but a

lady of culture, of social standing and with a very rich husband.

Her flower apports, her levitations, endorsed by Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace (who watched her mediumistic development from the very beginning) made her famous enough. No charge of fraud was ever levelled against her.

Even Frank Podmore, in *Modern Spiritualism*, faces her problem with a good deal of puzzlement. What he keeps dark is that, earlier in his career, when he was yet an avowed Spiritualist, he not only believed in Mrs. Guppy's transportation but submitted a theory of explanation. "The analogy by which I always endeavour to make credible to beginners or sceptics," he writes in the *Medium and Daybreak* on March 5, 1875, "the passing of Mrs. Guppy, or a dining room table through a lath-and-plaster ceiling, without visible scar or half-healed place of exit, is that of the phenomena exhibited by what chemists know as crystalloid and colloid substances."

Would he have endeavoured to make Mrs. Guppy's transportation credible to beginners or sceptics if he had not believed in it? And was Frank Podmore a fool as a Spiritualist, but brilliant as soon as he became a sceptical critic?

Had there been a conspiracy afoot, Miss Neyland would have carefully stated the time of Mrs. Guppy's disappearance as coinciding with her arrival at Lamb's Conduit Street.

Further, in view of the fact that Mrs. Guppy was one of the heaviest women in London, a special noiseless tackle and half a dozen men would have been required to lower her into the seance room. Now, it is a fact of some significance that nothing whatever pointing to a conspiracy was elicited after the event, which created considerable stir in the Press. This hardly could have been the case had the feat been accomplished by the connivance of hirelings.

DANIEL DEFOE'S GHOST HOAX

DANIEL DEFOE, the author of *Robinson Crusoe*, was also an advertising genius. He proved it by a famous ghost hoax which he concocted on behalf of a friend. This friend, the Rev. Charles Drelincourt wrote a book, *The Christian's Defence Against Death*. The book was a "dud." The author, very low-spirited, complained to Defoe of his failure. Defoe said that he would make his book sell fast enough. He sat down and wrote a story and had it published as a pamphlet under the following title: "A True Relation of the Apparition of one Mrs. Veal, the next day after her death, to one Mrs. Bargrave, at Canterbury, 8 of September, 1705, which apparition recommends the perusal of Drelincourt's Book of Consolations against the Fears of Death."

No one with the slightest psychic education or experience would now be deceived into believing in the story. The hall mark of invention is too conspicuous. But in Defoe's age there was yet no public standard by which to judge true ghostly occurrences. The pamphlet met with enormous success and, bound together with Drelincourt's book, it reached more than fifty editions.

For the evidence of this hoax the reader may consult Lowndes's *Bibliographer's Manual of English Literature*, 1834, vol. ii. p. 562, and the *Miscellaneous Prose Works of Sir Walter Scott*, Edin., 1871, p. 171.

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A PROMISE AND ITS FULFILMENT

STORY OF A PORTRAIT DRAWN BY
MR. FRANK LEAH

By MRS. ADELA NAPIER

THIS is the story of a portrait drawn by Frank Leah of my father-in-law, Colonel William Napier, C.M.G., who passed over about fifteen years ago.

I must state at the outset that I have never seen my father-in-law in life, and my husband's photographs of him are merely good snapshots.

Two years ago, we lived in Southern Rhodesia; and during the visit to a friend, who is also a Medium (we were not talking about my father-in-law or anything concerning him) she suddenly said: "There is a picture of Dad (my father-in-law) hanging on the wall. He says it is yours, and that it belongs to you." We were amazed and said it was impossible and that it was most unlikely, in spite of our strong wish, that we should ever be able to obtain a picture of him.

A few months later we left for Kenya, East Africa. In December of last year, I decided to return to England with my small daughter for a holiday; on account of business reasons my husband could not accompany me. I had arranged to travel on a German boat, but unforeseen circumstances kept cropping up, and in the end I was compelled to cancel my passage on that boat and book on the next, which was a Union Castle liner from Mombasa.

At the last seance I attended before leaving Kenya, I asked "the friends" why I had been obliged to travel on this boat, and the answer was: "On this boat you will meet a woman (here followed a description which subsequently proved minutely accurate) who will be of great help to you and will give you sound advice." This prediction was fulfilled in an astounding manner. I was helped and advised. The lady I afterwards met on the boat, although not a Spiritualist, became very interested.

Another question I asked "the friends" before leaving was: "Where shall I go for lectures when I arrive in London?" They told me that I should be guided and shown where to go.

Two days after my arrival in London, my boat-friend visited me at my hotel, accompanied by a young woman friend. During conversation, which turned on Spiritualism, it transpired that this lady knew a Spiritualist who attended services at the Grottrian Hall in Wigmore Street. This lady, whom I will designate as "Mrs. B." suggested that I should go to the Grottrian Hall and meet the Secretary of the Spiritualist Community there. Mrs. B. then commenced to discuss Mr. Leah, the artist who, she had heard, drew portraits of spirits. I was naturally greatly interested and gained all possible information from her.

Unknown to me, Mrs. B.—who was unacquainted with Mr. Leah and had not in fact, ever seen him—rang him up at his private studio and asked to see him at once. Mr. Leah replied that he was extremely busy; but, sensing that it was important, he agreed to see her for a few minutes. She was let in by the housekeeper; and, as she was shown into the studio, Mr. Leah looked up and said: "So you've brought him with you." Mrs. B., who knows nothing of this subject and is, in fact, rather scared of it, was startled. She asked whom he meant, and Mr. Leah accurately described my father-in-law, who was, of course, unknown to her.

Mr. Leah went further and told her that the man he saw had nothing whatever to do with her beyond the fact that she had been chosen as an escort for him.

Mrs. B. returned to me, quite excited, and I agreed that she should make an appointment for me to sit the following day with Mr. Leah. This was done through the Secretary of the Spiritualist Community.

The following day, January 19th, 1934, I met Mr. Leah for the first time at the Spiritualist Community Office. I was not introduced to him—in fact, he scarcely looked

at me as he shook hands. He is a man of extraordinarily swift movement, physically as well as mentally, and he vanished into his studio before I had time to speak.

A minute or two later, he called out to the Secretary to bring him some handkerchiefs as his nose was bleeding profusely. It bled for fully fifteen minutes and saturated quite a number of handkerchiefs. Mr. Leah said his nose had not bled since early infancy except in the boxing ring.

I expressed my regret, but Mr. Leah replied: "You ought to be jolly glad. This is caused by the man you want. He passed over with high blood pressure. You don't know that, even though he is a close relative."

At this point Mr. Leah recognised and described the man he had seen with Mrs. B. in his own studio the previous evening.

Mr. Leah put out the light and we commenced the sitting with the Lord's prayer—Mr. Leah sitting at a small table before a drawing board with paper and pencil. He asked me to draw my chair up to enable me to watch his movements in the dim red light from his torch; thereupon I sat at his left hand.

Developments followed quickly. My father-in-law, as well as many other spirit-friends showed themselves to him. The other spirits, including one of my Grandmothers, stayed only a short time, but my father-in-law refused to budge. Mr. Leah commenced to draw rapidly. It was marvellous to watch, and in two or three minutes my father-in-law's face looked up at me from the paper. Mr. Leah here interposed that I had travelled a long distance for this—from a hot country in fact. True.

Mr. Leah then saw a cross and asked me to "place" it. He said it was a very small cross and personal to me. After thinking, I realised that I was not wearing the small gold cross which I usually wear at seances.

At the close of the seance, Mr. Leah asked me to be critical of the likeness. I replied that it was really remarkable, but that it resembled my father-in-law when a young man. However, it was as a young man that my father-in-law appeared at this first seance.

The following morning we sat again. This time I wore my small cross, and my father-in-law appeared as he was a short time before he passed over.

Mr. Leah began to draw the face rapidly, but suddenly stopped and drew a large letter "A" in the left-hand corner of the paper. He asked me if I could give any reason for this, and in the same breath said: "It is for you, and I must mark it in the corner. This is the initial of one of your Christian names. You've more than one." My Christian names are Adela Violet Nesbitt.

The completed portrait shows a remarkable likeness to the small snapshot which I brought with me to England.

My husband and myself are both delighted with the portrait and are more than grateful to Mr. Leah for giving us so great a treasure. Furthermore, we are both most happy that the "picture on the wall" shown by my father-in-law through our friend in Southern Rhodesia two years ago has, through Mr. Leah's agency, become our treasured possession.

On the following day, Sunday, January 21st, I called at the Grottrian Hall. There were several busy people in the office and Mr. Leah took me into his studio. He described my husband (who was, of course, in Kenya) and his chief characteristic, especially in regard to the fit of his clothing, of which he is particular to the point of fussiness. Then Mr. Leah drew him, and told me that my husband had waxed his moustache since I left just before Christmas. I instantly recognised the drawing, which showed my husband three quarter length, but at the time I knew nothing about the waxed moustache. Since then, however, I have heard from my husband that he has actually made a habit of waxing his moustache; and, to support the evidence given to me by Mr. Leah in such an apparently casual and unsought way, my husband has had a photograph specially taken.

EVIL SPIRITS THEIR PLACE IN SPIRITUALISM

By MRS. MARJORIE LIVINGSTON

IT is curious that so many people who are speculatively interested in Spiritualism still believe that communicators with the Unseen are prone to arrive at a contact with "evil spirits."

There has been already much verbose argument upon this subject, and the present writer is loath to add to the volume of it. It may thus be pardonable to resort to a simple analogy that will make the position clear from the point of view of the Medium.

It will be conceded that a unit taken from a great majority offers an average standard of circumstance. Let such a unit be personified as a typical citizen. For convenience he may be called "Mr. Smith."

Mr. Smith regards his friends with affection, and he likes to have intercourse with them. From what society will his friends have been chosen? Is it likely that he has sought them among forgers and murderers, or in a den of thieves? No. His limited knowledge of such people is confined to the police reports in the daily Press, and to the crime-stories on his bookshelf. Even should he desire their friendship, they would have no use for him and would regard his advances with suspicion.

Would Mr. Smith be more likely to seek his friends at the other end of the social scale? As a citizen, he is free. He may communicate with the Aristocracy, with the Archbishop of Canterbury, even with the King.

To these communications, Mr. Smith would probably receive a courteous reply, not direct, but by proxy. The correspondence has been forced, pointless, and one-sided. Why? Not because the human race is snobbish, but because Mr. Smith has nothing in common with those with whom he has attempted to correspond, and for this reason friendship with them is unpracticable.

What Mr. Smith really does is to make friends with Mr. Brown and Mr. Jones. They possess sympathies and interests in common with him, they stand together on an equal footing and are mutually attracted.

Even so, the position of Mr. Smith, socially and morally, is not static. Nor are the situations of Mr. Brown and Mr. Jones. For clarity of argument, it may be supposed that Mr. Brown becomes interested in politics or finance, in art or science. Mr. Jones, on the other hand, becomes intrigued by the various methods by which the citizen may evade the Law. Both these men would influence Mr. Smith, and they would introduce him to a society that was either higher or lower in the social and moral scale, according as his own inclinations led him to maintain the one friendship or the other.

If he should follow Mr. Jones, he will find himself eventually consorting with thieves and jail-birds; if he follows Mr. Brown, it will be his privilege to meet those with whom he would not otherwise have found communication possible.

Inevitably, Mr. Smith will find that his new-found friends will inspire him, however unconsciously, towards some effort at personal achievement. His own success will bring him into touch, as a natural sequence, with those who hold a high position. He may even gain audience with the King. He makes friends in high places because he himself has created something that ensures a bond of mutual interest.

All laws, whether they be social, psychological, or what-not, which hold good in the physical world, hold good also in the psychic world.

The Spiritualist who seeks to inaugurate a correspondence with the Unseen will attract for his friends and correspondents those souls who are in affinity with him. Those who are a few degrees his moral inferiors may seek to prey upon him and to take advantage of his good

(Continued at foot of next column)

THE HOUSE THAT WAS NOT

REVIEWING the new edition of *An Adventure* (LIGHT, April 13) Mr. H. F. Prevost Battersby wonders what would have happened to Miss Moberly and Miss Jourdain had they disregarded the warning of the "running man" who rather tempestuously waved them in another direction.

The question is an intriguing one. As the lady adventurers appeared to have dropped plumb back into the xviii. century and lived in it, things might have happened to them with the same reality as that with which their surroundings impressed them. As trespassers, they might have been arrested and thrown into a dungeon—provided the emotions of a painful experience would not have dissipated jail and jailers before they did actual harm.

A curious story which somewhat bears on Mr. Prevost Battersby's query was told by Mrs. F. E. Leaning in LIGHT, April 25, 1925. She quoted from Reginald Span's *Things That Have Happened* the adventures of a prospecting party in New Mexico.

Overtaken by a sudden change of weather on one of their expeditions, the three members of the party were very pleased to catch sight, as the sun was about to set, of a small house standing on a flat beside a stream in a narrow valley. It was an empty house of four rooms, "one of which was a large spacious apartment, evidently meant for a kitchen and general sitting-room, with a huge fire place, the whole building formed of roughly hewn logs, as is usual in the backwoods." A large fire of pinewood was soon kindled, the horses bestowed in an adjoining shed, and supper cooked.

After supper, they all fell into a heavy sleep, not awaking till late the following morning, when they were stupified to find no sign of the house they had entered the previous evening. The ground was perfectly bare where it had stood, the snow two or three inches deep all around, and the horses gone. The men were so scared that they left the spot at once, found the horses grazing further down the valley, and galloped several miles before stopping for breakfast anywhere."

Mr. Span admits that further corroboration would be welcome, but adds that he came across another man at Prescott who had heard exactly the same story from one of the other two who slept in the phantom house.

There is a similarity in this experience to that told in *An Adventure*, and its harmless finish carries a charm which is as delightful as it is reassuring.

nature. Nevertheless, if he uses as much common sense in his séance-room as he does in his office, he will not be taken in by a discarnate tout, any more than he would be by an incarnate beggar.

He will not allow disembodied spirits to gate-crash into his astral body, any more than he would allow a crowd of drunks to break into his drawing-room.

Help may and should be given to those in psychic need just as to those whose necessities are physical, but it must be given wisely and voluntarily, and the Free Will must be yielded to none, not even to an Angel. It is the test of the Angel that he will not ask for such a concession: it is only the unevolved spirits who seek to dominate the personality. The absolute affirmation of the I AM on the part of the Medium repels such mischievous, though seldom evil, spirits.

Meanwhile, it is certain that the average communicator who seeks with common-sense, humour, and absolute sincerity of purpose to link his consciousness with the Infinite, will find that his mind is opened to friendships which are sweet and true and steadfast beyond the possibilities of frail human loves. He will be led, step by step, to work with and for his new-found friends, and their inspiration and assistance will bring him to a point of achievement which he himself believed impossible, and which will attract to himself great Personalities, and link him with Those whose consciousness is universal and Divine.

THE LUMINOUS WOMAN

I NOTE that *The Observer* of the 22nd inst. in dealing with above, speaks of research work which is proceeding on living organisms, the investigation of rays given off by human tissues, and says that though "the results have not been of clinical significance in medicine, they open up to investigation an extremely interesting field which may conceivably lead to the explanation of some of those strange happenings now classed as 'psychic.'"

I recall the remarkable luminous phenomena observed with the Austrian Medium, Frau Silbert of Graz, during various visits to the British College of Psychic Science in 1922-23-25. I remember the startled astonishment of a maid who, bringing her a cup of afternoon tea, was greeted, as Frau Silbert stirred from a nap, with flashes of bluish fire which seemed to come from under her full skirts. The girl might have been excused for thinking "the devil was in it," but she reported the occurrence with the greatest interest.

On another occasion, when at a cinema performance with Mr. Hewat McKenzie, flashes of fire lit up the box, to the Medium's confusion; and once in the street, in broad daylight, a similar manifestation was observed—again from the lower part of the body.

These were spontaneous; but at seances, under careful observation, loud cracklings were often heard, followed by vivid flashes, which usually heralded the return into visibility of articles which had temporarily disappeared from view.

The records of these happenings are to be found in the volumes of *Psychic Science* for the years named, and are corroborated by reports from Austrian observers of incidents noted at seances at Frau Silbert's home.

BARBARA MCKENZIE.

DOES ANYBODY KNOW?

Katie Fox, one of the pioneers of modern Spiritualism, married in the seventies Henry D. Jencken, a prominent London barrister. He died in November, 1881, leaving two boys (aged eight and seven years), and a widow. Does anybody know what has happened to the sons?

The same question awaits an answer as regards the son of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Guppy, and the son of D. D. Home by his second marriage. They were all born in the seventies, and might still be living.

EDINBURGH PSYCHIC COLLEGE

The nature of the evidence which one requires to prove survival was discussed on Friday (April 20th) in an interesting lecture by Mr. T. Dudley Parsons, barrister-at-law, Chairman of the Reading Society for Psychological Research, at the Edinburgh Psychic College and Library. He related personal experiences, and said it seemed to him that if he tried to explain them in any other way than as proof of survival, he would be giving an irrational explanation.

The College has an interesting programme for the Spring Session and is steadfastly gaining in public appreciation.

CROWDED MEETING AT SOUTHEND

When Mrs. Estelle Roberts spoke and gave clairvoyance under the auspices of the Conan Doyle Memorial Church, Southend-on-Sea, on Sunday, April 15th, the Hall was crowded and a large number of people were unable to gain admission. Mr. S. H. Cusden presided, supported by Mrs. M. A. Bruce, the Church Leader, and Madam Esther Wordsworth impressively sang "There is a green hill far away."

Mrs. Roberts based her address on a lecture by "Red Cloud" (her Control) on the "Personification of God." Her clairvoyance was very impressive, every name and description being recognised by the people to whom they were given.

WALKING AMONG GHOSTS

By MRS. HEWAT MCKENZIE

HOW far do earthly localities bear the impress of the emotions of the living minds which have been associated with them? The Versailles incident, dealt with so clearly by Mr. Prevost Battersby in your issue of the 13th inst., gives us one of the most carefully observed and verified instances, occurring in a place which, on one known occasion at least, must have seethed with the most poignant of human feelings. But lesser emotions must likewise leave their mark, and may, even unconsciously, affect those who are in the least sensitive.

I have on two occasions experienced such place-contacts. The first time I ever ascended the Tor at Glastonbury—of the history of which I knew nothing—I wound round the lesser-used side of the hill. It was a lovely June day, and all was peaceful and happy as I was myself, only intent on getting a pleasant walk and ultimately reaching the summit. Not a soul was in view, except some far-off workers in the surrounding fields. Suddenly, I was caught up with a feeling of oppression, of something alien to my own atmosphere. I stood still to "sense" this, and the feeling deepened to one of discomfort and dislike. I was not prepared to deal with such a condition at the moment, and walked on, and within a hundred yards seemed to pass clear of the condition. I noticed a group of old apple trees near the spot which might indicate a former human habitation.

Speaking that evening to a resident in Glastonbury who had made a long study of the Tor, I told my experience, and she at once said: "That side of the hill is known to have malign aspects; I have myself experienced it, and have noticed its effect on others even to producing faintness: what the history of the spot is no one seems to know."

The incident had a sequel!

Walking further on, and resting at the turn of the hill, I sought to find a reason, and sensed clearly the presence of a very ancient condition represented to my clairvoyant sight by a gnome in clay-coloured garments, accompanied by one of the very early symbols representing the worship of the earth—a fine ram's head. The influence here was not alien, and I was able to unify myself with it quite easily. It is known that animal and even human sacrifices accompanied this first human worship, and it may be that this aspect of the Tor has remained untouched and still holds some etheric record of the fear and pain engendered by such practices. I offer these wholly unexpected experiences for what they are worth to psychic students.

The second occasion was destitute of emotion and recorded only by sight.

On the grounds of my present home, a Tudor House, dating from Henry VII., once stood: the position is still indicated by old fireplaces. One beautiful still summer day, I sat on the grass with two friends close to the old site, in a quiet mood but not intentionally receptive. The heat made me drowsy, and suddenly I found myself "looking" at a group of women of various ages, walking about near me as if enjoying the scene. Their dress indicated various periods—Elizabethan, Stuart, and even Puritan, and this rather surprised me. Then I noted that they were not a composite group, but each seemed to move about on her own in an easy natural fashion, but holding no communication with the others. I could catch no glimpse of their feet, as if their skirts completely hid them or a haze gathered around them. I watched them for some time, and described them to my friends.

What had I seen? Thought forms of those who, through the centuries, had loved the place and had walked on this very spot. The garden has been raised considerably just there, even in my occupation of it, and the indistinctness of the feet may indicate that the old level of the ground was being sensed in the vision.

SHIP OFFICER'S "RETURN" DIED IN SAVING A LADY PASSENGER

By R. BUTTERS

I THINK that the following story is remarkable evidence of survival after death and the honest sceptic will find it difficult to explain it away.

It is my practice to sit in a circle every Sunday night with the object of using the trumpet as the means for communicating with the Spirit world.

Once a fortnight Mr. Hutchings, who is a Medium for clairvoyance and trance, sits with us. At a sitting on Sunday, November 26th, 1933, he asked me if I recognised the name Stanley, and said that all he could get with the name was a lady's shoe and the words, "Fought like a Trojan."

After some time I was able to connect the name Stanley with a boy friend of mine who lost his life in attempting to save the life of a lady passenger from a ship which was wrecked on the Manacles in the English Channel, about thirty years ago.

On Sunday, December 3rd, 1933, at the evening service at the Grottrian Hall, London, Mr. Thomas Wyatt gave clairvoyance after a very beautiful address delivered by the Rev. C. Drayton Thomas. Pointing to me, Mr. Wyatt said he saw built up in front of me a large stone on which were the letters "Moonstone," and he proceeded to describe a young man who was naked except for a small pair of under-drawers. He said his hands were torn and bleeding, and his appearance was that of a person who was drowned. Near by, on a rock, was a lady who was almost naked and absolutely alone and deserted. He then went on to say that the boy had changed into his spiritual robes and had said that he was very happy in having sacrificed his own life for that of the lady.

The man who was described to me by Mr. Wyatt was my boy friend, Stanley Browning, who sailed as fourth officer in the Atlantic transport liner S.S. Mohegan, from London to New York, which was wrecked on the Manacles in the English Channel on October 14th, 1898, just 35 years ago. I remember meeting Donny, Stanley's youngest brother, in Liverpool some months after the tragedy, when he related the details to me as told by the lady whose life Browning had saved. When she was well enough to travel after her terrible experience, she went to Liverpool to see Browning's mother. She particularly mentioned that, as the ship was breaking up fast, Browning said to her, "This is no time for mock modesty; you must get your clothes off quickly and jump into the sea with me." He assisted her to a rock and succeeded in getting her into a safe position, but he was so exhausted that he fell back into the sea and was drowned.

It is at this point that I must mention that, before I commenced to sit in the circle, I had never at any time spoken to Mr. Hutchings beyond saying good morning or good evening at the Grottrian Hall, so that I can honestly state that he never heard anything from me about the drowning of my friend Browning, and it is as well to point out that the tragedy took place over 35 years ago and Mr. Hutchings is only in his 27th year.

Most people who are interested in Spiritualism are aware that many of the Guides and Controls are North American Indians, and the Control of Mr. Hutchings is a North American Indian, "Moonstone." I have his permission to say that a few nights after he gave me Browning's Christian name, he asked in prayer that his Guide would give him some real evidence that he was using him for spirit-work, and the following Sunday Mr. Thomas Wyatt gave the descriptions recorded above.

Mr. Wyatt told me after the meeting that the Guide who gave me the description through him was "Moonstone," and he gave it for the benefit of Mr. Hutchings.

There is much more than mere coincidence in this narrative. The name of the ship was Mohegan, and at the

(Continued at foot of next column)

WHO IS "POWER"?

"POWER" delivered a remarkable address at the Æolian Hall, London, on Sunday evening, April 15th, when he spoke through Mrs. Meurig Morris for an hour and a half. This followed two large public meetings during the previous week, in the large Public Hall, Croydon, and the Town Hall, Ilford—very obvious testimony to the super-physical assistance in the matter of health, for Mrs. Morris is far from well.

This address was significant in that, for the first time, "Power" gave to the world knowledge of his personality, which should dispel much conjecture and refute many ideas.

"I am not a person, or personality, as you understand the term," declared "Power." "I am the chosen voice of many other masters of the School of Mezzantric. Leaders of all the varied forms of acquired wisdom and learning express themselves through the apparent 'me' when the voice delivering this message proceeds from this child (Mrs. Morris). We make of our collective selves an instrument or personality which controls her physical organs and mentality, and we use these exactly as you use your wireless instrument, regulating the pitch of voice at will, and in ordered volume capable of exactly the power and emphasis desired and of adequately filling the largest and smallest areas in which it has to be heard."

"Power" explained that the School of Mezzantric, (of which he has often spoken), is one of an Order in which the religions of the past, and also all that concerns the progress and well-being of humanity, are studied by the students of the super-physical realms.

Mr. Laurence Cowen presided, and General Sir P. Holland-Pryor supported.

SIR ERNEST BENNETT ON "HAUNTED HOUSES"

Great interest is being aroused by the lecture on "Haunted Houses," to be delivered at the L.S.A., on Thursday next (8.15 p.m.) by Sir Ernest Bennett, M.P., Assistant Postmaster-General (vice-president of the L.S.A.)

The lecture will be a sequel of the "talk" on "Ghosts and Haunted Houses," broadcast by Sir Ernest on March 2nd. At the end of that "talk," Sir Ernest asked listeners who had seen an apparition "in circumstances which rule out illusion, trickery, or bad observation," to write to him relating their experiences. In response to this appeal, he received many hundreds of letters; and in his lecture at the L.S.A. he will deal with these replies and give some indications of their nature.

(Continued from previous column)

time the description was given to me it flashed through my mind that perhaps Mohegan was "Moonstone" in Indian language. I have since had it confirmed that my surmise was correct.

I also sit in a developing circle with Mrs. Esta Cassell at 48 Sinclair Road, Olympia, which meets every Thursday evening, and on January 4th, 1934, Mrs. Cassell described my friend, Stanley Browning, and gave a vivid description of a drowning man. Browning spoke to Mrs. Cassell and said that I had written a very convincing account of survival, but he said that on the second page, seventh line down there was a mistake. I took the papers from my pocket and read to her what I had written about the sitting on November 26th, 1933—namely: "Stanley," "lady's shoe," and the words "fought like a Trojan." Browning listened whilst I read this out to the circle and then said it should be "She fought like a Trojan."

The remarkable thing about this revelation is that my friend, Browning, has made use of three Mediums to prove his survival. Some seekers are satisfied with the evidence supplied by one Medium, so surely one should be more than satisfied when three different Mediums confirm each other as they most certainly do in this case.

SPIRITUALISM IN CANADA

By Rev. WM. R. WOOD, of Austin, Manitoba.

THE people of Canada are influenced largely in their thinking by the very much larger community adjacent in the United States, and the work of leaders of psychic thought in such centres as Boston, Buffalo, Los Angeles and San Francisco has through many channels penetrated to some degree the Canadian mind; and the activities in things psychic in several of the larger Canadian centres has not been without effect.

Yet the ideas of personal survival of death and the possibility of communication with the discarnate have not come to be apprehended in a practical way excepting by an extremely small minority. Generally speaking, Spiritualism is regarded still as one of those new cults which may be expected to arouse some temporary enthusiasm, but will sooner or later pass into oblivion. One hears it somewhat commonly said that the movement acquired a temporary popularity largely as a result of the war, but that even now it is rapidly "petering out." Ordinarily, the individual is wholly indifferent.

It is significant of the general attitude that one even finds some of those who have been brought into a degree of contact with the magnificent work done by Dr. T. Glen Hamilton, of Winnipeg, dismissing the matter with the casual remark, "Yes, it's very interesting, isn't it?"—just as they might remark at an odd-shaped turnip or an unusually large potato.

MINISTERS AND PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

The United Church of Canada, representing the former Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregational Churches of Canada (which united in 1925) is recognised as one of the vital factors in Canadian thinking. Her point of view is in the main modern and liberal. Her ministers are almost without exception in touch with the conclusions of modern critical and historical study, though it may be questioned as to whether this has come to be generally reflected in their teaching. In matters social and economic many of the ministers are being strongly influenced by the writings of such leaders as Fosdick, Coffin, Ward and Eddy of the United States, and such men in their own communion as Roberts, Line and Fairbairn, and perhaps to a lesser degree J. S. Woodsworth, the leader of the new political group known as the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation.

Among these ministers here and there is one who has been attracted to the study of modern Psychical Research, and there are a few who have taken some pains to investigate for themselves and to test out the common phenomena of psychic sittings; but it must be admitted that among ministers, as among the populace in general, the feeling of indifference prevails. Yet there is abroad an uncomfortable feeling that the Church is falling short in dealing with the problems associated with what we call death. There is a vagueness and ambiguity about the views held which sometimes becomes painfully manifest to thinking minds on the occasion of funeral services. Language is often used suggesting an after-death condition of unconscious sleep, and then in the next breath there comes the suggestion of the immediate continuance of active life. Here and there, too, individuals and sometimes ministers have psychic experiences which to them are definitely evidential in the direction of establishing belief in conscious survival and the possibility of communication. And for such the Church has no word.

[Next week there will appear in *LIGHT* the first of a series of short articles by Mr. Wood, entitled "Think it Through With Me." These articles will deal with psychic problems in a manner specially helpful for beginners and for those who are concerned regarding the religious implications of Spiritualism.—EDITOR.]

Letters to the Editor are on page 259.

WHAT WILL THE CHURCHES DO?

By REV. ROWLAND W. MAITLAND

I HAVE recently received, no doubt in conjunction with many of your readers, the opening appeal of the newly-founded International Institute for Psychical Research. It seems to me to be a veritable landmark in the progress of Spiritualism, when a Society embracing many of the foremost men of science is willing to investigate, and—what is more important still—to investigate sympathetically the claim that "memory, character and personality persist after death, that those we call 'dead' are still alive and, under certain conditions, can communicate with us on earth."

Let no one imagine for one moment that all these brilliant scientists who will take an active share in the work of the new Society are going to be converted to Spiritualism as a result of this investigation. Far from it. But surely, like Professor Richet, they may come to the conclusion that "These things are incredible, but they are true."

As a clergyman, however, one naturally wonders what effect all this will have upon the Churches? These scientists, or many of them, seem to have already acquired proof of the existence of some psycho-dynamic power emanating from the Medium and operating at a distance from him. Is it too much to assume that this same psychic power will, later on, show itself in the form of visible matter as ectoplasm, and that ectoplasm again will have the strange faculty of shaping itself into a semblance of human hands and limbs, and so, by and by, when conditions are favourable and the investigators sympathetic, they will see built up before them the similitude of the human body anatomically complete and perfect, and animated and directed by the same living power?

That, surely, is what many of us have already found, and others must find the same thing when they investigate.

But again, the question arises in one's mind: What line will the Churches then adopt, when the evidence is put before them backed by such an array of witnesses? Will they accept such evidence as proof of the Resurrection, or will their natural conservatism cause them to assign such phenomena to the power of the Medium only, as perhaps many of the investigators may be inclined to do? That may be all right for the scientists, but the Churches cannot do that without cutting the ground from under their own feet, for they will then simply be helping to prove that the Resurrection also was due solely to the psychic power of the Disciples acting as Mediums, and that no discarnate power was necessary to bring about the wonders of Easter Day.

Again, one cannot help wondering how the Churches will face this inscrutable problem which will be theirs sooner or later.

Darsham Vicarage, Suffolk.

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L.S.A. PSYCHIC TREASURES

IT is not so well known as it ought to be that there exists at the L.S.A. Rooms, South Kensington, the nucleus of a Psychic Museum, comprising treasures of interest to all Psychical Researchers and Spiritualists. Chief amongst these treasures are the note-books containing the Stinton Moses scripts from which the books *Spirit Teachings* and *More Spirit Teachings* were compiled. But there are many others, as may be seen by our summarised report of a lecture by Miss Phillimore, Secretary of the L.S.A., on page 260. The Stinton Moses note-books are so precious and so important that it has been seriously proposed they should be preserved in the British Museum. Better, we think, that they should be the nucleus round which a really comprehensive psychic collection could be gathered. Meanwhile, they are kept carefully at the L.S.A., where they may be seen by those interested, whether members of the Alliance or not.

PROFESSOR HUXLEY'S DIFFICULTY

NOTWITHSTANDING his official connection with the International Institute for Psychical Research, as vice-president and member of the consultative committee, Professor Julian Huxley said nothing about the Rationalist attitude to Psychical Research in his broadcast talk last Friday evening. This omission may, not unfairly, be taken as indicating the view that Rationalism and Psychical Research are not fundamentally opposed. Certainly, the definition of a Rationalist as a person who believes in the value of human reason as an instrument for seeking the truth might quite well be applied to a Psychical Researcher, or even to a Spiritualist who has reached assurance of Survival by the scientific method of experiment, observation and deduction.

It is worthy of note, also, that when Professor Huxley was questioned about the Christian religion, it was to the demand for acceptance of the dogma of physical resurrection, and not to belief in *Survival*, that he pointed as a reason for regarding it as fundamentally opposed to scientific knowledge. In saying this, he brought to view a weakness of the dogmatic Churches to which attention has often been drawn in *LIGHT*. It is a fact, however, that enlightened Christians are more and more recognising that belief in physical resurrection (either of Jesus or of mankind in general) is not warranted by a reasonable interpretation of the New Testament scripts. Some day, when the pressure of knowledge within and without the Churches becomes strong enough, the Spiritualistic teaching—which is also the true scriptural teaching—will be frankly accepted, and Professor Huxley's difficulty will disappear.

THE "VOICE" THAT SPOKE TO SAUL

FEW stories in the Bible—or out of it—equal in dramatic interest that in which the conversion of Saul the Persecutor is described. To Spiritualists, the story has a particular appeal, because it relates how in a blaze of light and in the open air, a "direct voice" was heard, not only by Saul, but by those who accompanied him. This part of the story is told in Acts ix, 3, where it is written:

"And as he journeyed, it came to pass that he drew nigh unto Damascus; and suddenly there shone round him a light out of heaven; and he fell upon the earth and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And He said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. And the men that journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no man."

Recently, at the British College of Psychic Science, when Mr. Ernest Hunt delivered his most interesting lecture on "The Drama of Saul of Tarsus," the question was raised whether there is any record in modern psychic experience of a "Voice" being heard in the open air and in daylight.

The case of Joan of Arc will at once be recalled, but her "Voice" (like that of Socrates) appears to have been heard only by herself and not by others. In other words, she was clairaudient; whereas the "Voice" that spoke to Saul was heard by his companions as well as by himself.

Mrs. Ch. de Crespigny, Hon. Principal of the British College, says she knows of two cases of an objective "Voice" being heard in the open air and in full light. The first was that of Mrs. Etta Wriedt, the voice-Medium. When she was a child, Etta used to be followed by "Voices." On going to bed, she heard someone saying: "I'll catch you, I'll catch you!" Her father, who was a lumberman, and her brother, working in the woods, were often annoyed when Etta was present by hearing "Voices" in the daylight, the origin of which they could not discover. Admiral Moore relates that he heard a "Voice" speaking behind him in broad daylight in a room in West Kensington from which Mrs. Wriedt had just gone out.

The other case is that of Charlotte G. Herbine, a London Medium who, in 1915, published a book, *Meeting of the Spheres, or Letters from Dr. Coulter*. Dr. Coulter, a spirit, it was stated, would often join in a clear, loud voice, in the conversation over 5 o'clock tea.

Andrew Jackson Davis records that he often heard his mother's voice in the open air when away from home, both before and after her passing.

At the seances of Mrs. Blake, an Ohio Medium, a direct voice could occasionally be heard at a hundred feet distance; but it is not clear whether this took place in the open air. Professor Hyslop, in the *A.S.P.R. Proceedings*, vol. vii, reports having heard these "Voices" twenty feet away when the trumpet was in Mrs. Blake's hand, and he says he could have heard them from a distance of forty or fifty feet. Apparently he did not test the carrying power of the "Voices."

The subject is one of great interest, and we invite readers who have knowledge of authentic cases to let us know of them.

"LIGHT" SUSTENTATION FUND

Since the reduction of the selling-price from 4d. to 2d. (at the beginning of October last year), there has been progressive increase in the net sale of *LIGHT* and the figures for last month show that the progress continues. The decrease of revenue has not yet, however, been made good, and there is a weekly gap between income and expenditure. The object of the Sustentation Fund is to give interested readers an opportunity of assisting us to bridge the gap and so helping *LIGHT* on the way to commercial stability. Donations should be addressed to the Manager of *LIGHT*.

BRAND OF SUPERSTITION

BOOK REVIEW

By H. F. PREVOST BATTERSBY

IT is curious how many things we talk about which we cannot define. Here is one—Superstition.

Father Herbert Thurston has written a charming little book* about it, but has brought us really no nearer knowing what it is. A cynic called it "The other man's religion," but that does not quite dispose of it, though Father Thurston agrees that "the application of it in the concrete depends largely upon the standpoint of him who uses it."

St. Augustine and the Latin Fathers used *superstitio* in no favourable sense; but much of their beliefs would be reckoned superstition by theological experts to-day.

Father Thurston agrees with Professor Albert Lehmann that it "may be applied to any general persuasion which, having no warrant in a recognised religious system, is in conflict with the scientific conception of nature prevalent at the time"; but that would give it an altered meaning all down the ages; the scientific conception of nature being as shifting as a quicksand. But that is, perhaps, what Father Thurston means.

But though definitions get us no nearer, a survey of man's attitude to the subject may persuade us how vain would be the search, remembering the author's warning that "this word of reproach has also become to a large extent a relative term, depending upon the pre-conceptions of the particular speaker or writer."

When England abjured Catholicism, the Statute of Chantries, in the first year of King Edward VI, declared that "a great part of superstition and error in Christian religion" was due to the offering of "masses satisfactory for them that be departed." For more than three centuries bequests for the offering of masses were held by the Courts of Law to be gifts "for superstitious uses," and were therefore null and void; and the "Test" formulated in 1678 declared that "the invocation or adoration of the Virgin Mary or any other saint, and the Sacrifice of the Mass as they are now used in the Church of Rome are superstitious and idolatrous." So far the cynic was right about the "other man's religion."

Father Thurston is, as a Catholic cleric, not too happily placed in dealing with his subject. He faces it courageously.

"Although," he tell us, "a great part of the superstitious beliefs and practices of the Middle ages had their origin in paganism, it cannot be disputed that much which the modern reader is most disposed to condemn under that head grew up within the Church itself."

He gives a long list, headed by "the ready acceptance of spurious and often preposterous relics, and the multiplication of miracles."

"The memorials of the Blessed Virgin which were preserved in the Royal Abbey of Westminster" in the 15th century were more fantastic than the *gri-gri*s of the darkest African tribe, but there were even more surprising relics than these in the chapel of the Sanctum Sanctorum itself attached to the basilica of the Lateran. The rod of Aaron that blossomed; the rod with which Moses drew water from the rock, the tables of the Testament; fragments of Christ's cradle and of the five barley loaves and two fishes; the cloth with which He wiped the feet of His disciples; the tears He wept at the grave of Lazarus; two phials of the blood and water from His side.

One speaks of "blind" superstition, and surely the most dislocated vision is that lent to religious rapture; and he must, indeed, have sensed its intermissions who

offered as a relic "the window recess in which the angel stood when he saluted the Blessed Virgin."

Eadmer, St. Anselm's secretary, describes how when a certain Ilgyrus, returning from the Crusades, offered the Saint two hairs of the Blessed Lady, "St. Anselm, with the Archbishop of Rouen and all the canons and clergy of the city, went out in solemn procession to meet the treasure" which was being escorted by a band of monks from Chartres.

Father Thurston points out how unlikely it is that hairs torn from the head of Christ's Mother should have been retrieved from the trampled soil of Calvary, and that one must be sceptical about the three heads of John the Baptist, and the very large number of his index fingers.

Miracles are not quite in the same category unless we take the liberty to describe as such the multiplication of St. John's finger.

But—one would ask that acceptance of the miracle should not be called in one case faith, and in another superstition, according as it may be wrought by our own formula or by some one else's.

There is a great Catholic festival, when phials containing the blood of San Gennaro are borne to the high altar of a church in Naples above a hushed multitude in prayer that its liquefaction may cheer them with the promise of good fortune to come. The African, also, uses blood though not the blood of a Saint, to divine what the future may have in store for him.

Now, supposing that in either case the oracle is effective, why should they be differently assessed? I do not know to what the Catholic attributes the working of his miracle; the witch-doctor definitely understands the fetish to which he appeals. By results, they both seem to be handling the same machinery; much as, within limits, did Moses and Pharaoh's magicians.

SPIRITUALISTS' ATTITUDE

The Church can hardly repudiate such a comparison. There was a time when it was so enamoured with the efficacy of pagan ordeals that, as Father Thurston admits, it "sanctioned them and in a measure adopted them for her own."

And though the Spiritualist, tolerantly conscious of his own ignorance, might "include under sin" neither worker of miracles, the views of the opposite camp were forcibly expressed by Archbishop Sandys at York on the anniversary of Queen Elizabeth's accession, when he compared to Christ's purging of the Temple, that gracious lady's eviction of the "buyers and sellers of popish trash, monks, friars, mass-mongers, with suchlike miscreants, to be hurled and whipped out, the stumbling stones of superstition, the baggage of man's traditions with all monuments of idolatry, vanity and popery."

So extremely complicated is the point of view. And the Church's own standards are so changeable.

"Superstition," wrote Joseph Hall, a future Bishop of Exeter, in 1608, "is godless religion, devout impiety," and Father Thurston also agrees that there are beliefs which "deserve to be called superstitions . . . because though they profess to honour God, they honoured Him irrationally."

That again is puzzling; since surely it is not on reason that religion relies; the unreasonableness of his creed being once instanced by a very saintly person to explain its potency.

If reason is to be a standard we might have an African sorcerer, whose fetish is often of a scientific exactitude, describing as grossly superstitious the affirmations of the Athanasian Creed; indeed, may not the pronouncement of St. Agobard, Archbishop of Lyons in the 9th century, be still applied to-day? "Things are believed by Christians of such absurdity as no one ever would aforetime induce the heathen to believe who knew not the Creator of all." Reason is really rather a dangerous weapon to be used against other people's beliefs, so long at least as ignorance so far exceeds our knowledge.

"By the vast majority of professing Christians, what-

Superstition. Herbert Thurston. London. The Centenary Press. 1934. 2/6.

ever their creed," asserts the author, "any belief in the influence of the stars upon human action or human destiny would, nowadays, be rejected as pure superstition."

That assertion comes at an unfortunate moment, seeing that the astrologers, in the last few weeks, have foretold with inexplicable exactitude recent events in France and India.

St. Thomas thought that the heavenly bodies "might act upon the passions of men taken in the mass"—not a very scientific concession—but Pope Sixtus V declared that "so far as any truth is to be found in such predictions . . . it is due to the devil's subtle knowledge of many conditions and secret influences already at work which are not yet manifest to the world at large."

Yet, such are Time's revenges, that, for many, the devil himself has become a superstition.

AS TO WITCHCRAFT

Then as to witchcraft. Father Thurston is surprised that a belief in witchcraft "was accepted unquestioningly by such intelligent men as Sir Thomas Brown." But it was just their intelligence that enabled them to accept it. Witchcraft was as real as priestcraft. That was why, in the Home Circuit alone, 133 witches were sentenced, and all but a few of them hanged, under Elizabeth, who consulted her own pet astronomer when terrified by a comet.

With certain unassailable evidence before him, the author concedes that "we shall have to admit that many of those who believe in the magic powers of African witch-doctors and rain-makers are not necessarily guilty of superstition."

But why should we accord to African witchcraft what we deny to the European variety?

"Among us," wrote Reginald Scott in 1584, "there be manie women and effeminate men (manie papists alwaies, as by their superstitions may appeare) that make great divinations upon the shedding of salt, wine, etc., and for the observation of daies and houres use as great witchcraft as in anie thing."

But belief in the witch's psychic powers does not necessarily extend to an acceptance of such debatable auguries; and it is profitable to remember that less than a hundred years ago when Crowley was hanged at Warwick for murder, we are told that "scarcely was he dead than the scaffold was crowded with women afflicted with goitre or white swellings in the knee, upon which the dead man's hand was passed to and fro, 'for the benifit of the hangman.'"

So near to us are the dark ages. But it is a disappointment to have their proximity stressed by the author's assertion that "the flood of spiritualistic communications purporting to be transmitted from the world beyond the grave . . . must bring home to us the conclusion that man cannot easily shake himself free from irrational beliefs which the common feeling of the more educated is prone to characterize as superstition."

The spiritualist is no more concerned to sponsor all such communications than is Father Thurston to vindicate all his Church's fantastic relics; and it is surprising to find so able a thinker, who has appropriated such communications from the other side as suited his creed, asserting that "these credulities are somewhat dishonouring to human nature, and that it is a moral duty to resist them with all our force."

Well, force was once used to crush the superstitions of a certain Galileo. I do not think our "superstitions" need be afraid of it.

Readers of LIGHT will be delighted to learn that Mr. Cyril Scott has been awarded the first prize (£100) in the "Daily Telegraph" orchestral competition for British composers. The judges had before them 223 scores when the task of adjudication began. Mr. Scott lectured at the L.S.A. recently (March 22nd) on "Some Occult Aspects of Music."

S.P.R. AND RUDI SCHNEIDER

A SUMMARY of the coming S.P.R. report on about fifty sittings with Rudi Schneider (from October, 1933 until March, 1934) was published in *Nature* (April 14th), over the signatures of Mr. Theodore Besterman and Mr. Oliver Gatty. It records complete failure in every experimental line.

"No evidence of absorption of a beam of infra-red light, of the type recorded by Dr. Osty and Herbert, could be obtained," it is stated, "notwithstanding frequent announcements by the trance-personality that the 'force' had entered the ray. . . ."

"A cinema camera was installed, with a film sensitive to the infra-red. No evidence, however, could be obtained of the telekinetic phenomena recorded by Price and others; with the exception of a considerable number of movements—not exceeding 10cm.—of a hanging curtain.

"During a period of half an hour, the 'force' could produce no significant difference in the rate of growth of two strains of *bacillus fluorescens*, or in the fermenting power of yeast.

"It has been alleged that the trance-personality is aware of what goes on in the dark seance-room; in these sittings this was not found to be the case.

"In view of the fact that the Medium's respiration has been regarded as a remarkable physiological phenomenon, samples were collected and analysed by D. C. G. Douglas, showing that the Medium in no way over-breathes. As the rate of respiration increases, so its depth decreases; the total oxygen consumption per minute . . . corresponds to that of a man walking some four miles an hour. . . . Moreover, we have found no difficulty in imitating his breathing."

In a final paragraph, it is stated that every suggestion made by the Medium and the trance-personality was acted upon, and "that it is impossible to speak too highly of Rudi Schneider's willingness to submit to every suggested test and control: he acted throughout with the most scrupulous straightforwardness."

MR. BESTERMAN ON CRYSTAL GAZING

MR. THEODORE BESTERMAN, investigation officer of the Society for Psychical Research, lectured recently (April 18th) on "The Folk Lore of Scrying" (crystal gazing) at the Folk Lore Society, London.

In reply to a question as to what he thought of modern crystal gazers (as reported in the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*) he said "the answer falls in two parts. One question is: Do people really see or imagine they see images in the crystal? Secondly: Do the images correspond to external realities?"

"The answer to the first part of the question is that invariably people do see or imagine they see images in the crystal. The convenient property of a shining surface is regularly used by psycho-analysts and others to induce a mood of dissociation in a patient. It is a mild form of hypnotism.

"In answering the second part of the question, we are entering into a more debatable field, but I do not hesitate to say from the cases I have personally investigated that people do see images corresponding with external realities.

"Generally speaking, a person who does it for a living is probably not genuine, because these faculties cannot be turned on like a tap. "The best crystal gazer known to Psychical Research in modern times was a woman who was an extraordinarily good scryer, and frequently did see things in the crystal, even those things that were going to happen in the future."

"I am quite amazed at the little interest most people take in the question (Spiritualism). A decision of the existence of mind independent of ordinary matter must be far more important than any scientific discovery could be, or rather, would be the most important possible scientific discovery." (Lord Rayleigh in a letter to Henry Sidgwick.)

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).

"MARGERY" MEDIUMSHIP

Sir,—In Mr. Thorogood's Report on the "Margery" mediumship, p. 129, occur the statements that Dr. X demonstrated to "Margery," on July 30th, 1926, the manner in which thumb impressions might be made in it, by making some of his own, (his appointment book shows "Margery" at his office on that date) which she took with her when she left his office. Upon returning home, she talked over the matter with Dr. E. W. Brown, whom she found at the house attending her mother who was ill, and his wife. Since he was familiar with the phenomena, "Margery" showed him the waxes and discussed the matter with him and with Mr. Dudley who was also at the house. 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."

Against this Mr. Dudley states in a letter to me, dated Boston, February 22, 1934, "The statement that I received Dr. C... 's (Dr. X's) original wax prints is false, the events there related never occurred; furthermore, the alleged witnesses were not present, and the story is made up out of whole cloth."

Between these two statements the letters which follow will enable us to choose. These letters were sent to me by "Margery" in answer to my enquiry of recent date. STANLEY DE BRATH.

Letter from Wendell P. Murray, Counsellor-at-law, 60 State Street, Boston, U.S.A., dated June 14, 1933.

"Dear Mrs. Crandon.—I have a fairly clear recollection of the matter of which you spoke to me.

I recall that one summer evening, six or seven years ago, Doctor Brown and I were at your house at 10 Lime Street in the late afternoon or evening. As I remember it, Mr. Charles S. Hill and Mr. Dudley were present. When we came in, we understood that you were at Doctor C... 's (Dr. X's) office, and later you came in with several pieces of some dark reddish wax, which I understood was called 'Kerr.' There were some thumb impressions on the wax, which we all examined and discussed, you stating that Doctor C... (Dr. X) said that this was the best material he knew of for taking and preserving impressions.

"The wax was warm, and we experimented with thumb-prints on some of the pieces.

"Mr. Dudley took some of the pieces away with him upon which Doctor C... 's (Dr. X's) thumb-prints were impressed. I recall this because at the time the question arose in my mind as to the reason for his doing so. Doctor Brown drove us to Worcester Square, where Dudley left us, and Doctor Brown and I went to Beachmont in his car.—Very truly yours. (Signed) WENDELL P. MURRAY."

Letter from Edison W. Brown, M.D. 20 Crescent Avenue, Beachmont, Mass., U.S.A., dated 5th, 1933.

"My dear Mrs. Crandon.—I was present at Lime Street some six years ago when you came in with a number of pieces of Kerr wax and said that your dentist had given them to you as the best material on which to record thumb-prints, and you said he had shown you how to use it. Several of the pieces had thumb-prints on them which you said he had made.

"I had driven to Lime Street in the late afternoon with Mrs. Brown and Mr. Wendell Murray. Mr. Dudley was there and took possession of all the waxes and took them away with him. I drove him to his home in Worcester Square. Mrs. Brown tells me that the above is also her recollection.—Very sincerely yours. (Signed) E. W. BROWN."

* * *

"BELIEVED BECAUSE IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE"

Sir,—In the notice given in the April 13th issue of LIGHT of Mr. W. H. Evans' talk on "Psychic Phenomena in the Life of Jesus," the second paragraph took my attention. In this paragraph Mr. Evans is recorded as saying—"The difficulty of believing the miracles is, perhaps, best expressed in the phrase attributed to one of the early Fathers who declared he believed because it was impossible."

In this connection the following passage, taken from a book recently published entitled "In Job's Balances," by Leo Chestov, may be of interest, as it appears to show that Mr. Evans may have drawn a wrong conclusion from Tertullian's words, the real meaning of which may be the opposite of what he thinks. This passage, which is on page xxiii of the Foreword, is as follows:—

"Some decades before the Bible was made accessible to the European peoples, the Jew Philo began his endeavours to 'reconcile' Oriental revelation with Western science. But what he called reconciliation was treason. A few Fathers of the Church—Tertullian, for example—were aware of this. But not all of them saw, as Tertullian saw, wherein lay the essence of the Hellenic spirit and the danger of its influence. He alone understood that, as he ex-

pressed it, Athens could never agree with Jerusalem. He alone resolved, and that only once, in the famous saying which I have often quoted and which, in my opinion—as I have also said—each of us should say daily before sleeping and repeat on waking—resolved to recognise the formula of incantation which alone can give us freedom from the magic spell of centuries: 'non pudet, quia pudendum est; prorsus credibile—quia ineptum est; certum—quia impossibile—' (I am not ashamed—because it is shameful; it is absolutely credible—because it is absurd; it is certain—because it is impossible).

"No one, not even himself has hearkened to Tertullian's voice. His words have either been forgotten altogether, or, if occasionally quoted by lay or theological writers, cited only as an example of supreme contradiction and perfect absurdity. Everyone thinks it his duty, not only to reconcile Athens with Jerusalem, but to require of Jerusalem to seek her justification and her blessing in Athens."

S. H. OAKSHETT.

* * *

"KATIE KING'S" PHOTOGRAPHS

Sir,—I am glad to see the Crookes photographs of "Katie King" reproduced in *Psychic Science*. Nearly twenty-five years ago, Sir William (writing to me in response to my request for copies), said that "the negatives had been accidentally destroyed during a removal." This letter I have. Nineteen years ago, my friend, Admiral Osborne Moore, sent me large prints of all the photographs shown in *Psychic Science*, together with two or three others. These he would not allow me to publish or retain, as he was pledged to the owner not to do so; but I remember them well. The one showing "Katie King" and Dr. Gully in profile was published as a book-illustration more than thirty years ago, and I have a copy of it. Fortunately it is that these pictures have been saved by those to whom they were originally presented. (REV.) CHAS. L. TWEDDALE.

Weston Vicarage, Otley, Yorks.

* * *

"TIBET'S OCCULT WONDERS"

Sir,—My attention has been drawn to a letter in your issue of April 20th, referring to my latest book, *The Invisible Influence*, written by Mr. Leaf, under the heading of "Tibet's Occult Wonders." I am amused at the contents of this letter. For anyone to think that Crookes was the first person to express "the opinion that telepathic transmission was the result of brain-waves" is ridiculous. Tibet knew of these vibrations centuries before Crookes was even thought of: the theory dates back at least to Pythagoras in B.C. 562. It would be nice to think that the views contained in *The Invisible Influence* were those acknowledged by Western authorities as Mr. Leaf suggests: alas, this is far from the truth! Otherwise we should have made much greater progress with such knowledge at our finger-tips. (DR.) ALEXANDER CANNON.

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May 1st—Clairvoyance: Miss LILY THOMAS.

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Thursdays at 8.15 p.m. Members free. Guests of Members 1/-. Non-Members 2/-

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.

SYLLABUS ON APPLICATION

LEADERSHIP OF JESUS

AT the Free Public Meeting on Tuesday last, Mr. W. H. Evans spoke on "The Spiritual Leadership of Jesus." He said this was a subject upon which there is a wide difference of opinion amongst Spiritualists, some accepting the leadership of Jesus, and others rejecting it. While there is no difference of opinion about the noble character and teachings of Jesus, there are many Spiritualists whose reactions to the theological aspects of the question are such that they seemed to be possessed with a fear that any acceptance of this leadership carried with it an assent to the theological ideas common to organised Christianity. One can sympathise with this fear, but the question cannot be dismissed with a wave of the hand; while the idea that acceptance of the Leadership of Jesus means accepting the dogmas and creeds of orthodox Christianity surely betrays a lack of clear thinking.

It is curious how the name of Jesus causes such a cleavage amongst Spiritualists. One would imagine that there would be a clearer discrimination between the Man and the dogmas held in His name. Instead of taking the priestly view, why not go straight to the New Testament and accept the view there expressed? Unitarian Christianity, which in its ethic is practically one with that of Spiritualism, does this. It cuts out the mass of theological creed and dogma and accepts the Leadership of Jesus and salvation by character, basing its reasoning upon the teachings of the New Testament. This indicates that there is no need to go back to what we have outgrown, and I suggest that if Spiritualists, especially those who oppose the idea of the Leadership of Jesus, would consider the Unitarian view, much of their opposition would die.

Spiritualists at times seem strangely unaware of the implications arising from the origin of their movement. I presume no Spiritualist would assert it was an accident; indeed, with the talk about guides and guidance, they cannot. We can hardly suppose that the rapping at Hydesville was a haphazard happening, for the growth of the movement indicates that there was, and is, behind it

a great spiritual force. What is that force? And who is directing it? We cannot regard that force as a blind and blundering power entirely dissociated with intelligence. Almost every psychic phenomenon reveals an intelligence associated with it, and if we trace it back, we find that it is a manifestation of some mind; pushed further still, and the whole movement can be seen as one under the direction of spiritual beings, who not only influence the world through spiritualistic channels but through many others.

PSYCHIC TREASURES OF THE L.S.A.

IN a lecture by Miss Mercy Phillimore, on Wednesday, April 18th, attention was drawn to the remarkable collection of psychic treasures in the possession of the L.S.A. They are on view in the Lecture Room at 16, Queensberry Place, and a catalogue of them will shortly be prepared.

The collection includes the following items: The original note-books of Stainton Moses, with the famous automatic scripts on which *Spirit Teachings* are based; the two "Retrospects," an account in Stainton Moses' own hand of the remarkable phenomena observed in his seances; his automatic drawings (of considerable art merit) of his chief controls; the wreath of foliage apportioned and put around his head in a seance with Charles Williams. These treasures are the principal items shown in a glass case donated by Miss Cordelia Grylls.

In addition to the above, listeners were shown: The table used in his sittings by Henry Slade—a table which, during the prosecution of Slade, Maskelyne declared under oath, at the Bow Street Police Court, to be a trick-table; several slates covered with writing as produced in Slade sittings; Morell Theobald's notebook with direct scripts obtained in his own household during a number of years; Captain Bartlett's (John Alleyne's) astonishing automatic sketches of Glastonbury Abbey as it was in the days of its glory; "Iola," a large painting of Admiral Moore's spirit-control, produced directly by the Bang Sisters of Chicago; a series of symbolic automatic paintings produced by Mrs. Claude Scott; two direct paintings obtained during sittings with Mrs. E. French, of New York, and signed by Judge Edmonds, Benjamin Coleman and others; an original automatic sketch by Victorien Sardou, the famous French dramatist; several direct paintings obtained through the mediumship of David Duguid; relics of Mme. D'Esperance; an original copy of Tissot's famous mezzotint "Apparition Médianimiques"; a collection of early spirit photographs; also portraits of early workers in the movement.

PSYCHIC DEVELOPMENT CLASSES

Classes for psychic development are being held at the L.S.A. on Wednesday afternoons at 3 o'clock. As planned, these classes were to have been conducted by Mr. Vout Peters, whose sudden death we recently recorded with much regret. His place has been taken by Mr. Leigh Hunt, who has had much experience in this kind of work, and is recognised as a capable and careful instructor who quickly gains and keeps the confidence of those under his instructions.

INSPIRATION AND FAITH

"THE only thing that stands between us and true inspiration is a lack of faith in ourselves"—was the idea advanced by Mr. Garland Anderson, the coloured playwright in his lecture on "Inspiration" at the L.S.A. on Thursday last week (April 19th). Faith in oneself, he said, acts as a magnet to attract what is termed inspiration. It is the connecting link between divine influence and consciousness of inspiration. What is faith?—he queried. It is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

"We all have an equal amount of faith," he added, but some use it constructively, others destructively. It requires just as much faith to fail as to succeed, to be in ill health as in perfect health, to be unhappy as to be happy.

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Sunday, May 6th, at 7 p.m. Speaker: Mr. GEORGE
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SUNDAY, APRIL 29th, 1934

11 a.m.—Mr. Ernest Hunt.

Clairvoyant: Mr. Thomas Wyatt

6.30 p.m.—Major C. C. Colley.

Clairvoyante: Mrs. Estelle Roberts

Sunday, May 6th, at 11 a.m. Mr. HAROLD CARPENTER

Clairvoyante: Mrs. Grace Cooke

Sunday, May 6th, at 6.30 p.m. Mr. ERNEST OATEN

Clairvoyante: Mrs. Helen Spiers.

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Mon., April 30th—Speaker: Mrs. Hewat McKenzie

Clairvoyante: Mrs. Stella Hughes

Wed., May 2nd—Speaker: Major Leith-Hay-Clark

Clairvoyant: Mr. Thomas Wyatt

Admission Free

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. (Recommencing May 28th).Tuesday. 2 p.m.—Mrs. Gray's Private Healing Treat-
ment. 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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Friday.

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

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May 2nd. 2.30—Mr. Thomas Wyatt.

6.30—Miss Fillmore.

9th 2.30—Miss Lily Thomas

6.30—Mrs. Helen Spiers.

16th 2.30—Mr. Glover Botham.

6.30—Mrs. Rose Livingstone.

By Appointment:

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Mrs. Esta Cassel

Mrs. Annie Johnson

Mrs. Rose Livingstone

Miss Lily Thomas

Miss Jacqueline

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(SOCIETY ARRANGEMENTS CONTINUED ON PAGE 262)

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SORROW WHICH MIGHT BE LIGHTENED

AS bearing on the after-death value of a knowledge of the possibility of spirit-communication, Mr. Charles Thornton sends us extracts from a message (received by him through automatic writing) from the wife of a clergyman. Describing her parting from her husband, the communicator wrote:—

"There is a great sadness in any parting, even for a short while, between two people who mean a great deal to one another; and this parting had to be an indefinite and complete one. We both believed firmly in the survival of the human spirit, but to neither of us had the possibility of any communication between those in the earth-life and those in the hereafter occurred. The teaching of the Christian Church was a great and wonderful mercy, but there had somehow crept into it a woeful misunderstanding of the real truth, so that poor humanity had been allowed to suffer a great deal of sorrow that need never have been.

"As I had passed through life, so I persisted to the end. I had always taken for granted the truth of the teaching that death presented a complete barrier between the living and the dead. And so, as I lay in that hospital bed, I continued to believe and to deplore it.

"How great my joy would have been had someone come to my bedside and assured me that the entire thing was a misconception, that I should be able to send a message to and even to see poor David again, although there might be difficulties in the way of his ever seeing me. Had I been assured of this, the relief to my mind would have been too great to express in words."

"TONGUES IN TREES" is the title of a new novel by Winifred Graham (Hutchinson & Co., 7/6). The chief character in it is a Pole, Alexis Dolfouski, a world-famous musician, an eccentric genius, and consummate egotist, with a purely personal standard of morals and behaviour. Undoubtedly a psychic, he rises to real greatness when he saves the reason and probably the life of his outraged father-in-law, who, under the stress of a great shock, deliberately shoots him. Though still in great physical pain himself and regardless of his own risk, Dolfouski insists upon being carried to his would-be assassin in order to convince him that the act had not been that of the man's true self, but had been due entirely to the psychic forces of a certain oak tree. His father-in-law, he declares, had for years been in close psychic rapport with that tree, and it was the ancient and barbaric spirit attached to that oak which had suddenly overpowered him and made him its instrument.

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