

Light

on

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PRICE TWOPENCE

THE VISION BEAUTIFUL

SPIRIT GUARDIANS WAITING TO ESCORT THE PASSING SOUL

Written on June 19th, 1934, by the wife of a brother officer of mine, at my request. She had told me of it verbally and I asked her to write it out for me.—L. L. HOARE.

IN describing the last few hours on earth of my mother, it would be wise to bring out first the following points as to her character, type and normal line of thought. She was what is often described as "A sweet, vigorous old lady," a saintly, unselfish, healthy mother of a large family, five of whom died when young. Many griefs and worries and the hard work of bringing up a family as the wife of a clergyman had failed to damp her cheery spirit or to chill the glowing warmth of her nature.

She was greatly interested in everything, a great reader, and kept abreast of her time. She adored my two children, her only grandchildren. She was also very fond of my husband and most interested in all he did. She was religious in a practical way, but left the study of religions to her husband, and carried out the normal duties of a clergyman's wife hospitably and well.

She did not read at any time books pertaining to an after life or survival; was never introspective, other than such as is normal to old people. I imagine, however, that she was always a psychic without knowing it.

She was 82 when she died, and had been so ill the year before that her Doctor said he had never seen any old person *so near death, and yet recover* (see below). She was amazingly tenacious physically and very healthy. On the day which turned out to be her last, my sister and I were with her continuously. The Doctor said she was sinking and she looked very frail, tired, and was practically unconscious.

At 3 o'clock in the afternoon she suddenly recovered consciousness and began to chat to us, feebly at first, and then her voice became stronger and so much younger. At first her memory roamed about her earlier years and she forgot the present. Soon after this she quite suddenly sat up and her mind came to rest upon the subject of a book called *The Lace Makers*. Its description of beautiful things and its delicate language seemed to have captivated her mind at the time, and it was as if her mind were being cleared by this beautiful memory to prepare its reception for what was to come. She talked with glowing warmth of the beauty of the book and gradually, to our astonishment, life

crept into her frail frame, light crept into her eyes. The wrinkles seemed to clear from her face and in a short time she looked amazingly young and beautiful. She seemed to glow. Still more to our amazement, she sat up and clasped her hands round her knees in the most comfortable and cosy way, and oblivious of what ordinarily would have been a monstrous effort at such a time, settled down to a downright gossip. I can only use such a word to describe the naturalness, the cosiness, the lack of strain or effort—but the word *gossip* is otherwise far from suitable. I am so afraid of exaggeration at such an interval of time that I shall find it difficult to convey a fraction of the beauty and the glory of what followed.

TWO BEAUTIFUL BEINGS

It was very clear that she saw two Beings standing at the foot of her bed. "Who are those beautiful tall people at the foot of my bed?" she asked, and from then she could hardly take her adoring and beseeching eyes away from them. She afterwards explained to us that they had come for her and were waiting to lead her Home. She was afraid, almost desperately at times, that they would go without her.

She then began a most vivid description of what she saw. Her eyes left the confines of the room and seemed to be gazing beyond at the most stupendous scenes. She used words of beauty and description that she would not have used normally. In trying to describe colours she failed, saying: "You have no words to describe the colours or beautiful sounds in your language." She saw beyond the Guardians at the bed a very lovely scene of river, valley, and mountain pass, through which she said she saw throngs of people passing. She said: "I was here last year, I wonder if I ought to have stayed, don't hold me back this time" (see above) and, smiling to the Guardians, she said: "I shall soon be ready, please don't let them go without me."

At this period she was distressed and said: "They are all so beautiful; I am not pretty enough to go with them." I gave her a little pink silk wrap and she draped it round her shoulders and head with the prettiest gesture of feminine vanity I have ever seen. She then insisted on putting pink satin bedroom slippers on her feet, and then said: "Now I look better."

All through these hours, from 3 p.m. to 11, she at no time had a distraught or strained look in her eyes nor any suspicion of senility. The Doctor came in twice

and sat there amazed, and said he had never had such an experience and that he would not dare drag her back as he had the previous year.

She sometimes lay back and was quiet, seeming to smile and keep her eyes fixed on the scenes she saw. Then she would resume her glorious description of people, colour and grandeurs.

CHILDREN IN A BEAUTIFUL GARDEN

There appeared to her to be, among many other things, people looking after and playing with many children in a beautiful garden full of flowers. Also, she several times mentioned a Being: "It is not Alfred" (my husband), she said, "but he is working out ideas, putting them into Alfred's head and helping him to design things."

And so on, hour after hour, using beautiful sentences, laughing at times at us and with us in the sweetest way, she crept nearer and nearer to the end (I prefer beginning), while we sat enthralled and oblivious of time.

She began to droop a little, quite pleasantly, just tired with all her wonderful marvels, but always saw vividly the waiting figures whom she from time to time unconsciously included by a look or word with us, so real they were to her.

Her general anxiety was that her tenacious body would again prevent her spirit leaving.

At last she sank back very gently. She appeared to be seeing and talking to my father, who had died some years before, and was describing my daughter, Diana, to him, and to the waiting angels smilingly she said: "Diana, lovely eyes has my Diana." Then she sank back smiling and passed on.

Bruce's Farm, GIBRALTAR. CONSTANCE BUTTENSCHAW.

GOOD CROSS EVIDENCE

THE following seemed to me excellent cross evidence.

A child friend of mine passed over, aged about twelve. She first started coming through to me through the mediumship of Mrs. Cooper, calling me "Daddy" though she was no relation. Later on, she came through Mrs. Barkel and Mrs. Mason. One day, when sitting with the latter, she came and, after passing the time of day with me, remarked: "You used to tease me when I was on earth." I told her that had only been fun and no harm had been intended. She consented to this, but told me that now it was her turn and she was going to have her fun and tease me.

A little time afterwards, when sitting with the Misses Moore, the Voice-Mediums, a kind of clicking noise started, like someone snapping their fingers very loudly. This seemed to go all round the room—now up in the corner near the ceiling, now close to the floor, and it continued so long that the Mediums discussed stopping the sitting, not being able to imagine what this could be.

Suddenly, a voice said: "Daddy, I'm teasing you." I said: "You little dear," and the voice replied: "I am sitting on the trumpet doing it." I said: "Well, then, bring the trumpet on to my head and do it." Sure enough down came the trumpet, resting lightly on my head and the clicking noise came all round it.

During all this, I frequently continued a conversation with the two Mediums, to convince myself that they had not left their seat, and even if they had they knew nothing about the child and her threat to tease me. No wonder I am not only convinced of survival; an experience like that helps me to realise that life on the other side is very like it is here, with the same feelings and *joie de vivre*.

C. H. MOWBRAY, (Major).

The Materialist never faces the fundamental issue that the present existence of consciousness is quite as mysterious as any supposed future existence of it.—Dr. J. H. HYSLOP.

B.B.C. TO RECONSIDER

QUESTION OF BROADCASTING SPIRITUALIST SUNDAY SERVICE

MR. FRANK HARRIS, Secretary of the Spiritualists' National Union, writes as follows:

A few weeks ago we asked the Governors of the British Broadcasting Corporation to direct that the Central Religious Advisory Committee should consider afresh the question of broadcasting a Spiritualist Sunday Service.

We are now advised that the Committee is to deal with this matter at its next meeting which takes place in the early autumn.

So far, so good. In considering what we regard as a matter of supreme importance—and a matter of common justice—to a large body of religious thought in the country, may we commend to the representatives of the other religious denominations, in whose hands the decision will lie, the observation of Lord Hewart made in another connection that toleration in matters of religion is only creditable when it is applied to someone else's religion.

We hope the individual members of the Committee will ask themselves the question, "Would I have given the same decision if my religion had been the one under discussion?" If they will do this honestly and fairly, then we have no fear of the result of their deliberations.

I am interested to see that one or two letter writers have stressed the fact that it is of little use planning a campaign for legal recognition of Spiritualism, unless it is done in time for each individual unit of the Movement to take its part. I quite agree, but if the writers of the letters would have taken the trouble to read what has appeared they would have found that the very things they had advocated were being done. Parliamentary Sub-Committees of each of the District Councils are now in process of being formed, and the skeleton organisation and experience which has been arrived at through participation in the various bye-elections, will be used and amplified in time for the General Election.

I would, however, point out that the time is not ripe for the Spiritualists' National Union to tackle proposals for the regulation of the evils from which the Movement is admittedly suffering. When recognition of Spiritualism as a religion is won from a reluctant judiciary, then will be the time for every section of the Movement to get together and hammer out its regulating code. The S.N.U. will be prepared to take its place among those, but to do so at the moment would probably lead to its being charged with wishing to eliminate from the field those sections of the Movement with which it cannot find complete agreement.

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DISCOVERING SPIRIT GUIDES

By W. A. CALL.

IN a recent issue of *LIGHT*, I read with much interest an article by Mr. W. H. Evans, on the subject of "Spirit Guides" and the confidence which is sometimes placed on their messages by some people, without proving that these communicators were genuinely those whom they professed to be.

Which leads me to put the question to anybody who can enlighten me—Is there any method by which we can discover who our Spirit Guides actually are?

I have frequently, when attending clairvoyance seances at the L.S.A., heard others in the room addressed by the Medium who gave them messages or advice which purported to come from their guides, and in several instances it was perfectly evident that this was the first occasion on which they had apparently got into contact with these communicators, and until then had known nothing at all about them.

On two occasions under the same conditions, I have personally been given messages by the Medium, telling me that the communicator was quite close to me, and claimed to be "My Spirit Guide." In one case he was a Hindu, and in another an Egyptian.

But some short time ago, at a private clairvoyant sitting, a Frenchman turned up, and this was more likely, as the first part of my life was spent in France where I was born. He claimed to be my guide, and absolutely elbowed out my usual communicators, and refused to let them talk to me at all. He told me that he had been watching over me all my life, and this was the first opportunity that he had ever had to get into personal contact with me, and therefore was going to make use of it to let me know precisely what he thought about me and my affairs in general.

AN UNCOMPLIMENTARY COMMUNICATOR

I certainly listened to what he had to say, which was decidedly in minor key, and it soon became evident to me that I could not possibly make use of his private opinion for any sort of testimonial. I will admit that the communications showed a very considerable knowledge of my family and private life, but according to him, I had done everything all wrong, though he offered no advice. I suggested that as he said he had been watching over me so long, and had such a knowledge of my actual conditions and circumstances, he would surely see that the difficulties that I had to contend with would not permit of any alteration of the existing arrangements.

Here the Medium said that the guide then became rather abusive, and was calling me rude names in French. I begged her to tell me all about it, but unfortunately she seemed unable to translate. So I had to come to the conclusion that—either my so-called guide was not quite the perfect little gentleman that I had always hoped he might be when he did come to hand; or, what seemed more likely, that the Medium was not quite up to her usual excellent form that morning, and might be getting her information through psychometry; and as far as the guide was concerned, it was not wise to treat him at all seriously.

I have always made it a point to rule out all messages and communications received at sittings which I have been unable to verify, or which did not fit in with ordinary common sense, but nevertheless there are times when messages or warnings come through which we may not be able to understand at the moment, but which should not be entirely disregarded, provided we can feel reasonably assured that they come from a genuine source, and that these guides are actually who they profess to be.

But how can we find this out? I should value any help in the matter.

One certainly gets some peculiar communications at

various sittings, for instance—in February last, I attended, for the sake of experience, one of the Friday evening circles at the L.S.A. There were about nine others present, all strangers to me, and I think to each other. Possibly it was for this reason and the lack of general harmony that the results were not at all a success, and none of us appeared to get anything through that we could really accept.

WAS IT COINCIDENCE?

The only message I personally got was that the Medium told me that every time she looked at me, I gave her a violent feeling of indigestion: "Was I suffering at all from this?" No, I said, it is the only thing that I am never troubled with.

"Well, had anybody in the room got indigestion?" Nobody owned up to this, one lady only said she was hard of hearing, but this did not count.

But the Medium again turned to me saying: "No, I am sure it is in your corner, as I get this feeling very acutely when I look at you."

This was not at all encouraging for me, as if this were the case, it was evident I should have to take some immediate steps to have my personal appearance drastically restored or overhauled.

On my return home to Monmouth, I related this apparently absurd incident to my family, and my son asked me: "At what time was your sitting on Friday?" I told him sometime between 7 and 8 o'clock. His reason for asking was that on this actual Friday, he had eaten a considerable quantity of pork pie for tea, and at about 6.30 he got a very bad attack of indigestion, which forced him to go up to his room and lie down until it passed over.

While resting, he tells me that he started thinking about me, and wondering how I was getting on with my investigations in London, and this was actually at the time that the circle was being held.

Now this may have been just mere coincidence, as at the time he was in Monmouth, over 150 miles away from the L.S.A., but I should certainly be interested to know if such a feeling could possibly be picked up by any means, from a distance so far away.

WHAT IS HYPERAESTHESIA?

THE findings of Mr. Harry Price's research group that "Marion's 'telepathic' faculty is really hyperaesthesia of some of the senses, plus the ability to read and analyse *indicia* unconsciously provided by his audience," confronts us with the question: is hyperaesthesia (a superacuity of the normal senses) as distinct from telepathy and clairvoyance as one may infer from Mr. Price's conclusions? While in Marion's case the experiments outlined present a strong argument for his faculties being on the borderline between the normal and supernormal (or psychic), generally speaking the dividing line between telepathy, clairvoyance and hyperaesthesia is extremely difficult to draw. For instance, as recorded in the *Encyclopaedia of Psychic Science* (p. 178), a subject of Boirac showed tactile hyperaesthesia by being able to read with his finger tips in complete darkness. "Being bandaged, his back turned to Boirac, but holding his elbow he could also read if Boirac passed his own finger-tips along the lines of a newspaper. It did not make the least difference if Boirac closed his eyes. Another subject could tell the time from a watch wrapped up in a handkerchief."

It would have been very interesting to know whether Marion could have found the card, which he felt previously, in the dark if, instead of himself, Mr. Harry Price or somebody else touched it while Marion was holding the experimenter's hand.—N.F.

NEGRO MAGIC IN DAHOMEY

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES OF MR. GEOFFREY GORER

By MRS. HEWAT MCKENZIE

MR. GORER visited West Africa in 1934, not in the character of an explorer, but with the intent to study negro dancers in their native environment, and his success in penetrating something of the esoteric life of the negro, which interests my readers, was furthered by his being able to journey with a negro dancer, a man of intelligence, whose acquaintance he had made in Paris, and who had many family and tribal connections in Dahomey, West Africa, giving the party an entrée often denied to Western travellers. Incidentally, the author throws light on government of the negroes under French and English protection, and reflects with a good deal of asperity on the French regime, which, according to him, tends to break up the customs and observances on which the life of the negro rests, drafts him away on foreign service and returns him dissatisfied and uprooted from all that made his life a happy one.

On the journey, which occupied several months under very difficult conditions, practically living as the natives did, Mr. Gorer met many psychic marvels. Driving very late one night in a lonely district, he and his companions heard, above the noise of the motor-car engine, a number of voices speaking urgently and incomprehensibly. Nobody said anything, but later, a negro asked if he had "heard the spirits"; "the noises were certainly not echoes," says the writer. Visiting a famous magician, they saw ritual dances performed by entranced negroes. The magician spilled millet beer on the ground and seemed to listen intently to a low rumble which apparently came from the earth on which they stood. He studied the puddle made by the beer and the pattern formed on it by the flies which settled upon it, and from this divination gave more or less correct answers to the questions submitted.

WOMEN AS MEDIUMS

In Dahomey, women are not excluded from any religious rites, and in many instances are the Mediums used in religious practice. To the writer, the negro's view of the after-life "has a great resemblance to that of such Spiritualists as Vale Owen!"

On another occasion, a diviner of fortunes, who is often a priest, took off all his metal ornaments and amulets before his operations, much as a dowser will divest himself of these before seeking for water or minerals. In this case special nuts were used, thrown from hand to hand, the results of the throws marked each time on a board. From this he arrived at the nature of the question asked, which had already been secretly whispered to a special nut by Gorer at a distance from the magician: "Speech it is held has a magical significance and the spoken word must be treated with care." The question was discerned fairly correctly, and the answer, too, was acceptable. A full consultation by this method may take three hours, and the diviner employs a woman to assist him.

The underlying idea of all negro magic is that a part of a thing is equal to the whole; a man's nail clippings or skull are the man; a wax image is like the man it is modelled upon and therefore it is the man, and anything done to the image is done to the man.

So there is in Dahomey a great business and even trade in making *grigris*, potent contacts, and images of all sorts for magical purposes, to which there is great faith attached both for self defence, for warding

off misfortune, for curing sickness, and for the destruction of enemies. These witchcraft devices can be purchased in the open market in Dahomey on certain stalls, and the ingredients offered for sale and seen by the author, who watched the natives haggling over the price as if buying a bunch of bananas, would have provided a veritable witch's brew as in Macbeth, frogs' toes, wolves' teeth, gall of goat, bats' wings, and all sorts of dried reptiles, birds' feathers, etc. "To the negro, magic is just as much an ordinary part of life as eating, they do not feel the need of constrained silence, or the hushed tones we bring to our "religion," but the most potent *grigris* are only made by the priests, and their composition is unknown except to initiates.

If a murder has taken place, the priest, failing other means, will even interrogate the corpse of the victim which by some means accuses the murderer, and revenge or expiation must follow, or the dead man will be angered and blast the family home, for though the dead are considered to have exactly the same position in the spirit-world as in this, they are more powerful in sending weal or woe on the survivors, and must be kept in a good temper by gifts placed on a little altar near the buried body. "It is this mass of all his dead," says the author, "that ties the negro to his land, his own neighbourhood is friendly to him, permeated as it is by the spirits of his ancestors, they also bless his crops and multiply his beasts, and he feels all other soils alien to him however apparently fertile they may be."

PRIESTS' SPECIAL LANGUAGE

It is interesting to learn that the priests who supervise the fetish or magic worship use a special language. Children may be dedicated to this service from very early years, and be taken away to a hut or "convent" as it is called, in which the fetish is housed, and remain there for a considerable period, being trained in the ritual dancing and in the language. To catch them young for instruction seems essential in this as in other religions. This priestly language is completely incomprehensible to any negro not initiated in this way, it may be a jargon version of a very early negro language, and may be of philological importance, but the difficulties of acquiring any knowledge of it seem insurmountable to a European, as even intellectual negroes have no acquaintance with it. The children trained in the "convents" are returned to their homes after some years, completely helpless, even having to be washed and fed, and to re-learn their own language, and ever after are subject to certain taboos as to diet and habits; against this they have certain privileges in the community. Once a year they return to the "convent" for some ordeal, and may have penances for mis-doings inflicted upon them, and they take part in all the public rites and animal sacrifices. This seems to be a regular system of training for mediumship from youth up. The ritual dances are often solemn and beautiful, using expensive and harmonious dresses and decorations, or they may be of the wildest order, macabre in the extreme in the animal masque furbishings employed.

A "convent" dedicated to fetish worship is only an ordinary hut, with a small hole in the thatch for entrance or illumination. It is, however, surrounded by a large courtyard in which the rites take place. These "convents" are situated in the "bush" usually among trees, and a traveller without a guide would have difficulty in finding them, as there are no paths leading to them. No one knows how many of these "convents" there are nor what goes on in them. The author, through the good offices of a negro prince, was able to visit one in which women were packed so closely that there was barely room to sit. They were all dressed alike in strings of cowrie shells and purple beads, were in deep trance and completely motionless,

* AFRICAN DANCES, by Geoffrey Gorer. Published by Faber and Faber. 15/- net.

all the actions of every-day life, feeding, washing, etc., had to be done for them by attendants, they were no longer themselves, but filled with the power of the fetish. They could no longer speak, unless under certain rituals used by the priest, and then the response was in the special language of the fetish. In this "convent" the women were kept in this condition for three weeks, and could not go out of the hut or see the light except for ceremonies. The wonder workers, another group, are kept in the trance state permanently, and perform no ordinary actions nor do they eat solid food, but these are few, living usually in deserted districts, and only work through the agency of a normally conscious priest; apparently these are hypnotized for life.

When the women are called out for a ritual dance they behave like blind people, and have to be guided to prevent them knocking themselves against buildings or objects, and have to be purified by the priests before returning to the hut, and helped into it. As the author watched them dance they "changed colour quite noticeably, their skin going through any tint of brown from dirty white to nearly black"; there may be nothing physiologically inexplicable in this," he says, "but the effect of half a dozen women with the colour of their skins visibly altering all the time they danced was very extraordinary." Such practices seem weird and repellent to Western minds, but this mention of skin discoloration is interesting. Is it a kind of transfiguration by 'controls' or by emotional states producing strange lights and shading on the skin, such as has been remarked upon in the recent infra red photographs taken of Mrs. Bullock's transfiguration at the International Institute for Psychical Research?

FINDING A THIEF

The Dahomeyans have a strange method of finding a thief. A man had a silver bracelet stolen from him, and Mr. Gorer was present at the proceedings used in discovering the culprit. A magician was called in, and took up his position near a main road close to where the bracelet was said to have been stolen. A live chicken was brought to him, he held it by its claws above his head so that its beak was level with his mouth, and started talking to it quickly, telling it about the theft over and over again. The chicken soon began to bleed from the mouth, a drop falling every few minutes. The magician went on talking to it for perhaps half an hour when a man suddenly arrived desperately out of breath and fell panting on the ground. Still the magician went on talking to the bird which suddenly gave a strangled squawk, at which the exhausted man confessed the theft and told where the article was concealed. The chicken was put on the ground, and started pecking about a little uncertainly. The explanation given was, that when the chicken started to bleed the thief was forced to come to the magician wherever he might be.

In Mr. Gorer's view the negro religion is a purely spiritual one, he does not acknowledge a material and causal universe, and so succumbs easily to suggestion through charms, omens, etc., and he can put himself into peculiar states with great ease, trances or fits can be induced even by the beating of a tom-tom. Spirit reacting on spirit is his belief, the idea can kill him or make him impervious to pain, and the few distractions in tribal life permit of great concentration. Certain negroes have been trained to harness their "wild talents" as the author names natural psychic powers, but to him it seems as if a miracle working mind and a logically thinking one are incompatible. We in the West, seeking to understand psychic powers intelligently know of this incompatibility, and what patience and determination are required to discern the conditions suitable for manifestation. That the many new distractions of modern life are detrimental to mediumship I am convinced, and this hindrance may by necessity bring into being training centres for mediumship which are so badly needed amongst ourselves to-day.

COMMUNICATION RIDDLE

A PARABLE FROM NATURE

By CAPT. Q. C. A. CRAUFURD

THERE are certain spiders which, having business to perform in the lower world of water, take down with themselves, in the form of a bubble, a small portion of the conditions of their world of sun and air. When this bubble, which surrounds them like an aura, is exhausted of vitality, they ascend to the upper world and refresh themselves with a new bubble.

Now these little creatures take advantage of laws which are not very obvious to ourselves.

We live in a world of larger dimensions than they do, and in this larger world the same sets of laws do not appear to hold.

We, if we want to descend into the water in a bubble of air, have to construct a solid shell like a diving bell to shut out the water altogether. We cannot take down, as it were, an aura belonging to our own world, with no definite partition.

It is said by those who converse with Feda, when she takes on the earth conditions of Mrs. Osborne Leonard, that they sometimes actually catch the whispered conversation of those belonging to Feda's world, prompting her; under the ordinary theory of temporary possession, this may be very difficult to understand.

But in the light of what these little water spiders have to teach us, it may be that Feda can, like the spider, take down a temporary garment of her spirit world, in the form of an aura, which has no sharp dividing line of material like our diving bell. Those who cannot take on earth conditions may still be able to exist within Feda's bubble of spirit-world or aura. With this simile of the spider, it is perhaps easier to understand the operation of spiritual laws.

Let us imagine that a mayfly, whose former life in the grub stage was in the world of water, wished now to converse with companions of the water world who had been left behind. It is not suited to dive into the water world itself, but one could imagine it accompanying the spider, protected within the bubble from water conditions, and prompting the spider as to what to say.

The water grubs, accustomed to the presence of the spider, might fancy they could catch fragments of direct conversation from the mayfly, existing, to them, in empty space (for they know nothing of our upper world).

These fragments would seem in some mysterious way to belong to the spider, who would seem to be acting as a sort of telephone exchange with the upper world.

I hope that this little parable from Nature may help those who are in difficulties over this Feda problem, to get things a little more into focus.

SIR THOMAS MORE

IT seems to me worth recalling (especially in this year of his canonization) the words of the Holy Martyr, Sir Thomas More, as recorded in the *Life* by Prof. Chambers, recently published.

"He spoke little before his execution. Once he asked the bystanders to pray for him in this world, and he would pray for them elsewhere . . . More assured the Winchester man who had been sustained by his prayer, that there need be no fear lest such prayer were about to cease. Maybe that More . . . chose these words to give him a second assurance of his continued prayer elsewhere." He was occupied, the account continues, "in the moments before his death with this thought of continued intercession on behalf of the friends he was leaving behind. And twenty years before, he had told how his Utopians trusted in their communion with their dead friends, though to the dull and feeble eyesight of mortal man they be invisible."

ROSA M. BARRETT.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

(The views and statements of correspondents are not necessarily endorsed by the Editor, who occasionally prints, in the interests of free discussion, letters with which he does not agree).

THE CHURCH AND SPIRITUALISM

Sir,—LIGHT has many readers among ordinary Anglican laymen, who appreciate its judicial and fair-minded attitude towards all Christian communities, and the absence from its columns of that atmosphere of sensationalism and partisanship which disfigures so much journalism to-day.

As one of these readers, I venture to suggest that Lt.-Col. David J. Smith's article in last week's issue is hardly likely to advance the cause he has at heart. It is regrettable that one who describes himself "as a member of the Anglican Church" should display such obvious ignorance of the organisation of the body to which he professes to belong. The Church of England is not a "corporation," wealthy or otherwise, and it would be interesting to know what individuals Lt.-Col. Smith has in mind when he speaks of its "directorate." What is popularly known as "Church Property" is the property, not of some huge central organisation, as your contributor appears to suppose, but is property belonging to the endowment of a multitude of individual benefices or capitular bodies.

It is true that within the last quarter of a century the establishment of a Central Board of Finance of the Church of England has provided a fund for the financing of such part of the Church's work as can not be dealt with on parochial and diocesan lines. The most casual study, however, of such a readily available book of reference as *The Official Year Book of the Church of England* will make it quite clear that neither this central fund nor the various diocesan funds are rolling in those entirely mythical riches which Lt.-Col. Smith apparently credits them.

The financial resources of a Church are, of course, no criterion one way or the other as to that Church's value to the individual or the community, and I am not concerned at the moment with discussing the respective merits or demerits of Anglicanism and Spiritualism although much might be said of several other rhetorical mis-statements in Lt.-Col. Smith's article.

What I do venture to suggest is that the best interests of Spiritualism in the widest sense are not to be served by bringing "railing accusations," based on imperfect knowledge of the facts, against a Church which contains many members who—certain episcopal pronouncements notwithstanding—believe that Anglicans and Spiritualists have much to learn from each other and that, whatever ultimate relationship between them may prove to be, neither body would be the worse for a wee spot more charity in its criticism of the shortcomings of the other.

LEONARD J. HODSON.

159 North Street, Brighton.

PSYCHIC HEALING

Sir,—Mr. Linham says, in your issue of 1st inst., that Psychic Healers do not touch the physical body of the patient. Well, I do not know if he refers to some special form of psychic healing, but this I do know: Mrs. Cleghorn who treats, I suppose, the best part of a hundred patients every week in Cambridge, most certainly touches the patients' bodies. Almost the first thing she does, when in trance, and with her eyes tightly closed, and when she is unable to sense where she is in the room, and is quite unable to tell whether the patient she is going to treat is a man, child or woman, is to catch hold of the patient's hands, or rather, his wrists, as he or she places them in her hands. After that her different movements vary largely in accordance with the patient's ailment.

Taking it as a rule, however, she runs her hands over the patient's body generally, the patient wearing all his

ordinary clothes, with perhaps the exception of his or her eyeglasses.

In a moment or two she will tell that patient all sorts of things about his inside machinery in general. In short, in say five to ten minutes at most she will turn that patient, much to his surprise, entirely inside out, better and quicker than perhaps half-a-dozen X-ray stunts could do in ten times the time and at probably a hundred times less cost, Mrs. Cleghorn's fee being *one shilling*.

Great Shelford,
Cambridge.

JAS. H. BURN-MURDOCH.

MR. PARISH'S WORK

Sir,—I was amazed to read the remarks in LIGHT of August 1st, by R. F. Linham that Psychic Healers do not touch the physical body of the patient. I have not met one yet who does not. Mr. Parish, who is doing such wonderful healing work, touches the body with great force and power. (Mrs.) H. M. GLASER.

A BENEFICIARY'S TESTIMONY

Sir,—Having read Dr. Worth's rather astonishing letter in LIGHT (July 23rd), I feel, as a beneficiary of spiritual healing, that it ought to be suggested to the writer of the letter that, before he makes such mistaken and sweeping statements, he should do a little investigating into *real* spiritual healing. This he can not have done or he would not have written as he has. Would not the medical profession consider, and rightly, anyone who has not made a proper study of medicine very foolish indeed to criticise their work in a similar manner to the way Dr. Worth has criticised spiritual healing?

E. N. PHILIPSON.

SWEDENBORG'S MESSAGE

Sir,—May I be permitted to comment on the note appearing in your issue of July 25th, with regard to Swedenborg, and in particular the assertion that "Swedenborg's messages were and are part of the Modern Spiritualist revelation." Swedenborg declared that he was called to his mission by the Lord Jesus Christ to reveal the hidden spiritual truths of the Divine Word and to give a new understanding of the love and wisdom of the Lord himself, and, also, Swedenborg says that the revelation was from the Lord Himself.

Modern Spiritualism does not claim this high inspiration, but seeks to discover for itself the knowledge of the spiritual world. Some years ago, just after the publication of his book making a similar claim to your own about Swedenborg, Sir A. Conan Doyle accepted an invitation to debate the subject with our Rev. W. H. Claxton, and Sir A. Conan Doyle was obliged to agree on the evidence of Swedenborg's own writings that he had nothing in common with Modern Spiritualism, and in fact condemns the man-made means of approach to the spiritual world. Swedenborg warns us of the dangers of this method, as indeed have several learned students of psychology, such as Sir Oliver Lodge.

In the present form the writings of Swedenborg are published in some forty volumes, they consist almost entirely of a presentation of the inner revelation of the Divine Word. Swedenborg's own experiences in the spiritual world—a very minor part of his work—being used as illustrations of the truths he was commissioned to reveal.

GEO. H. DICKS, *General Secretary,*
New Church Evidence Society.

[NOTE.—Why should Swedenborg, who was himself a man—and, as Spiritualists believe, a highly-gifted Medium—condemn "man-made approach to the spiritual world?" His mistake—and the mistake of his followers—is in supposing that the revelation he was enabled to make as the result of his communications with the occupants of the spiritual world was final and complete.—EDITOR.]

"AFTER THIRTY CENTURIES"

Sir,—Mr. Battersby appears to be annoyed with me. But judging from many letters I have received, readers of his review in LIGHT appear to want to know what is in the book.

FREDERIC H. WOOD.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

BISHOP OF LONDON'S ATTACK

Sir,—If the attacks on Spiritualism recently made by the Bishop of London were partly incited by the "Davidson Messages," and many others of a similar nature which sometimes emanate from public platforms, most of us would agree with Sir Oliver Lodge, as stated in *LIGHT* of July 25th, that the Bishop was perfectly justified on that score.

But the fact still remains that the Bishop attacked spiritual messages altogether; and although he admits that he has had no personal experience of a seance, or had a sitting of any kind, he openly states that the Mediums either consciously or unconsciously read the mind of the sitter, and are therefore preying on the feelings of the bereaved.

Most of us who have experience know that this is greatly exaggerated, and by suggesting *conscious* mind reading, he is accusing many perfectly honest Mediums of deliberate fraud, without having had any personal experience to verify this statement.

It is perfectly true that many seances and public meetings held under the name of Spiritualism are open to very severe censure and criticism. Most of us deplore this fact, but are quite unable to do anything to prevent it. But it is also perfectly true that there are many meetings and services held under the name of Christianity and religion that are by no means free from irreverence and in some cases vulgarity. I have seen certain revival services held in Nonconformist chapels in Cornwall and some parts of Wales, which really bordered on the blasphemous, and where the collection seemed to be the main object. And at many street corner meetings held in small towns, usually on a Saturday night, one can, if they care to stop to listen, hear some truly astonishing things, the motif of which is Christian Religion in some form or other.

It is certain that the Bishop and other leaders of the Anglo-Catholic Church would be highly indignant if they were put exactly on the same level as these, but this is precisely what the Bishop has done with Spiritualists as a whole, and unfairly attacked those who try to approach the subject in a reverent and earnest manner, without having any real justification for such an attack.

He further states that communication of this sort is dishonouring to the dead, and a waste of time and dangerous for the living. Most certainly it is dangerous if people approach this subject with an unbalanced mind, or in an hysterical manner, or without first getting some guidance or instruction before sitting.

But in the same way one could argue that some of our lunatic asylums have quite a good percentage of their inmates who are suffering from acute religious mania, and that on these grounds Church-going is a very dangerous practice, and should on no account be indulged in.

It is a great pity that so many people who are hostile to Spiritualism will not take the trouble to learn something about it before openly making attacks in the public press, and thus take the elementary precaution of first knowing what they are talking about.

W. A. FALL.

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE BODY

Sir,—I have been interested in the letters on "The Resurrection Body of Jesus," and think the undernoted experience may be of interest.

A few years ago, at one of our small meetings, we were discussing what happened to the body of Jesus after the Crucifixion, when a cross was shown to us.

The cross appeared on the wall of the room, and reached from the floor to the ceiling. Jesus was nailed on the cross. He appeared to be dead, and His head hung down over His breast. After a little time, the

(Continued in next column)

HAIL AND FAREWELL!

TO RICHARD DIMSDALE STOCKER

God speed, my friend, from us who remain behind,
From we who listened and loved, and knew your worth;

For thoughts so true, so lovingly forthgiven
Our thanks are poor. We send our love from earth.

How we shall miss you! We who remain behind.
But you have shown us the way to truth and—God!
Through you we saw shine forth His tenderness,
In you, His kingdom. May the way you trod,
The wealth you gave us, and the proud courage shown
Help us to fight, endure till all is past
Save Truth, which is our God, and we shall live
With Him in Heaven's harmony at last.

Hail and Farewell! God bless your upward journey
Towards the stars, to find new beauty there.

E. C. BUTLER.

(Continued from previous column).

body slowly dropped to the ground, where it lay for a few minutes, then gradually disappeared, leaving only the loin clothes, which also soon faded away.

Then a voice spoke through the Medium, who was all the time in deep trance: "You were discussing what happened to the body of Jesus after the Crucifixion, we have illustrated it to you. The body of Jesus was so highly spiritualised that it dissolved into the elements in a single night, leaving behind only the loin clothes.

7 Beech Avenue,
Glasgow.

DUNCAN CAMPBELL.

MR. JOHN BUTLER'S ARTICLE

Sir,—I should like to express my thanks to Mr. John Butler for his admirable article in *LIGHT* of August 1st, entitled "How to convince our doubting friends." It is so excellent that I wish it could be reprinted as a pamphlet and sent to every Spiritualist, and if this is done, I will gladly subscribe towards the cost of printing. Mr. Butler explains very lucidly how foolish it is to try to teach children to drive a car before they can walk, a mistake many of us are apt to make when trying to explain to our friends the teachings of Spiritualism.

Southbourne,
Bournemouth.

MARGARET VIVIAN.

THE PROBLEM OF RESPONSIBILITY

Sir,—Some of the things and actions now regarded as "correct" and so important, may seem grotesque in a few centuries time; and, whilst unable to judge, I am sufficiently optimistic to hope that the majority of intelligent seekers in this subject will not readily accept the vicious punishment version outlined under the heading "In an Icy Cage" (*LIGHT*, July 25th).

Does not the subject of Conduct hinge around this problem? Presumably, the average human so conducts his, or her, daily life on such lines as are thought, believed or known, best to contribute towards their own and others' happiness.

However, all appear to have many and varied limitations; and if, in ignorance, we err, little or much, does the Just Spirit which pervades The Universe adopt the same attitude as man-made law, where ignorance is no excuse?

Might not this self-same Spanish Inquisitor have been carrying out an irksome and abhorrent task in the mistaken belief that it was right and his bounden duty so to do; if so, would not re-adjustment and correction seem more fitting than vicious punishment?

E. P. DAMPIER (Capt.).

Light

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EDITOR GEORGE H. LETHEN
ASSISTANT EDITOR DR. NANDOR FODOR

As We See It

FUTURE OF PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

THE future of Spiritualism is a perennial subject of discussion. The future of Psychical Research is seldom heard of. It is easier to forecast the fruits of religious aspirations than of scientific pursuits. We know the phenomena that Psychical Research is intent on investigating. We hope that, in due course, they will be established as facts of science. But as to the means of establishing them, we are in a stage of growth and search.

One thing may be claimed as fundamental finding: you cannot employ the same laboratory methods to Mediums as you employ to guinea pigs or inanimate objects. Psychical Research is not a physical or chemical inquiry, but first of all a psychological one. The means of test, therefore, have to be humane; and progress, owing to the number of unknown or speculative psychological factors, will be necessarily slow.

The first requirement of successful Psychical Research is to provide perfect ease, comfort and congenial atmosphere to the Medium. A room full of strange instruments is likely to create a tension. In the ideal seance room all recording instruments will have to be built in the wall. Photography, except in special cases, will be done by infra-red and ultra-violet rays. Visible light will be reduced to the minimum and the spectrum explored at both ends to the farthest reach.

There is room for unsuspected discoveries in the ultra-violet end, particularly in the short wave band which, at this stage, photographically is unexplored territory. This is why the experimental success achieved at the International Institute for Psychical Research in solving the problem of simultaneous infra-red and ultra-violet photography is so important.

There is reason to suppose that psychic manifestations reach us through the ultra-violet end. In the Margery scale experiments, a quartz lens actually revealed an invisible cylinder on the scale with an apparent suctional effect.

Could we but prove that there are not only forces present in the seance room but also super-physical instruments through which invisible operators produce the ends they have in view we would have provided the best possible proof for the existence of an unseen world.

One cannot, really, speak of the future of Spiritualism alone. The real future, to which we are all hopefully looking forward, cannot materialise without making

(Continued at foot of next column).

SEANCE CONDITIONS

By FLORENCE HODGKIN

I AM glad to see an appeal for fresh flowers made by one of the Centres, and for this reason.

A few weeks ago, seeking confirmation of an astounding communication that had been made to me, I arranged for a sitting with a Medium who was unknown to me, and who lived in a place I had never visited.

The result was almost past belief. Three of my communicators were allowed to control and talk to me direct, quite apart from all that the Medium's own control gave to me—one item being a masterly summing up of evidence that has been given to me gradually, piece by piece, over a number of years.

I commented on the quality of the sitting, expressing my wonder that the world did not ring with the power of this Medium who is, in fact, little known. The control replied, practically word for word, as follows: "Will it surprise you, madam, to learn that you, yourself, are largely responsible? You and the Medium, both prepared yourselves for the sitting. You had but a light meal two hours ago (as the Medium did), you bathed your body and put on clean linen. You held aloof from crowds."

I said this, surely, was customary.

"On the contrary, madam, it is very rare. Women rush in from a round of shopping. Men come, gorged with food—even smelling of beer or whisky at times!

"Again, what preparation do your Societies make? Anything is good enough for Mediums! Do they provide any beauty, or seek for harmonious conditions by keeping a room sacred to a Medium?

"Are we poor spirits welcomed by fresh flowers? Flowers there are, at times, but often the water is stale and the vessels are not clean, and this is far worse than nothing.

"This room is set apart. The vibrations are not mixed. Your guide was able to meet me here, and rehearse with me, before your sitting, the difficult names he wished to get through to you. Thus we were able to give you confirmation and to satisfy you.

"To this Medium, a sitting is a sacred trust—not pre-eminently a source of income.

"Where such conditions prevail, we are able to work. The results you have profited by."

To give point to his remarks I may add that recently, at a sitting in London the Medium could not "go off." She said the room was filled with the people who came to the last Medium. She opened the window—and waited, saying: "I wish I could have a room to myself."

I admit this is a council of perfection, but here is an expression of definite guidance as to what should be done to secure a good result and to give both the Medium and the communicator a fair chance of success.

Are we not drifting, under the pressure of the demand, towards actually creating poor conditions and indifferent results?

The control I have quoted laid stress on the fact that our Societies have become commercial, and think first and foremost of their fees.

As he was so astute in matters known to me, that I could check, I am afraid he knew also what he was talking about when he made this statement.

(Continued from previous column).

Spiritualism a science. That is why co-operation between Spiritualists and Psychical Researchers is so important.

Psychical Research, based on 80 years' findings of Spiritualism and an understanding of subtle human factors which are non-existent in other branches of inquiries, is the very door which leads to a conquest of the world.

LOOKING ROUND THE WORLD

WHAT THE BISHOP SAID

IT is on record that the Bishop of London once solemnly asserted that a man was not changed by death—that his individuality was the same five minutes after death as it was five minutes before death. He did not say how he knew this. It is true enough, but obviously it is a truth which can only be made known by a communication from the man after his death. Did the Bishop ever have such a communication? Or did he draw on the experience of some Spiritualist friend? Or did he just draw a bow at a venture and declare something to be true of which he had no actual knowledge?

However that may be, the Bishop should realise that, assuming a man is the same after death as before, he will still be interested in the friends he has left behind on earth, and be anxious to speak to them.

SIR OLIVER LODGE'S COMMENT

Writing in *Tit-Bits* (August 3rd), Sir Oliver Lodge draws the attention of the Bishop to this probability:

"Let us try," he writes, "to put ourselves in the place of those who have recently gone over, having (let us say) left behind someone we love, or being unable to finish some piece of work to which we had set our hands. Surely in such a case we should strive to get a message across the gulf, and to utilize any and every means available to get messages through."

"There are not wanting students who have satisfied themselves that a power of communication really does exist," Sir Oliver continues, "and the possibility ought to make us wary of condemning the attempt. Otherwise the people who have departed, and who have much the same feelings as they had when here, will be disappointed, and unable to send the messages they wish."

WHY IT IS DISHONOURING

It would be interesting to know what the Bishop has to say to this; and how, if he still believes that a man is unchanged by death, he can justify the assertion that it is "dishonouring" to the dead to provide opportunities for the reception of their messages and for handing them on to the people for whom they are intended.

If the Bishop agreed with the Old Testament sceptic who said: "The dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward" (Ecc., ix., 5), there would be some logical justification for his attitude; but, as a proclaimed believer in conscious survival (however his belief has been reached) he must surely see that his attitude is absurd.

LADY DOYLE'S ASSURANCE

In a letter to the *Evening Star* (Ipswich, July 25th), Lady Conan Doyle hits out at a correspondent who, in a letter to the editor, inferred that the psychic extra of Sir Arthur published in *Thy Kingdom Come*, had not been passed by the late author. She says:

"In actual fact, the photograph, which the sitter gave to me as my property after it was taken, was perfectly genuine, and has since been corroborated by my husband in an unmistakable way."

CAPT. KIDD'S TAVERN

The fate of another homeless ghost is bewailed in *The People* (July 28th) in reporting that Turk's Head, one of the most famous hostleries on the Thames-side, where 400 years ago Capt. Kidd revelled, is to be pulled down. We dwell on the problem of homeless ghosts in a previous issue of *LIGHT*, and it occurs to us now that the idea of rendering an earth-bound ghost homeless may be quite futile. In the mental world, in which an earth-bound spirit lives, the old tavern will continue and, as we may infer from psychometric and other visions, may remain just as, or perhaps more, substantial to the ghost than the earthly abode.

A CARAVAN MISSION

RIDING on horseback from village to village, John Wesley carried the message of Methodism throughout England. Mrs. St. Clair Stobart has visions of a Spiritualist mission on similar lines, but with the motor-car and caravan in place of the horse as a means of travel.

To test the practicability of her vision, she has completed arrangements to make a caravan-visit towards the end of this month to two villages in Leicestershire where the Vicars are known to be friendly. She will be accompanied by the Rev. Maurice Elliott, Vicar of St. Peter's, Cricklewood, who is also Hon. Secretary of the "Order of the Preparation for the Communion of Souls," and both will proclaim the message of Spiritualism as they see it—Mr. Elliott as a clergyman who is also a Spiritualist and Mrs. Stobart as a Spiritualist who is anxious that the facts and implications of Spiritualism should be recognised by the Church.

Should this experiment be successful, a larger scheme for a caravan mission is to be prepared.

HOUDINI MESSAGES

From Hollywood comes the news of a seance arranged for Mrs. Houdini and twelve of her magician friends, at which, much to Mrs. Houdini's disappointment, her husband's spirit failed to manifest. This, no doubt, will be exploited by the American Press as a new proof of the futility of a belief in survival. Possibly, the story will also be revived that Houdini has never sent through from the dead the test message agreed upon between him and his wife. That story is a wilful falsification, in view of Mrs. Houdini's testimony to the contrary.

How the Houdini test message came through and how it was accepted, is a matter of psychic history. It is fully told in Mr. Francis R. Fast's booklet, *The Houdini Messages*. From this we also learn of Mrs. Houdini's hunger for further communications which, for some reason, have not been vouchsafed to her. The report from Hollywood apparently refers to a new attempt to get in touch with Houdini.

The question is not so much why it should fail, but why it should succeed. Twelve magicians, probably all incredulous and publicity-mongering, can hardly provide the right atmosphere, not for the discarnate but for the Medium. The difficulties in sending a message through unadulterated from the other side are so great, at least, that a case should never be made of a failure but only of a success. How many professional magicians (who somehow always fancy Mediums as their rivals) are broad-minded enough to make this allowance!

CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?

Writing on "Science and the Psychical" in *The Listener* (July 31st), A. S. Russell makes a curious reference to the levitation of D. D. Home reported by Lord Adare and vouched for by others who witnessed it.

"If," he writes, "one agrees that D. D. Home's famous exploit of flying out by one window and in by a widely separated one, three storeys up from the ground, never occurred objectively, even as a trick, it was a wonderful thing to do as an effort in mass suggestion on the few people in the room who believed they witnessed it. That Home's experiment can be imitated by impressing the necessary statements on a few suggestible witnesses without anybody having to fly at all, I know as a fact."

We have read many assertions that mass suggestion might account for such incidents, but we have no recollection of anyone having gone so far as this writer. Can anyone really believe that Lord Adare and his friends were the victims of "mass suggestion?" It may be hoped that Mr. Russell will be given an opportunity of demonstrating the illusion.

VICAR ANSWERS BISHOP

OF ANSWERED ALLEGATIONS AND CRITICISMS

IT would appear that the Bishops of the Church of England are getting seriously perturbed about the spread of Spiritualism amongst their diocesan flocks.

Following closely on the attack by the Bishop of London, comes an almost similar attack by the Bishop of Winchester (Dr. Garbett). All the old criticisms and allegations are repeated, as if they were new and had never been answered. As summarised by the *Daily Telegraph*, the chief points of the attack (which originally appeared in the *Winchester Diocesan Chronicle*) are as follow:

Dr. Garbett writes that his own impression is that the adherents of Spiritualism are fewer and less active to-day than they were immediately after the war.

He criticises particularly Christians who believe that Spiritualistic phenomena confirm the teaching of Revelation and those who believe Spiritualism is a religion giving them help and knowledge they could not find elsewhere. Among his chief points are:

The history of spiritualistic materialisation is largely a story of the exposure of false claims.

The communications received, orally or in writing, when they are not due to fraud, can often be accounted for by the working of the unconscious mind or by telepathy.

They are usually pious and sentimental platitudes, sometimes interspersed with cheap jokes.

Intellectually, morally, and spiritually they are usually on a lower plane than the utterances of any good and intelligent man who is still living.

When ascribed to well-known departed, they are so much below their living conversation that, if anything, they show increasing senility after death, and not the complete survival of the personality as taught by the Christian faith.

The Bishop concludes that it is dangerous to the mental and spiritual health of the ordinary person to dabble in Spiritualism.

REV. C. L. TWEEDALE'S ANSWER

All these criticisms and allegations have been answered so often that Spiritualists may be pardoned for becoming tired of them. We content ourselves therefore with reproducing the following trenchant comments on earlier attacks from the pen of a Vicar of the Church to which the Bishop of Winchester belongs—namely the Rev. C. L. Tweedale, Vicar of Weston, Yorkshire. It is taken from Mr. Tweedale's booklet, *Present Day Spirit Phenomena and the Churches* (48 pages, 3½d. or post free from the author 4d.) which has gone through thirty-seven editions, and which should be circulated widely wherever attacks on Spiritualism are made by Churchmen. Societies and individuals can obtain it through the L.S.A. Publications, 16 Queensberry Place, London, S.W.7:—

"The utter fatuity of those leaders in the Christian Churches who talk of 'coincidences,' 'telepathy,' 'hypnotism,' 'subconscious self,' 'subjective hallucinations,' 'extended human powers,' and 'cosmic mind' as the explanations of modern psychic experiences, and at the same time fail to see that these explanations, if true, would not merely explain away their Christianity, but also all revealed religion, and shatter both to bits, is almost beyond belief. One expects this sort of thing from professed Atheists, Materialists and Agnostics, but that Christians should be guilty of it—!!!

"It is a humiliating spectacle to see such persons, in their anxiety to discredit modern psychic phenomena, eagerly quoting against them the opinions of notorious Materialists, Agnostics and modern Sadducees, with their anti-spiritual theories. What an unholy alliance! To paraphrase the words of the prophet: 'A wonderful

and horrible thing is committed in the land. Men speak falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means' (Jer. v. 30, 31). These strange Christians seem incapable of perceiving that if the statements of these modern infidels could be maintained they would sweep away the foundations of their Christianity.

"It is objected that returning Spirits do not add greatly to our knowledge of the nature of the future life, or reveal a higher moral code. Neither did returning Spirits in Bible times. Samuel, Moses and Elias, tell us nothing about that future life when they return. Christ himself, during the great forty days, told us nothing at all, which is recorded, about that life, and even later, when he appears to John, in Patmos, very little is told of the details of the life in the Spirit-world.

"Again, it is said that information given to prove identity often consists of trivial personal details, too commonplace to be of discarnate spiritual origin, and therefore non-evidential. What do objectors demand? Some elaborate description of a condition, or of experiences, which we of earth have no means of verifying, and which they would be the first to declare non-evidential? Or do they demand (as I have heard them do) that we should be told what sort of men live on Mars, or be given the true inwardness of Einstein's theory of Relativity? Does it ever occur to these wiseacres to ask why the Angels that appeared to Jesus, or to St. John in Patmos, did not give a full explanation of the laws of gravitation or chemical affinity? Such shallow criticism shows ignorance and inexperience, a lack of any real understanding of the subject, or of any true acquaintance with its extensive literature.

"The object aimed at by returning spirits is not primarily to give details of the future life, which we in our present state have no means of verifying, to do away with the necessity of human investigation and research, or to preach a higher morality than that already given to the world, but rather to give evidence which proves human survival and the existence of the Spirit-world, and to impart the consolation and encouragement which this knowledge affords."

THE BISHOP'S BAN

(IN LIGHTER VEIN)

The Bishop said, "By Hooks or Crookes,
I'll scotch this Spiritism;
I will not have, gadzooks, these spooks
Upset my scepticism.

"My flocks will have some sprightly shocks
If found at witches' revels;
I'll give them socks—Socratic knocks—
Communing with these devils.

"No talking with the dead, I've said,
(I'll dash their tilted tables).
Oliver 'Stellar' life like Stead
(I'll fash their fancied fables)."

The Bishop's ban acts as a fan,
Inflames F. Sharp, Archdeacon,
A venerable man, who can
Show "still more Light" as beacon.

The Rural Dean, when he was seen,
Told members of the "Order,"
How busy the blessed B. had been,
That none should cross the Border.

He said he'd heard there was a bird,
Its head in sand would bury;
This bird, whose fears were so absurd,
Was like the Clergy—very.

God grant the morn will soon be born,
The morn of Life Eternal;
The veil withdrawn, that truth may dawn,
The truth of Light Supernal.

H.H.

METHODISTS AND SPIRITUALISM

RECENTLY, the Rev. W. J. Tunbridge criticised Spiritualism in the course of a sermon preached at Sackville Road Methodist Church, Bexhill. Commenting on this, "a Methodist and a Christian Spiritualist" writes to the *Bexhill Observer* suggesting that the Rev. C. Drayton Thomas, "a well-known Spiritualist leader and a Methodist minister," be invited to preach in the same church and to "explain the truth as believed in by thousands of devout followers of Jesus Christ who are convinced Spiritualists."

"The pulpit has often been called a 'coward's castle,'" says this correspondent, "let us hope the Bexhill Methodists will not let theirs become one."

MR. DENNIS DOYLE'S RETORT

In the same issue of the *Bexhill Observer* (27th July) there appears the following letter from Mr. Dennis P. S. Conan Doyle:

"Sir,—My attention has been drawn to a report in your columns of an address on Spiritualism by the Rev. W. J. Tunbridge, in which he refers to my father, the late Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

"He said 'Because a man was a writer of magnificent detective stories, it did not necessarily make him a great guide concerning the other world.' Mr. Tunbridge would do well to realise that the brilliant brain which created 'Sherlock Holmes' was brought to bear upon the subject of 'Life after Death' for nearly 50 years. During this time my father made most exhaustive investigations and penetrating researches into this very comprehensive subject. His powers of scientific deduction and analysis were of inestimable value to him in distinguishing between and separating the genuine from the false.

"Mr. Tunbridge makes a very grave mistake in stating that Spiritualism 'did not lay stress on fellowship with God and there was no dignified place to give to our glorious Lord.' In actual fact, nothing could be further from the truth than this assertion. The possession of psychic knowledge does not tend to diminish one's conscious desire for fellowship with God or one's love and reverence for Jesus Christ. On the contrary, it directly enhances them, for one's deep gratitude for the inestimable comfort of psychic knowledge serves to strengthen one's fellowship with the Father of All, and it is this knowledge which renders intelligible the references of Christ to a future existence.

"The life and teachings of Christ demonstrate a spiritual life, which psychic knowledge endorses. Spiritualism provides irrefutable proof of individual survival, which in turn substantiates the Biblical proof of the survival of Christ.

"Descriptions as to His exquisite tenderness and Divine Love, received from those highly evolved souls who have been so infinitely blessed as to see Christ in the Hereafter, transcend in beauty anything that I have ever heard."

BISHOP AND SPIRITUALISTS

Sir,—The Bishop of Winchester probably has never been in communion with any of his departed relatives as has been the writer. One such experience and I feel sure he would not say it is all a fraud.

No reasonable being would condemn the Christian Churches because many of its clergy have been unfrocked, and many have seen the inside of a prison and served terms of imprisonment. I resided in the U.S.A. for six years, and on one occasion was imposed upon by a confidence trickster who, as it turned out, was a clergyman in charge of a parish. Do I therefore say all clergymen are "con" men? No, but I say that the truths of Spiritualism will out in the long run whoever may try to obscure them.

The Rectory,
Mountfield.

W. H. MILLIGAN.

SIR OLIVER LODGE

A SUMMARISED BIOGRAPHY

THE following "Mirrograph" of Sir Oliver Lodge, by Gordon Griffiths, appears in the *Daily Mirror* of 2nd August:

"Goes in for things like the speed of ions; the phenomena of electrolysis; scientific Spiritualism; makes ordinary men reel!"

"Oliver Joseph Lodge, Knight, F.R.S., D.Sc. (London); Hon. D.Sc. (eight universities); LL.D. (four); Hon. M.A. (Birmingham).

"Member of umpteen scientific organisations; author of a young library.

"Often dances at B.M.A. Receptions; sprints on the Downs; plays tennis. He is eighty-six years young.

"Fully equipped gym. at home, where Sir Oliver keeps fit. His secret.

"Son of a Staffordshire potter. Looks like a Biblical patriarch.

"Comes to London in morning coat and spats; tweeds in Wiltshire.

"In his orderly library books line the four walls, filing cabinets, three desks and a huge map-globe.

"Eyes blue and kindly; slender figure; smokes cigarettes in a long black holder.

"Never flustered; likes travelling in comfort.

"Convinced Spiritualist—and that Raymond is not 'dead.'

"Enjoys telling his friends that 'some people think he is off his chump'—his words—not mine! And how!"

SUMMER GHOSTS

A seasonal, if not seasoned story comes from America about an Illinois farmer who has been annoyed by a ghost prowling round his farmyard in a snappy "boater." *The Star* (July 27th) puts it into the following jingle:—

We've always the seasonal quota
Of tales that are reckoned a draw,
But now comes a ghost in a "boater"—
This certainly is the last straw!

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DIARY OF EVENTS

THE AUTUMN SESSION. Particulars of Opening Meeting will be announced shortly.

NEW SYLLABUS IN COURSE OF PREPARATION.

DAILY ACTIVITIES AS USUAL.

Private sittings are arranged daily with approved Mediums, including Mrs. Abbott, Miss Naomi Bacon, Miss Jacqueline, Mrs. Livingstone, Mrs. Mason, Ruth Vaughan, Mrs. Clifton Allen, Mrs. Brittain, Miss Frances Campbell, Miss Lily Thomas.

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Special Assistance to Enquirers: Tuesdays, 3.30-5.30 p.m., Vice-Admiral Armstrong; Fridays, 3-6 p.m., Mr. Stanley de Brath; Every day, 6-10 p.m., Mr. W. H. Evans.

L.S.A. AND QUEST CLUB NOTES

THE NEW SESSION

The Autumn Session will commence early in October, and the new Syllabus will be despatched to members at the beginning of September. This Session should prove to be an extremely interesting one as arrangements have been made for a series of lectures by well-known people both at Queensberry Place and at the Caxton Hall.

Social activities will also have an important place and announcements regarding these will be made later.

It is proposed to devote one evening during this Session to a discussion. A number of representative people have been invited to say a few words as to what their attitude would be, assuming the demonstrated evidence for survival to be true. We invite candour and these speakers will be at liberty to say what they think.

MRS. ABBOTT'S MEDIUMSHIP

It is satisfactory to learn, as we are continually doing, that the mediumship of Mrs. Abbott brings not only comfort and help to her many sitters, but that undoubted evidence of communication from loved ones on the other side is definitely received. Quite recently one of our new members had a first sitting with Mrs. Abbott. He writes that the sitting was extremely satisfactory to him. He received proof of the presence of his wife—the conversation being taken up by many intimacies and reminiscences, besides information being given concerning herself.

This member considers that the sitting was a highly satisfactory one from another point of view, as it confirmed all the essentials previously communicated to him through another Medium. He considers that he has, as he puts it, "solid ground" to stand upon.

IMPORTANCE OF TRIVIALITIES

Nothing but trivial facts will ever prove either supernatural knowledge or personal identity, and these must be shown in order to prove the spiritualistic theory. Just let any man sit down and ask himself what he would select to prove his identity to a friend. He would soon find himself thinking of some practical joke, a broken jack-knife and a wart, a cow kicking over a bucket of milk, and other such incidents. He can do nothing else, if he is rational. Triviality is absolutely necessary to prove the case.—Dr. J. H. Hyslop in *Psychical Research and Survival*.

HOW NEAR IS THE INVISIBLE?

ONE would not think that travelling by aeroplane would furnish material for ruminating on the occult side of things; yet I have found it so.

Sitting in the car at the window, looking at the propeller obliquely, a few yards behind, one notices that it revolves so rapidly that it totally disappears from view, that there is no movement in the air to reveal that it is there, and that there is no interruption of the objects beyond, which there would be if the propeller were at rest. For the plane on which my physical vision penetrates, it is not there, yet it can slow down its vibrations and become visible.

When the aeroplane is about to descend, the propeller slows down, and the atmosphere appears disturbed; although the propeller is not yet visible, one can see, by its effects that it is there. When it finally stops, one can see the propeller, and how it blocks out certain objects behind it.

Here is something parallel to the super-sensible world, corroborating the statement of the Mystic and Spiritualist that behind the visible phenomenal world there is another world with inhabitants, all upon a more rapid scale of vibration, because of which they are invisible to our material vision: that behind and within man's physical body there is another body constituted on such a rapid scale of vibration as to be invisible to ordinary material vision, and yet both this invisible world and body powerfully affect and control our visible world and body, much as the invisible propeller does the aeroplane.

This kind of travelling affords ample time and opportunity for studying the phenomena of light and its puzzling problems; some of which appear incapable of solution. Perhaps the most extraordinary was when, above the clouds, one saw reflected on the white clouds below an image of the aeroplane with a rainbow halo *around the reflected image*; yet none around the aeroplane. The sun casting a shadow one is familiar with, but I never heard of it forming a halo around the shadow.

Again, once when high above a rainbow, we saw on looking down that it was not vertical, but lay obliquely in the atmosphere—not as an arc—but as a circle, only a small piece of the lower circle was lost to sight under the aeroplane.

From below I have always found the rainbow was a vertical arc; from above it was quite different.

J. W. MACDONALD.

A NURSE'S TESTIMONY

There was an interesting letter in the *Sunday Referee* (July 28th) from a nurse who has attended many deathbeds and yet doubted survival. Then came this experience:

"We had just lost our four-year-old and, returned from the funeral, I was sitting longing *desperately* to see her again, just to know that my baby was not unhappy. I did not see her. If I had I should presently have put it down to sick fancy, induced by weeks of watching. But her little pal, her matter-of-fact six-year-old sister, playing in the room near me, did, and was somewhat scornfully incredulous that I should be blind.

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Clairvoyante: Mrs. Stella Hughes.

Sun., August 18th. Speaker: Mr. H. ERNEST HUNT.
Clairvoyante: Mrs. Helen Spiers.

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SUNDAY, AUGUST 11th.

11 a.m.—Mr. T. W. ELLA.
6.30 p.m.—MOON TRAIL.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 14th, at 7.30 p.m.
Mrs. MAUDE BATEMAN, Clairvoyance.

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SUNDAY, AUGUST 11th, 1935.

11 a.m.—Mr. C. GLOVER BOTHAM.

Clairvoyante: Mrs. Stella Hughes.

6.30 p.m.—Mrs. St. CLAIR STOBART.

Clairvoyant: Mr. Thomas Wyatt.

Sunday, August 18th, at 11 a.m. ...

Clairvoyant: Mr. R. E. Cockersell.

Sunday, August 18th, at 6.30 p.m. ...

Clairvoyant: Mr. Horace Leaf.

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Wednesdays, 12.30 p.m.

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Monday, August 12th—Speaker: Mr. H. W. Muirson Blake.

Clairvoyante: Mrs. Fillmore.

Wednesday, August 14th—Speaker: Mr. Horace Leaf.

Clairvoyante: Mr. Horace Leaf.

Monday.

WEEKDAY ACTIVITIES

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

2.30—Mrs. Bird's Ladies' Healing Circle. For appointments write to
Mrs. Moysey (Hon. Secretary). (Suspended during August, recom-
mence September 2nd).

2.30—4 p.m.—Mrs. St. Clair Stobart welcomes enquirers.

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

6 p.m.—Mrs. Bird's Ladies' Healing Circle. For appointments write
to Miss Robertson (Hon. Secretary). (Suspended during August,
recommence September 2nd).

Tuesday. Mrs. Livingstone, by appointment.

2.30—4.30 p.m.—Mrs. Matson, the "Landscape" Medium, by appoint-
ment.

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

2.30—4 p.m.—Mrs. St. Clair Stobart welcomes enquirers.

Thursday. Miss Lily Thomas, by appointment.

7 p.m.—Mrs. Bird's Mixed Healing Circle. For appointments write
to Miss Mitchell (Hon. Secretary). (Suspended during August,
recommence September 5th).

Friday. 2.30—4 p.m.—Mrs. St. Clair Stobart welcomes enquirers.

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Members, 3s.; Non-Members, 4s.

Aug. 14th. 2.30 p.m. Mrs. Matson.

6.30 Mrs. Livingstone.

Aug. 21st. 2.30 p.m. Mr. Glover Botham.

6.30 Mrs. Livingstone.

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AMONG THE HILLS

FEELING OF LOSS OF IDENTITY INDUCED BY THE SILENCE

SHORTLY after reading Mr. H. F. Prevost Battersby's exceedingly interesting review of Sir Francis Younghusband's *Modern Mystics* (LIGHT, July 4th), I chanced to come across, in Mr. T. Earle Welby's *One Man's India* (Lovat Dickson, Ltd., 6/-, 1933) a very interesting note on the author's own personal experience of the effect of the Himalayas in producing just such mystical effect as described so well in *Modern Mystics*.

It is to me the more interesting in that the writer is in no way a mystic himself, nor did he set out to encourage or induce these experiences in any way, as will be seen from his attempt to put into words his actual sensations at the time.

I should say that Mr. Welby was born in the North Western part of India among "the Hills." "His father," he says, "the son of an Anglican bishop, was himself an agnostic with a profound feeling for the poetry and pathos of Christianity, and his mother, brought up in another Church, had come to occupy much the same position," and he was an only child. "This lest," he says, "I should suggest that my parents belonged to that deplorable class of Occidentals whose adulation of the Orient is the greatest modern misfortune the Orient has experienced, I hasten to say that they were neither Theosophists before the event, nor any other kind of raveners after the Wisdom of the East.

"To my father," he continues, "with his wise dislike of confusion, it seemed well that I should live mentally in the East until I could truly live mentally in the West. And so, until I was nearly six, I was not allowed to speak a sentence of English even to my parents. So, when I learned to read, shortly after I was four, it was not in English but in an Indian language, and by my father's wise choice, in an archaic sacred script and in six or seven months I had more and longer passages by heart than years later I could ever acquire out of compulsory Virgil, but this gradually gave place to English after I was six."

CONTACT WITH THE HINDU MIND

In maturer years, after he had returned to India, he endeavoured to re-open this avenue of study, even though only in translation, yet in the absence of any attraction to him, in either Hindi or Undu literature, he gave it up.

But if he fell away from the study of old Hindu poetry, he by no means lost contact with the Hindu mind, but was drawn increasingly into Hinduism of a sort, which was, and is, popular in Northern India.

When he came home to England to be educated, he had ample opportunity of comparing the primitive Hinduism as practised among those whom he had known so intimately in his childhood days in India, with the grandiose structure erected by, or for, the Western mind, and so he concludes that as his was a mind "which became aware of the world only as it became aware of India, and was, in its small way, from almost the first, privy to part of Hindu India's secret, he was not likely to be either sceptical on the one hand, or to be duped on mature experience of India on the other."

This rather brief and imperfect account of his early training and surroundings will help, perhaps, to amplify his contact with the strange and subtle influence of the "Hills" which he writes of as follows:

"It may be that my contact from infancy with Hinduism should have developed a more mystical turn of mind, and I do not think I was an exceptionally unpromising lump to be leavened; at any rate, in later life, in our own literature, Vaughan, and Trahearn, and

Blake have meant a great deal to me, and I have had my time of curiosity about the two great Spanish mystic poets whom I can read only in translation. But the only mystical experience I can recall out of childhood may be one which would have befallen me anywhere, and certainly it was not directly consequent on anything I had learned from my conscious or unconscious India teachers.

"I had it first in what the English in India amusingly call 'the Hills,' referring to the mightiest mountain system in the world. I had it as a child several times; and I had it once, I think less intensely, in maturity, again in the Himalayas. It was the experience, as nearly as I can describe it, of loss of identity, and the first time I had it it ended with me in a frenzy of terror crying out my own name over and over again, without then knowing why, as I now suppose, in an instinctive assertion of personality. I conjecture the experiences to have been always induced by the audible silence so strangely to be found at times among those vast mountains. One moment one is walking along slopes and through woods full of the murmurs of bird and animal life, the next moment one is in some inexplicably silent fold in the hills with the effect, at least in my own mature experience, of first finding one's sense of personality extremely sharpened, and then of feeling the almost physical draining out of personality."

ADEPTS AND THE MOUNTAINS

"Perhaps it was for this as well as for the orthodox reasons that so many of the contemplatives of Hindu India chose or aspired to the mountains, though indeed the genuine adepts among them seem capable of abstraction from self almost anywhere.

"Recalling the several childish and the one mature experience, I find myself wondering now, perhaps foolishly, what would have happened if the instinct of self-assertion had not operated. Were I the right sort of writer about India there would be no hesitation in answering that, as child or young man, I should have been flooded with wisdom; but in maturity I have seen enough of the wisdom which pours itself into the emptied cup to set no great store by it."

In his later years, Mr. Welby, as the Editor of a leading Indian paper, had more opportunities of contacting the "native" feeling on the forthcoming changes embodied in the Reforms Bill and all its long antecedent history, than falls to the lot of but a few people. The book can be recommended as an excellent corrective to the often gravely distorted ideas held by many whose only contact with India is what can be attempted from this country, separated as it is by a distance which must affect clear vision.

G. KENYON ROGERS.

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RIDER

THOUGHT

IN spite of the spate of books on the subject of psychology which have been poured out from the press in recent times, very few of the writers seem to have realised the fact that Thought, the main-spring of all human action and endeavour, is a common and fundamental operation of the entire human race.

To grasp the significance of this simple and obvious fact, not only solves a host of problems which have perplexed many students of psychology, but also creates new ones and opens out vast domains of hitherto unexplored territory of mental science and psychical research. Thought is cosmopolitan, international, universal. It is the one chain which links the whole of the human race into one bond of relationship with our fellow man and with a common Creator.

Its implications are tremendous. The Brotherhood of Man, and the Fatherhood of all conscious life is surely implied here if for no other reason. It follows also that there is a common origin and destiny; and, however dimly we see now the purpose of the awful maze, tangle and muddle of our existence, depend upon it that, on these grounds alone, we may be sure of the ultimate, and to us, incomprehensible scheme, working according to plan.

Thought is the same all the world over and involves the same mental processes. Identically the same Thought is expressed by a Zulu donning his skins about him as by anyone putting on their clothes. It is precisely the same Thought which prompts people to wash themselves whether they be black or white, bond or free. The question of language or dialect does not enter into the matter at all, and solves at once the problem of the ignorant person who asks: "Can God understand all languages?" It is the complete answer to the puzzled in our seance rooms of how foreign guides can make themselves understood.

It is rather late in the day to say tritely that

(Continued in next column)

(Continued from previous column).

"thoughts are things," but we can go a step farther and ask: "Are thoughts ever lost?" "Are our thoughts our own?" "Can thought be super-imposed upon our own?" "What is Inspiration?" The answer to these questions will take us into psychological deep waters, but they are studiously avoided by the modern apostles of psychology. ALFRED E. STOTE.

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