

# Light

on

## Spiritualism and Psychical Research

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PRICE TWOPENCE

### CHALLENGE TO MODERN THOUGHT AND ACTION

#### OBJECTIONS TO SPIRITUALISM ANSWERED

*Miss Lind-af-Hageby, President of the London Spiritualist Alliance, lectured at Caxton Hall, Westminster, on November 7th, on "The Challenge to Modern Thought and Action by the Evidence for Survival." The first portion of the lecture was published in LIGHT last week. The second part is given below.*

*The lecture is to be the basis of a discussion at Caxton Hall to-night (Thursday, December 5th), in which a number of non-Spiritualists will take part. These include Prof. A. M. Low, Mr. Harold Speed, Mr. C. E. M. Joad, Mr. James Laver, Mr. Arnold Lunn, and Mr. Oscar Parkes. Miss Nancy Price will recite and Miss Lind will preside.*

By MISS LIND-AF-HAGEBY

LET us devote a few moments to the objections to Spiritualism. First of all, we are told that it is forbidden in the Bible—in other words, the dead sleep and cannot talk. Recently, the Bishop of London has again been warning Christians not to have anything to do with Spiritualism. Some of us have replied to him, pointing out that the Bible is brimful of Spiritualism, both in the Old Testament and the New, that the Christian religion is simply founded and based on voices, visions, and so-called miracles and strange utterances.

Then we are told that the phenomena are based on nothing but fraud and self-deception. That argument is so futile in view of the evidence that has been piled up that it is scarcely worth a reply.

We are also told that phenomena do occur, but they are of Satanic origin. It is Satan and his demoniacal hosts that are busy producing these phenomena. That has been repeated by a good many Roman Catholic opponents. It would be very strange if the ordinary well-behaved, kind-hearted, law-abiding citizen should avoid devils at all times except when he seeks to find out the truth about Survival and the after-life. The idea is, of course, nonsensical.

Messages are said to be trivial. Why do such silly and unimportant things come through at seances? The answer is that most of us are trivial, or if not always trivial, we have our trivial moments. Further, some trivial thing, a child's toy, a red handkerchief put into a drawer on a certain day, may make most excellent evidence if it is mentioned at the right time and in the right connection.

If your friends were to come back and talk to you about astronomical secrets or some great Einstein-like

principle of relativity, or some philosophical difference between two great systems, you might reject that evidence as not being likely to come from your friends.

We are told that we "drag down spirits." That talk is exceedingly foolish. You cannot drag down any spirit. The suggestion arises from the idea that they are "up there" and we are "down here," and that we put on them some sort of chain to pull them down. It is a matter of placing ourselves in a state of consciousness in which we are aware of them and they of us. It is a matter of those special gifts and powers by which we can be aware of them.

Then we are told that Spiritualism leads to insanity. To that we have replied many times that Spiritualism has saved hundreds and thousands from insanity who would not have been able to bear the sorrows and trials to which they have been exposed. It may be that in some cases people have become unbalanced over Spiritualism. But is there any subject over which some people will not become unbalanced and take exaggerated views? Is there any subject you can mention which has not led someone to insanity—finance, for instance, politics and religion?

#### THEOSOPHICAL CRITICISM

There is also the Theosophical criticism, that we do not communicate with spirits, but with a kind of "shell," the cast-off astral shell. That statement was very common a good many years ago, but I am surprised to find that it is still used in Theosophical quarters. I came across it in May of last year in a Theosophical review of a Spiritualist book and I read: "If Miss ——— would wisely divert her attention to the study of *true* Spiritualism and occultism, as taught by ancient Eastern sages and popularised in our day by Madame Blavatsky, she would see why the phenomena of the seances should be shunned as morally and spiritually unclean, besides being insulting to human intelligence."

It is astonishing that that kind of criticism can still be printed in a responsible Theosophical journal. My friend, A. P. Sinnett, who was a great Theosophist and one of the founders of the Theosophical Society, took an entirely different view. He published a book, *In the Next World*, which recorded the experiences of people who had passed over, in a very interesting way. Again and again he said that the greatest desire of his life was that Spiritualism and Theosophy should come to understand one another and cease to express contempt or antagonism for one another. In his book, *Incidents*



in the *Life of Madame Blavatsky*, Sinnett recorded, as others have done, the mediumistic phenomena associated with Madame Blavatsky.

If Spiritualism deals with peculiar subjects and puts forward peculiar theories, I can assure you that Theosophy does the same. It is a matter of terminology. Theosophy uses Eastern terms and Sanscrit words where Spiritualism uses Western terms and European words. The vast literature of Theosophy deals with subjects which, from the ordinary man's point of view, are just as difficult to comprehend as anything advanced by Spiritualism.

Whether it is so much more "rational" to say that great teaching comes from those whom the Theosophists call "masters," than to say that it comes from angelic messengers, from spirits who take an interest in our evolution and in our fate, I really do not know.

There is a love of being imprisoned in words, of living within walled-in rooms, afraid to look over the wall and see what is happening on the other side, or to express one's own experiences and observations in the terms of others who have used a different terminology.

There has also been expressed hostility to Spiritualism on the part of the Swedenborgian Society. Yet what was the life of Emanuel Swedenborg but a spiritualistic life—a long record of the exercise of psychical faculties!

I come to the legal position of Spiritualism. Spiritualism and Mediums are still judged under the Witchcraft Act of 1735 and the Vagrancy Act of 1824. Prosecutions of Mediums are undertaken because mediumship and all psychic faculties are deemed to be not genuine. The law does not recognise them; they are all regarded as humbug, as fraud. During the General Election another effort was made to secure the support of Parliamentary candidates for a Bill to do away with this injustice and absurdity. Fortune-telling is forbidden except when it is done by politicians, parliamentarians, and doctors, and it is specially allowed when it is done by scientists. Sir James Jeans, speaking at the Royal Institution a few days ago, said that the moon would break into pieces, at first into two pieces, then four, then eight, and eventually into countless particles which would resemble Saturn's rings, and the earth would then have continuous moonlight, but instead of the light being reflected from the moon it would be reflected from the particles. This will be charming for lovers and others

who like moonlight, and there will also be more opportunity for the moon to exercise its baneful influence on those who are likely to be moonstruck, but I ask you if Sir James Jeans ought not to be prosecuted for this bad piece of fortune-telling, which affects us all?

What is the principal purpose and object of Spiritualism? To destroy Materialism, which has made men blind, to shed new light on religion, to explain the origin and nature of voices, visions and "miracles," to show that religion and science, rightly understood and practised, are not hostile to one another, and to prepare a better and higher kind of humanity, for, in the words of Robert Browning, "man is not man as yet."

Do you think that the evolution of species of plants and animals, and even of humanity, went on for so many centuries and then stopped dead? There are still changes, there is still the urge for better and better forms, there are infinite possibilities of manifestation on this planet. Life on the "other side," so Spiritualism teaches, is determined by our actions here. Heaven and hell and intermediary states are states of our own making. There are many planes, many centres of teaching, many places where powers and talents, what we now call the arts, intellectual pursuits, the search for knowledge, can be developed and are being developed. Like attracts like. The teaching can be applied, and is being applied, to this physical life of ours.

#### THE POST-WAR WORLD

Let us consider the post-war world here which threatens to become just an intermediary between the last great war and the next great war. What have we seen since 1914? War and untold suffering, civil wars, revolutions, violence enthroned, terrorism, economic warfare, dictatorships, men reduced to military robots, depersonalised, despiritualised, rabid nationalisms, persecutions, an anti-God movement which has spread throughout the world. I remind you of the exhibition in Regent Street a year or two ago of anti-God posters, books and pamphlets. We have seen the exaltation of the State as against the individual conscience, the failure of the Disarmament Conference in 1932. I was one of the women who staggered into the hall of the Disarmament Conference in Geneva in 1932 carrying part of the heavy petitions of forty million women begging for peace, for a measure of disarmament. We have seen the breaking of the Covenant and of solemn undertakings given. We have come to a new race in armaments, to new and more horrible methods of bombing from the air, new and more horrible methods of spreading poison gas.

I have spent some six weeks in Geneva this autumn listening to all the speeches in the Assembly and the Council, meeting delegates, hearing different points of view. I heard the Italian representative speak of the desirability of introducing "civilisation" into "barbaric" Abyssinia. I talked to the Abyssinian delegate, who said that they desire a higher civilisation, but not that introduced by bombs and tanks. And now I read in *The Times* of November 5th of an air bombardment. Most of the bombs, thrown by the Italians, fell into the wells half a mile west of the camp, where the women and boys water their cattle and camels, and thirty women, fifteen children and a hundred head of cattle were killed, but the garrison suffered no loss. That throws light on how civilisation is being introduced at the present time in Abyssinia.

How many of you have read H. G. Wells's book, *The Shape of Things to Come*? Now, there is a new one made into a film story and entitled *Things to Come*, in which the "unending war" that is to come is depicted. I do not know whether any of you have watched H. G. Wells at a social function, where he wears a charming and perpetual smile. The last time I saw Mr. Wells at such a function I was interested in that smile, so much at variance with this

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terrible book. Those who are students of psychic forces know that *thoughts* are apt to become *things*; thought-forms thrown out are apt to materialise. This book describes a world devastated by modern warfare and the fabric of society shattered, the world depopulated by a pestilence which completes the social disorganisation. Mankind, however, is not wholly exterminated by war and sickness, some types survive, but there is general disaster and chaos. Among the pictures suggested for this film are Blackpool bombed, Oxford University in ruins, and the enemy spreading bacteria by aeroplanes.

I object to that sort of book. The effect is evil. To emphasise my point, let me say that if writers, good writers, powerful writers, like Mr. Wells, instead of being materialists in their innermost selves—I am thinking of his book, *The Science of Life*, in which he rejects the theory of survival—possessed the rudiments of psychic science and knowledge, they would not disseminate *mental poison* of this kind.

#### A MECHANISTIC AGE

We are living in a mechanistic age. Speed and machines are worshipped. The Press gives us much information and little time to digest it. Culture is at a low ebb. There is a great movement in the world to-day to level down. What has been called the little man is uppermost. We do not talk much now about the *superman*. The best sellers in biography are those books which are "debunking"—to use an inelegant phrase—great names. We have had writers debunking Queen Victoria and all the great Victorians—Stanley, Gordon, Florence Nightingale, and the rest. There seems to be a peculiar pleasure in "taking down" the great, and in making people feel that the man or woman to whom they have looked up is, after all, quite commonplace.

There is also a great interest in gangsters and in crime. There are even Crime Book Circles and Crime Book Clubs. I have always disliked books about crime. I think newspapers should be stopped from giving the immense publicity they give to this subject. But what do you say to what happened a little while ago in London when there was a Crime Lunch arranged, at which the wax figure of Charles Peace, the murderer, was seated at the table with the other guests? Pictures were published in the Press of charming ladies sitting near the effigy of Charles Peace. Here again, if people had a little gleam of psychic knowledge they would not do such things. These wax effigies are sometimes dressed up in the clothes the originals wore. There are psychic emanations and psychic forces clinging to them. Talk of "obsession"; it is courting obsession for the weak mind and the sensation-lover.

Then there are strange evolutions in art—horrible sculptures, misrepresentations of Christ, pathological conditions represented in stone—I will not mention names—which are written about and talked about, whilst the ancient ideals of the true, the beautiful and the good are considered infantile. There is a great interest in the odd, the revolting, the misshapen. There is atavism in art and literature. There is indiscriminate approval of anything or anybody appearing in the guise of science.

Science divorced from morality becomes a menace. Take poison gas. I have here a terrible book with the latest details of poison gas experiments on helpless animals. It shows all the latest developments in the art of murder by gas. The War Office wrote in 1926 in a *Manual of the Medical Aspects of Chemical Warfare* that "chemical warfare is a rapidly developing science." You have gas defence practice in Paris, in Berlin, and in Rome. You see regiments of young people dressed up in these hideous masks that are supposed to be a protection but really are no protection at all. You have experts who say you can protect yourself against poison gas by going into cellars and using masks, and other experts, equally great and important, who say you cannot—that there is no protection. Science is helping to kill at a distance, and we are promised this

and promised that in the form of ghastly new methods of war.

I have had no desire to paint a false picture or to exaggerate. Do not misunderstand me. There is in the world to-day so much to rejoice in, so much beauty in man and in Nature, so much is happening to give us hope, so much humanitarian feeling that did not exist a hundred years ago. That declaration in Geneva the other day, when the nations had the courage, for the first time, to declare that there was an *aggressor*, makes history, and history of a very encouraging kind. Whatever happens in the future, that decision will always live as an expression of the moral sense of the nations.

#### THE CHALLENGE

And now the *challenge*. The challenge of Spiritualism is a challenge to thought, to the thought that creates and shapes the character of mankind and the moral feeling of the race. Character is the only thing we have to stand up in when we die. Spiritualism teaches the importance of suggestion, the power of the will for good, the ministry possible to each individual in making his life in the physical world a contribution to the advancement of the planet. Instead of telling you to go away and live by yourself the monastic life, or the ascetic life, spiritualistic teaching urges you to live fully, to work and serve, realising that the contribution of each one is of eminent importance. Spiritualism, instead of disregarding this life in pursuit of the other, endows this life with a new importance. Above all, it teaches that brotherhood, compassion and co-operation are the things to strive for in national and international life, and that everything else will lead to failure sooner or later.

My last word is a word in defence of politics. Do not let people tell you that politics are not worth while, that they have nothing to do with religion, or morals, or intellectual activities. You may listen to the recriminations and accusations that form so large a part of electioneering or you may become a little contemptuous of democracy, you may hear the man in the street say that the politicians make their promises and do not mean to keep them. I beg of you, do not surrender to that mood, and do not be silent when you hear the cynical jibe that politicians' promises are not made to be kept—it is for you and me to see that they are kept, and to create a standard of decency, truthfulness and honour in political life.

After all, what are politics but the expression of your principles, your views, your activities? The idea that politics are an artificial something quite apart from humanity or from morality is foolish. It is for those who have spiritual knowledge to change them, and to challenge wherever they can all that is false and degrading in public life. It is for us, in a word, to rescue the mind from its acceptance of vulgarity and distortion, and to point, in the old Greek phrase, to the good, the true, and the beautiful.

#### MR. DAVID BEDBROOK'S BOOK

We have received from Mr. David Bedbrook a very excellent translation from English into French (by Mr. Derek Lynham) of his little book, *Gifts of the Spirit*. Mr. Bedbrook is a London business man who is so convinced of the truth of Spiritualism and of the benefits it offers to mankind, that he generously devotes much time and work to the furtherance of the cause. His book is an admirable handbook to those wishing to start their study of the subject and to learn how to set up a home circle. It deals in separate chapters with the various phases of both physical and mental mediumship; the chapter on how to sit for the development for direct voice is particularly helpful, and includes a long and instructive quotation on the subject from Mr. F. R. Robertson. The author writes after careful investigation and experience, and gives evidence throughout of his own high spiritual outlook. The entire proceeds from the book go to the Healing Clinics for poor persons in Paris.



## PREVISION IN FACT AND FICTION

Review by H. F. PREVOST BATTERSBY

HERE, curiously enough, published almost simultaneously, are two books, dealing with the same subject from entirely different points of view, and each of them is written by a citizen of France.

Noëlle Roger has achieved a considerable reputation on the Continent by a series of novels after the manner of H. G. Wells in his early scientific period, and Pierre-Emile Cornillier has been complimented both by Flammarion and Bozzano on his psychic study, *La Survivance de l'Âme*.

The theme which has stimulated both these writers is the ability to foresee and predict the future.

Noëlle Roger uses it for fiction. Lord Duncan (who is indifferently described as Lord James Duncan) learns of a deposit of parchments somewhere in Tibet, out of which a Chinese shoemaker in the East End of London has made slippers, some of which still retain traces of the script. The shoemaker declines to sell the last pair in his possession, but though he describes the position of his find, he warns Duncan solemnly not to look for it.

Duncan, however, starts at once for Tibet with his friend, Dr. Savigné, who plays the part of a Dr. Watson. The search proves long and exhausting, but, at last, the cave is found, the manuscripts are, literally, unearthed, but tragedy follows the discovery, the assisting coolies die, of no ascertainable cause, one after another; such of the manuscripts as proved too bulky for transport were burnt in the cave by a passing Buddhist priest, and the travellers themselves were all but murdered on the way home.

But it is at home that the real trouble starts. Duncan begins to see into the future; he sees death waiting in the air for the husband of the woman he loves, and later he sends her to her fate to save her from some other danger. He tries to warn the audience at a cinema that the building is about to catch fire. He tries to warn the inhabitants of a village that is about to be overwhelmed by an avalanche. His warnings have no effect; his foresight of the future is useless to others; it is beginning to undermine his sanity, and it so influences that of his friend, that Savigné shoots him to snatch the secret which Duncan is about to destroy.

That is the story, and its moral is that a knowledge of the future is mercifully withheld from us, but the author lacks the imagination which might make it of psychic interest.

The acquisition of this amazing power of precognition from reading a Buddhist manuscript is altogether too cheap a device. It tells us nothing.

M. Cornillier's volume does not err in that respect; he rather overwhelms us with what he has to say.

His information till 1921 was drawn through Reine, a highly-developed Medium, and later through Mme. Dargy and René C.

He came to the conclusion that prevision varies according to the source from which it is derived. Reine in magnetic sleep, in what he calls the First Mode, drew her information from images and vibrations on the astral plane, either in person or with the aid of a discarnate spirit.

In the Second Mode, a more advanced state of detachment, she saw what appeared to be *representations* of events to come, often so realistic that she was unable to distinguish them from actual scenes on the physical plane. (An embroilment which Lord Duncan found so distressing.)

In the Third Mode, after long magnetisation the Medium, either directly, or through the intermediary of

*He Who Sees*, by Noëlle Roger. Trans. by Robert Lancaster. London. George G. Harrap & Co., Ltd. 1935. 7/6.

*The Prediction of the Future*, by Pierre-Emile Cornillier. Trans. by L. E. Eeman. London. Author-Partner Press, Ltd. 1935. 5/-.

a highly-evolved spirit, recognised *signs* revealing the future, "carried by cosmic streams, waves and vibrations," and on an ability to interpret these signs depended the precision of the resulting prophecy.

From information thus received, the author asserts that Great Spirits, who act as liaison officers between ourselves and the higher powers, interpret from these "signs" the events which they are charged to conceive and organise.

Thus: "Future events pre-exist only as projects. Forecasts and predictions, other than prognostications based on observed facts, reveal only plans conceived by astral intelligences with the immutable aim of determining the spiritual evolution of human societies."

Examples follow of prognostic previsions by the First and Second Modes, from trifles of employment to battle scenes and presidential elections.

The Third Mode, predictions by "signs," was declared by Vettellini, Reine's Guide, to be a matter of some difficulty. "We can only get glimpses of those 'signs,'" he said, which were reflections of the decision of supreme astral Wills, made momentarily perceptible to the spirits ruling our planet, and liable to disappearance before they are understood.

"No human undertaking," it was explained, "however important, is ever more than a part, a fragment, of a higher undertaking of which we do not know the origin . . . but the path ordained always has an unknown quantity."

That, one presumes, is to cheer us with an illusion of free will.

We are told of "tremendous efforts" made to end the war, but the victory of the Marne, which is quoted in proof of them, seemed rather destined to prolong than end it.

Vettellini declared in 1923: "It is sad to find one's efforts wasted! We just manage to avert the worst, but not to alter the direction of events." That is somewhat confusing.

Great efforts are also made to avert terrestrial catastrophes. The earthquake of 13th, 14th January, 1915, in Italy had been foretold ten days earlier, and on the 27th Vettellini explained: "We are very busy opposing matter with astral forces. It would be better if we could delay the explosion. The blind forces of the earth can be met by intelligent forces, sustained by an accumulation of fluids;" but added: "We can only postpone the catastrophe—as we did with the War." And on 30th January, 1920, we find him deploring: "It will be more tremendous than was foreseen. Holding it back for so long has accumulated still more fluids. Oh! it will be frightful!"

M. Cornillier lays great stress on the enormous importance of a Medium's degree of development, since a Medium in trance can only see and understand phenomena pertaining to his own sphere. "The 'beyond' of that sphere does not exist for his detached spirit any more than the beyond of earth-life exists for us in our waking hours."

Thus Mme. Dargy never got beyond a certain plane, while Reine, inferior as a Medium, could see and understand the life of the highest spheres.

Mlle. P., if too deeply magnetised, had to be brought down again to her proper plane before she could exercise her faculties; whereas Mme. Marcelle G. rises at once to superior planes, but, once beyond a certain sphere, her "vision" and judgement fail progressively as she rises, and when she reaches the planes Reine used to call her "realm," she sees nothing whatever.

This discovery of the author is, I think, of real value, and is worth careful working out. It may account for all sorts of discrepancies.

His information as to the contrivance of destiny might have been of service to Noëlle Roger's fiction, but makes a less convincing appeal as fact.



# DREAM PREDICTION COMES TRUE

## "PSYCHIC EXTRA" OF A LIVING MAN

By LT.-COL. DAVID SMITH

NEARLY fifty years ago, I was articled to a large firm of engineers, and had several strange experiences during my period of apprenticeship.

One night, I had a very vivid dream. I was in the works and saw one of the men, a slinger (so called because it was his duty to "sling," that is, put the chains round heavy pieces of machinery to be lifted by the cranes), sling a heavy column, which had been faced in a large lathe. So expert were these men that they could put the chain round the articles at the first attempt so that they balanced exactly when lifted. I particularly noticed this column in my dream, as it had a large square flange on one end and a round flange on the other—an unusual combination. I saw the crane lift the column, and move away with it, the slinger steadying it at one end as it swung on the chain. At the end of the turning-shop, the column was lowered on to a rail trolley and moved under the travelling crane of the fitting-shop, by which it was picked up and taken to the gate to await the wagon which was to take it away. As it hung about ten feet from the ground with one end just in reach, the slinger caught hold of this end and began to turn the column round to bring it in line with the wagon, which was backing up to it, the column being about 20 feet long. At that moment the chain snapped and the column fell on the slinger, crushing him through the thick wood floor, and killing him instantly.

I told one or two of the other pupils and the men about this dream, but it was not taken any notice of, naturally, and I recall one of the men telling me that all chain slings had to be annealed and tested every six months so that there was no chance of any breakage, and in any case "Old Scrino" (as the slinger was called) was much too artful ever to get caught if anything did drop. Some weeks after, in going down the turning-shop, I saw a large column being faced; this was not unusual, as many columns were so treated, but this one had one square flange and one round. I was told by the turner that this one had not been cast in our shop, but had been sent in by a neighbouring foundry which had no machine tools for facing. The column when finished was duly slung, but not by the man I had seen killed in my dream, and was duly brought to the end of the fitting-shop, just at the dinner-hour break. Contrary to regulations, it was left hanging about 10 feet from the ground. When the works again started after the break for dinner, the man I saw in my dreams went to the column to turn it in line, the chain snapped, and he was instantly killed. I did not see the actual occurrence, but was there a minute or so after and the scene was exactly as I saw it in my dream—a scene I have never forgotten.

I have had other similar experiences, and my daughter has also had visions of the future which were fulfilled to the letter, so that it does seem as if past, present and future are strangely intermingled. "That which hath been, is now, and what which is to be, hath already been and God requireth that which it past."

My only "spirit photograph" experience took place at the same works, and I still have the photograph. One of the other pupils had bought a snapshot camera,

which were then only just becoming popular. He took photos about the shop and of the other pupils, which he developed in the drawing office. One day he took a snap of myself while I was working a large shaping machine. The next day he gave me the print I still have. I did not notice anything about it, but one of the men to whom I showed it said in an awe-struck voice: "Why, there's old Charlie Roberts." In the background, to my right, was an exact portrait of the man in question, but it was transparent, all the details of his machine that he worked, when present, could be seen through him. Now, Roberts had been away from the works ill, for some weeks, and, being an old man, was much afraid his job would not be kept open—his anxiety being increased by the fact that he had married for the second time and had got a young family. This strange "ghost" on the photograph caused great excitement among the men, and it was generally held that Roberts had died, and some of the men on their way home called at his house to see if this was so. Not only was Roberts not dead, but he was getting better, and though still confined to bed, his recovery was such that he was able to resume his work about ten days after.

There was no possibility of "faking," it was a snapshot taken in a busy works, the man in the photograph was in bed miles away, and had not been in the works for weeks. What is the explanation of this, and why, if the man was in bed, did his spirit appear in his usual working clothes? It was the one matter of discussion among the men at the works for weeks, and the pupil got tired of supplying copies of the photograph. I do not regard "spirit photography" very favourably, but this case I know was above suspicion.

## "THE FUTURE THAT WAS"

In this novel play by Francis Deverell, presented at the Arts Theatre Club, London, the interesting theory is put forward that, in sleep or trance, we can not only see into the future, but that our actions on this physical plane are influenced by what we see and hear there.

As thought precedes action, it is suggested that by travelling to the mind-plane of a future age we see, not what we thought we were going to do, but what we actually did, and *the consequences thereof*. On regaining consciousness, we do not remember this, but nevertheless we act accordingly. The common objection to pre-knowledge, that it rules out free-will, is avoided by the fact that as we do not remember "the future that was," we do, in effect, employ free choice of action.

If by taking a trip to a future age we can see the consequences of present actions and the attitude of the "great unborn" towards our age, the more widely such astral journeys are cultivated the better.—J.D.

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# UNSEEN FRIENDS

REV. S. CRUWYS SHARLAND ON SPIRITUALISM  
AS A GUIDE TO LIFE

UNSEEN FRIENDS was the title under which the Rev. S. Cruwys Sharland delivered the last of four addresses on "The Teaching of Spiritualism as a Guide to Life," at the L.S.A. on Wednesday, November 27th. As a very fitting opening to his subject, he quoted a remark made many years ago by a pupil of his—a boy who was "both physically and mentally one of the finest young fellows I have ever known, himself a splendid testimony to the truth of his beliefs." This young man on one occasion said to Mr. Sharland (himself at that time a sceptic regarding Spiritualism), "Nothing helps me so much to keep straight as the knowledge that I have unseen friends who are often near me and care very much for my welfare, and that they would be greatly distressed if I did anything discreditable."

How can these "unseen friends" help us? Professor L. P. Jacks entitled one of his books, *All Men are Ghosts*; and if that is true, as we believe it is, then spiritual communion should be possible between all men. One of the chief things that militate against this is that while we are incarnate here on earth, our consciousness of "self" is apt to erect a barrier between us and others. The awareness of our own "I" produces a sense not only of separation, but in many cases one of intense, and occasionally devastating loneliness and isolation. The lecturer testified to this from personal experience, and also from his wide association with many friends.

There have been cases, Mr. Cruwys Sharland reminded the audience, where two souls, both incarnate, have been so closely *en rapport* that they could exchange thoughts and feelings without the medium of words. Robert and Mrs. Browning provided one such instance—they could *think* their conversation to each other; a mode of communication which is believed to be the normal means of communication on the Other Side.

## MIND AND BRAIN

A more exceptional case, indicating that mind can occasionally function independently of the brain, or state of the brain, was illustrated by an account of another pupil of the lecturer. This boy suffered from excruciating head-pains after any violent physical exertion; but thanks to the intervention of Mr. Sharland was very largely helped to overcome this condition. Some time later, tutor and pupil made a most delightful tour together of the West Country, after which they did not meet for many years. In middle life, this man was once more attacked by the terrible head-pains; an operation was resorted to, but disease of the brain supervened; his condition became "too terrible to describe," and finally "the brain was apparently non-existent." Nevertheless, just before this man passed away, he suddenly began to speak to the nurse in attendance; and to her he then gave a minute and detailed account, including many names, of that tour in the West that had been undertaken over twenty years before. "This," added the lecturer, "shows very clearly what the memory of the soul is like."

Referring again to the frequent sense of loneliness we experience here on earth, Mr. Sharland said: "One at least of the advantages, and joys, of communion with the unseen is that such communion, if real and sincere, is characterised by a frankness which is hardly possible between friends who are on both sides still limited by earthly conditions. The shy, conventional reservations, which so often prevent us here from saying exactly what we mean, can have no place in our intercourse with those who are now at home in a world of thought and of truth." "Don't say *like—love* is the mainspring here," was Lord Northcliffe's reply when Mr. Hannen Swaffer told him at a seance, "I always *liked* you, chief," thus showing that "if only one of two souls in communication with each other has passed over to the other side, the one left on earth must realise that his unseen friend has perfect understanding of his meaning, and that he

need not feel embarrassment in going to the root of things. It means that the isolation of self-consciousness is partially broken down."

Passing on to the dangers of communication, Mr. Sharland grouped them under three headings. First, there is the danger of *standing still*. It is to be regretted, he said, that many Spiritualists are content to indulge in little more by way of communion with their friends in the Beyond than a continual reiteration of statements of, and wishes for, each other's happiness. This is needed for the first establishment of intimacy, but the communion should be one of steady progress, advancing from one experience to a higher—"approving ever" as St. Paul bade his converts at Philippi, "the things that are excellent."

The second danger is that of failing to distinguish between *psychic* and *spiritual* powers. The psyche, or soul, is not in itself necessarily good or bad, and "if the soul is tainted, the possession of exceptional powers will be a curse rather than a blessing, ministering only to self-importance and conceit. Before such faculties can deserve the epithet *spiritual*, the soul itself must be in subjection to the Divine Parent Spirit, from Whom it derives its life. Otherwise, a great psychic may be a great rogue."

The third danger is that of insufficiently "trying the spirits." Like attracts like, and there are malicious and mischievous beings on the far side as on our own—beings "adept" in the arts of deception and masquerade." Moral precautions are always necessary, and doubly so in the case of rescue work.

## "IN MEMORIAM"

The lecturer then dwelt at some length on Tennyson's poem, *In Memoriam*, first written in 1833 but not published until 1850, called forth by the loss of the Poet's great friend, Arthur Hallam. This work, said Mr. Sharland, was hailed by many as though it contained a new Gospel. It first dared to voice the questioning of teachings that dated from the Middle Ages. It contributed appreciably towards the later acceptance of Spiritualist teachings, and is a piece of writing—despite its blemishes—that should never be forgotten.

Referring to the question of "Guidance," the speaker said that Katherine Bates, the Spiritualist writer, had once told him that she considered it right to treat advice from an unseen friend in exactly the same way that she would treat advice from a good friend on earth: that is to say, reserving the decision to her own judgement and conscience. The outlook of our discarnate friends may not always extend much further than our own; and their concept of *time* differs greatly from ours. For further advice on this point, the lecturer drew attention to Mr. De Brath's book, *Psychical Research, Science and Religion*.

He also reminded his audience of the Northern myth of Igdrasil, the tree of existence. If all the leaves on this tree were unaware of twigs, branches and stem, they would—as we so often do—regard themselves as separate existences; only if they could become conscious of the tree as a united whole would they realise their at-one-ness not only each with each, but each with the parent stem whence their common life and nourishment were derived.

In conclusion, Mr. Sharland spoke of the greatest of all our "Unseen Friends," our Master, Jesus Christ. After His resurrection, Jesus initiated His disciples into a new experience—the experience of a fellowship and friendship with all men of all races and climes, a continued friendship with Himself and others who had risen. They learnt that death could not take Him from them—that after the Ascension He was still present with them in a new way. Pentecost finally taught them that they were His for all time, and that through Him they had found God.

"As the souls who love rise to higher spheres, they must be drawn ever closer to each other, until in the time beyond time, soul can say to soul, as Jesus said to His disciples, 'I am with you always.'"



## 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).*

## SPIRITUALISM AND CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

Sir,—In the letter in your issue of November 28th, E. M. Clague raises an important point, and one that I do my best to emphasise in my modest connection with the Spiritualist Community platform. It is, that we should do well not to ignore the vast evidence in support of Spiritual Healing afforded by the Christian Science Church; also, if I may go further, the evidence afforded for other forms of psychic manifestation in religions which are outside the Spiritualist movement.

I have never attached much importance to labels, and in this respect would gladly sacrifice the label of Spiritualism if it would achieve a wider acceptance of the principles for which Spiritualism stands.

Just as the works of the Christian Science Church confirm the essential truth in relation to Spiritual Healing, so in a greater or lesser degree do the tenets of other religious denominations—inside and outside the Christian faith and not excluding Theosophy—confirm the fundamental truth of Survival and its implications. For example, how many Spiritualists are aware of the truths embodied in the teachings of the New Church, which was founded on the writing of that great philosopher and seer, Swedenborg? Yet, because of doctrinal misunderstanding, the evidence and confirmation of his experiences within the spiritual realms, which is afforded to Spiritualists, is as a closed book to Swedenborg's devoted followers.

Remembering Christ's words, "I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil," my belief is that Spiritualism, while affording positive proof of Survival in this materialistic age, should aim at becoming the leaven which will permeate the entire world of religious thought and activity—just in the same way as we hope it will penetrate the world of science.

It is for this reason, if for no other, that I am in sympathy with Mrs. St. Clair Stobart's great effort to secure the support and co-operation of the Clergy, which has already achieved far-reaching results.

23 Nottingham Place,  
London, W.1.

GEORGE NOBLE.

## SPIRITUALISTS THE REAL CHRISTIAN SCIENTISTS

Sir,—Your correspondent (November 28th) should know that a dangerous element pervades and masquerades under the guise of Christian Science. Mistakes made in healing by Christian Scientists are legion, mistakes that would not be made nor condoned by Spiritualists. Spiritualists are really the Christian Scientists.

CHARLES E. KING.

## HELPED BY KIND THOUGHTS

By MAJOR C. H. MOWBRAY

I HAD a letter from an old brother officer of mine some time ago, in which he mentioned that another officer in our regiment had "come through" to him. As I have been in touch with him myself, I think perhaps readers of LIGHT may be interested to hear particulars—but I have not given my friend's name in full.

At one time I was in the habit of sitting with Mrs. Barkel once a week. She never went into trance. Sometimes we sat in red light, sometimes in complete darkness. I used to sit facing her, nothing between us, and generally held her hands. We used to await developments and I was seldom disappointed.

One day, when sitting in the dark, a globe of dull light seemed gradually to build up in the far corner of the room; and, thinking that light had got into the room from outside, we turned up the lamp to investigate but found the seance room was quite dark so we resumed our sitting in darkness. The globe of light again appeared after a few minutes.

Half jokingly I asked: "Is that a spirit-light?" when, to my amazement, three loud raps were given which seemed to come from a table on the further side of the room. I found out by means of questions—the answers being given by raps—that this was an officer of my regiment who had been killed in the War. He said he was neither happy nor unhappy. I asked if he could rap out his name and I got "WILLIE." Not being able to place him, I asked for his surname and got M——.

Now, Major M—— had been a great friend of mine, but he had always been known by his nickname of Doodle, and I had never thought of him by any other name. (Surely our old bugbear would have given the nickname; what tricks Telepathy seems to play!)

I then asked if there was anything I could do for him or if he would like a message given to anyone, but he replied "No." I then asked him to move the light round the room; it immediately started slowly travelling, stopped and vanished.

Some six months later, when sitting with Mrs. Mason, "Maisie" informed me that WILLIE had come to thank me for what I had done for him. I replied: "My dear old man, I have done nothing for you. You said there was nothing I could do." But "Maisie" answered "He says you have given him kind thoughts which have helped him."

Kind thoughts and prayers are, I take it, identical—prayers for the dead. Would our good Bishop of London, I wonder, consider I had "dishonoured" my friend and that it was a "waste of time?"

## READINGS FROM THE AURA

The British College of Psychic Science has been favoured by a week's visit from Mrs. Bertha Harris, of Chester, a Medium well-known and appreciated in the North and Midlands. This is Mrs. Harris's first visit to London, and her work has been highly esteemed during the visit, both in private sittings and in groups which have given general satisfaction to the participants.

In a public demonstration on November 27th (presided over by Mr. S. O. Cox), Mrs. Harris spoke briefly on how she saw the aura of individuals and what it revealed to her, and proceeded to confirm by some remarkable readings in which temperament, health conditions, past and even future happenings were given. These were acknowledged as correct by the recipients, none of whom Mrs. Harris knew. Clairvoyance followed and was equally successful in providing evidence as to Survival.

Mrs. Harris gave a trance address and demonstration on Sunday, the 24th inst., at Pembridge Mission. will be a welcome addition to our ranks in London College having arranged for return visits at a date.

## Confraternity Luncheon Hour Meetings

will be continued at

## THE FORTUNE THEATRE, RUSSELL STREET, W.C.2

every Friday until 20th December inclusive, 12.30 to 1.30 p.m.

Addresses are given by Representatives of the Churches, and by Spiritualists, followed by a Demonstration of Clairvoyance by Mrs. ESTELLE ROBERTS.

Chairman - Mrs. ST. CLAIR STOBART

Speakers:

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6th The Rev. A. HAWORTH.  
Rev. C. DRAYTON THOMAS.  
To-morrow ADMIRAL ARMSTRONG.  
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13th The Rev. T. B. CLARKE, M.A.  
Miss GERALDINE CUMMINS.  
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 20th The Rev. LESLIE J. BELTON  
Major C. C. COLLEY.

Admission Free.

Silver Collection.

Refreshments may be obtained in the Theatre.

A few reserved seats at 2/6 may be had by application to the Secretary, "Confraternity," Grottrian Hall, 11, Wigmore Street, W.1.

The addresses given at the Historic first Meeting of the Confraternity, at the Grottrian Hall, on June 24th, may now be obtained in pamphlet form, price 6d.



# Light

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EDITOR

GEORGE H. LETHAM

## As We See It

### CHALLENGE TO THOUGHT AND ACTION

AT Caxton Hall, Westminster, to-night (Thursday, December 5th) there will be a discussion of a very unusual kind. It is arranged by the London Spiritualist Alliance, whose President (Miss Lind-af-Hageby) will preside; but of the six eminent men announced to take part, only one is known to have a definite leaning towards Spiritualism.

The subject to be discussed is "The Challenge to Modern Thought and Action by the Evidence for Survival," and the intention is to discover how that evidence is viewed by representative men and what are their reactions to it in their respective spheres—scientific, religious, social.

The L.S.A., of course, takes up a clear and positive position—namely, that the Evidence for Survival (to use the words of the President) is "attested and substantiated," and shows "that the human personality survives the process we call Death and that there is not only survival but communion," that "the so-called dead can and do speak to us, they can and do show themselves to us, they can and do take an interest in our lives and doings." There is nothing hesitating about the testimony of the L.S.A., which is now, as it has been since its formation in 1881, in the forefront of the active Spiritualist movement.

That some of the speakers will refuse to accept the L.S.A. estimate of the evidence for Survival is certain; and the interest of the discussion will turn very largely on the clearness and nature of the reasons they give for doubting or rejecting it. What they say should help Spiritualists to understand how their educational efforts should be directed so as most readily to secure the attention and interest of thoughtful people, how to meet reasonable criticism, and how best to overcome the prejudice which still prevails against Spiritualism in scientific and religious quarters.

There is much to be learned from frank, friendly criticism; and it is criticism both frank and friendly that may be expected at to-night's meeting—from scientists and sociologists on one side and representatives of art and religion on the other.

As a prelude to the discussion, Miss Lind's address (the second portion of which we publish to-day) should serve a useful purpose, since it covers the ground very thoroughly, and puts the case for Spiritualism in a manner so clear and comprehensive that the challenge conveyed to science, to religion, and to politics cannot be missed or misunderstood.

## CUMULATIVE EVIDENCE

By J. W. PARRY

FREDERIC W. H. MYERS thus expressed himself towards the close of his monumental work, *Human Personality*: "What a delightful crisis (it is) that science has come to admit the immortality of the soul!"

This apophthegm must sound strange to the chosen few who implicitly rely on faith—whether epitomised in theology, or as recorded facts in both the Old and New Testaments; yet experiment had become necessary to implement that very faith—thanks to the materialistic trend of physical science, which, while postulating an indestructibility of matter, advanced no such theory for that of mind (or consciousness). Now, it is clear that while Materialism dealt with normal appearances, which it would term "factual experience," and resolutely refused to investigate anything apparently "supernormal," it had the best of the argument everywhere; but once the "supernormal" be investigated, all such theories had to be revised . . . and the Materialist "remained where he did not know" (Hyslop).

That "factual experience" in the realm of the supernatural (*sic*) is well attested, goes without saying; an inquirer has only to study the series of experiments dealing with the phenomena of D. D. Home and Florrie Cook—by that intrepid pioneer and doyen of scientists, Sir Wm. Crookes (vide *Researches into the Phenomena called Spiritual*). Sir William became a convinced Spiritualist as a result of these investigations, and gratuitously affirmed before the British Association, a quarter of a century afterwards, that he was as "convinced then, as ever, and he had nothing to retract from his former findings" (1870-4).

As regards the paranormal phenomena of telepathy, I think that Dr. Rhine's experiments (as recorded in a former number of LIGHT) prove beyond all reasonable doubt to psychologists that it is a fact of life, and even this, once granted, Materialism automatically becomes obsolete.

But it is by a process, *cumulative in its effect*, that the fact of communication, and hence Survival, is adduced. The eminent psychologist, Prof. Wm. James, is credited with bringing Mrs. Piper to the notice of the Society for Psychical Research, and experiments with "observations of certain phenomena of trance" began, extending over a number of years and conducted by such able psychologists as Dr. Richard Hodgson, and Dr. James H. Hyslop (whose works cannot be read too carefully), two men who were *frankly sceptical at the commencement*.

In his second report to the Society (Proc. S.P.R., vol. xiii., part 33, p. 396), Dr. Hodgson remarks: "And having tried the hypothesis of telepathy from the living for several years, and the 'spirit' hypothesis also for several years, I have no hesitation in affirming with the most absolute assurance that the 'spirit' hypothesis is justified by its fruits and the other hypothesis is not." One must be referred to the Proceedings for the full account. Dr. Hyslop discusses at great length the veridicity of the communications in his *Science and a Future Life*.

And so, from experiments made with Mediums of unquestionable psychic power, such as Mrs. Piper (for "mental" phenomena), and Home, Miss Cook and Mme. Paladino (for "physical" phenomena) by such celebrated names as Drs. Hodgson and Hyslop, Professors Richet, Lombroso, Morselli and Schiaparelli, Sir Wm. Crookes, Sir Oliver Lodge and Sir Wm. Barrett, and many others, the cumulative evidence for the survival of the individual and a super-sensible world has become *overwhelming*—and yet one hears still the oft-repeated inane question: *Cui bono?* To what good, indeed—with the aftermath of a once strongly entrenched materialistic philosophy, and its attendant scepticism! Does it not—in the words of F. W. H. Myers—"confirm the central claim of Christianity?"



# LOOKING ROUND THE WORLD

## RATIONALISTS AND SURVIVAL

SPIRITUALISM has a great attraction for *The Freethinker*—which, unfortunately, does not think freely on the matter of Survival, but always along hard, fixed lines which prevent the truth being seen or reached. In a recent issue, there were two articles—one by "J.C." on "The Chances of Survival," and the other by "Mimnermus" entitled "Down Among the Dead Men."

"J.C.'s" conclusion is that the chances of Survival are nil—although he seems to reach it regretfully, for he writes: "If we only knew for certain that we survived . . . what a grand consoling thing it would be, and what a lot of trouble would be saved." Which is, of course—as Spiritualists can testify—quite true. "J.C.'s" reason for *thinking* that Survival is impossible (Rationalists only *think* these things; they don't profess to *know*) is that "the only consciousness we know anything about is that which we find associated with, or bound up in, a human brain; we do not find it elsewhere."

There he is quite wrong. There are many authenticated cases on record in which consciousness has functioned apart from the physical brain—such, for instance, as that of the novelist, William Gerhardt, who described how he was able to think clearly whilst standing (in an etheric body) by the side of his bed looking at his physical body. "J.C." must try again.

## MISPLACED CONDESCENSION

In the second *Freethinker* article, "Mimnermus," writes very condescendingly of Sir Oliver Lodge's efforts to convince his contemporaries that Survival is a "demonstrated fact"—and condescension, it may be suggested, is in this case more than a little out of place. It is, in fact, bordering on impertinence.

Still, "Mimnermus" is right when he says that "Sir Oliver Lodge has proved a rare asset to the Spiritualists." He has; and Spiritualists are glad to acknowledge the help Sir Oliver has given them in spreading a knowledge of Survival.

"Mimnermus" is also right—though again unnecessarily condescending and superior—when, after describing what he calls "the horrible views of the orthodox Christians" regarding hell and eternal punishment, he says: "Our Spiritualists may be credulous, but they are more kind-hearted than these Christians."

Rationalists have much to say that is true. The pity is that their dogmatic belief (for it is only belief, and it is very dogmatic) in the impossibility of Survival prevents them from recognising the truth of Spiritualism and the honesty of Spiritualists.

## MRS. HELEN HUGHES

The saying that "a prophet is not without honour save in his own country" does not seem to apply to Mrs. Helen Hughes, who has recently given some very convincing demonstrations of platform clairaudience at London meetings arranged by the L.S.A. Mrs. Hughes' home is at Dalton-le-Dale, near Dawdon, Durham County; and the *Sunday Sun* (Newcastle-on-Tyne), which circulates in that area, devotes a long and very complimentary article to her psychic development and her public work.

"Already," says James R. Spencer, the writer of the article, "she is probably in greater demand for public platform work than any other Medium in Britain." To this he adds the personal testimony that "Mrs. Hughes appealed to me as a straight, sincere woman, who would never do a single thing, or say a single word, that would harm or unnecessarily distress any human being."

Mr. Spencer states that, next April, Mrs. Hughes is to undertake a tour in Canada and the United States.

## RUMOURS OF WAR

MR. BASIL STEWART, author of *Revelation Fulfilled*; and the new *History and Significance of the Great Pyramid*, writes to say that he finds Mr. C. E. Mitchell's Mussolini prediction (referred to in *LIGHT* last week) "very interesting." Mr. Mitchell's astrological forecast was that Mussolini's Abyssinian adventure will bring "disaster to Italy and danger to himself."

"Precisely the same outcome is revealed in Scripture prophecy," Mr. Stewart writes, and in support he quotes Daniel xi., 45: He "shall come to his end and none shall help him." Mr. Stewart adds that he does not suppose that "Mussolini will listen to the warnings of Scripture any more than to the warnings from other sources."

The probability is that Il Duce knows nothing about either astrological or Scripture predictions, and would not, in any case, be influenced by them. A man who refuses to bow before the sternly expressed censure of the whole civilised world is not likely to be affected by prophecies, wherever they come from.

Unfortunately, the latest developments of the European situation arising out of the strained relations between the League of Nations and Italy (which means Mussolini, the Dictator) regarding the Abyssinian war are very serious—particularly the mysterious recurring references by the French Premier and other statesmen to the possibility of an attack on British Mediterranean forces by Italians.

In that respect, it is some relief to recall the confident predictions from quarters normal and supernormal that, notwithstanding threats to the contrary, there will be no great European war.

## "OBSCURANTISM OF THE WORST TYPE"

Letters continue to appear in the *Christian World* for and against (chiefly against) the Rev. John Bevan's rationalistic explanation of the New Testament account of the Transfiguration and his refusal to see anything good in the psychic—or spiritualistic—explanation, or in the claim that communion with the living "dead" is possible.

In the issue of November 28th, Leonard J. Hodgson, of Brighton, puts the matter in a form which should appeal to thoughtful Christians. "All Christian bodies," he writes, "profess to believe in the communion of saints and in the life of the world to come. Why, then, should it be thought a thing incredible that those who have passed the narrow stream of death should still be able to make their continued existence known and felt by those to whom they were linked by the ties of love and fellowship before they were delivered from the burden of the flesh? At all events, it is surely obscurantism of the worst type to denounce the possibility of such communication without thorough and patient investigation."

This is plain speaking, which should be all the more effective, seeing that it comes not from an avowed Spiritualist but from a Christian to his fellow-Christians.

## A "HAUNTED BOY"

Strange stories have appeared in the Press about Frank Atkinson, the "haunted boy" of Hawkshead, Lancashire. According to the *Daily Mail* (November 28th), mysterious knockings took place in his presence, when he was asleep and when he was awake. Doctors were said to be puzzled—particularly by knocks which apparently came from within the boy's body in response to knocks made by observers. But the *Daily Mirror* put a special correspondent, Leslie Nelson, on the job, and he promptly reported (November 29th) that there is no mystery, and that the knockings are all produced by Frank snapping his fingers or banging his legs under the bedclothes.

Now, we suppose, it will be necessary to appoint a committee of investigation to find out what really has happened.



# TOPSY : THE STORY OF A SOUL

## IX.—TOPSY MEETS HER FATHER AND MOTHER

*In the last chapter of this remarkable book (followed by an Appendix), Mr. Swaine—to whom we are indebted for the permission to publish these extracts, reiterates his assertion from the Foreword that, "This book did not set out to PROVE; it began as the simple story of the life of a soul, and the latest event in that life will be the end of the book. To those who read it and seek for a wider knowledge and a surer proof of the existence of the Summerland and the communion of soul with soul, there are the means at hand; and it cannot be over-emphasised that proof is personal experience, NOT accounts related second-hand."*

"WHEN the first notes from which this book was written were being taken down, Topsy was still unaware that she had a mother and father. She had no memory of any parents, so evidently she had never had any; further than that she had not sought. That was what she believed."

But when Mr. Swaine talked with Sister Francesca of his intention to publish the story of Topsy and her life, the Spirit-Mother agreed that this made it imperative that the parents of the child should be found, in order that the account of the early years of her life should be known and the story made complete; and she therefore began a systematic search for them throughout the spheres.

The gentle Samoan mother, Roma, was the first to be found, and Sister Francesca arranged for a sitting to which she could bring Topsy's mother. "This event," says Mr. Swaine, "was an interesting though rather a sad experience for us in the circle. . . . Roma, when she came, was eager to hold her child in her arms, to comfort this strange little girl with all the warmth of a mother's love. But Topsy, we could see, felt rather embarrassed and remained very aloof. She tried to explain. She told her mother and Spirit-Mother of her resentment when all other children had fathers and mothers while she had none. Now she had almost forgotten this resentment in her new work, and now, unexpectedly, she suddenly *had* a mother."

"It was a situation difficult to understand. Roma talking eagerly of childhood memories which to Topsy were without meaning; the little girl countering by saying she was quite happy with her new work in the Spirit World, refusing Roma's gifts, and then turning anxiously to Sister Francesca with the pathetic question: 'Must I love this new mother? I love *you*.'"

Roma, too, must have suffered. These precious memories which had ever been with her during her search for her child had no meaning for Topsy, whose love was so ardently bestowed upon another. Only her own strong love could put things right.

Three times she was brought to the circle, and each time she awakened further memories in the child and herself, which helped to bridge the gaps in the story; and each time she made advances to Topsy; and as the story unfolded, the child grew more in sympathy with her mother; she came to see that their sufferings had been due to the same causes, and pity began to kindle love.

Then came the circle to which Sister Francesca also brought Topsy's father Kamal. "At first Topsy affected an indifference and talked about other things," while Kamal and Roma talked eagerly together, rejoicing in their reunion and constantly looking wistfully across at the little girl. But eventually the child's curiosity prevailed and she turned to look at and admire her father's fine physique; "but after describing him to us, she asked, rather resentfully: 'He is very strong—he is a fighter—why did he not fight to prevent them from selling us?' and there was scorn and wonderment in

her voice. 'He is big—he is strong—why not?' But then a pause, and in an altered voice she went on: 'Ah—he shows me pictures—I can see now! He is bound and lashed. He is forced to see my mother and me led away—he struggles—the blood comes,' and then in her inimitably sweet way she turned to her father: 'O, I am sorry for what I said; I will learn to love you. Not now—but I will try,' and she proceeded to sing to her parents a little hymn another spirit child had taught her. This delighted her parents as much as it pleased us," says Mr. Swaine, "for only once before had she used her Medium's voice for singing on the earth-plane."

A little later Sister Francesca herself took control, and spoke lovingly and seriously to her little charge. She reminded her of all her parents had done for her during her babyhood, of all they had suffered and of all the joys they had missed. "All they ask now," she said, "is that you will blend with them and share your happiness with them. They have looked for you a long while; reach out to them now, my child. This is another lesson, and if I know my charge, she can do it." Then a smile lit up the Sister's face as she turned to us and said: "She has reached out; this is yet another victory over resentment."

Through Sister Francesca, Mr. Swaine then obtained from Kamal the details of their early life, as told in the first chapters of this book, at the end of which the Spirit-Mother turned to the sitters with a happy look and said: "Whilst I have been telling you this, Topsy has been listening too, standing between her father and mother, holding their hands. As I finished she pulled down their heads so that the three faces were pressed close together. It was a wonderful picture."

A week later, Sister Francesca again brought Roma and Kamal, "And," says Mr. Swaine, "we could hear Topsy busy chattering to them: 'Yes, she said to Roma, 'I like your beads. No, you keep them, I like to see them on you.'"

"Yes, I like him (her father) very much now. I bet he could throw me high and catch me. Yes, I would have liked the little birds he carved for me. I would have told them all my secrets. No, I never had any beads, nor any dolls, nor handkerchiefs, nor a pretty cup. There was no one to give them to me. No, I never thought I had a mother—and I wondered why? Do I remember putting my fingers through the rings in your ears? No, I doesn't. You missed my sunshine? I can understand that, because some of my earth-people here call me 'The Sunshine-kid.'"

Finally Sister Francesca took control again and expressed her happiness in the reunion of the little family. "Souls that have pursued different pathways," she said, "have met again and are happy, for they know that love is eternal. To you it is many years, but not to them, for we do not count time. Here one just realises that there *will* be a meeting. There is not the same longing as on the earth-plane. Had there been a great desire on Topsy's part, maybe they would have come together sooner; but she remembered nothing of them and was happy in her new work here. The clouds are for the earth-plane; there are no shadows in this great world of Spirit."

"And now I must leave you. I give you the love of the spirit friends who are with you so often. Good-night, and God be with you all." Whereupon Topsy came back to add her wishes to those of her Spirit-Mother. She ended up with: "And I will love my mother and my father, and I will be happy and give happiness to them. I ask for God's blessing upon everyone: a blessing for all homes, for all loved ones, for all piccaninnies, for all time. Good-night, and God bless you!"

(More about Topsy's work next week)



## ITALIAN NOTES

By ISABEL EMERSON

MISS HELEN MACGREGOR and Miss Margaret V. U. derhill, after spending a few weeks on the French Riviera, have returned to their winter quarters in Florence (Pension Romagnoli), where they have been welcomed joyfully by their large circle of friends. Their "act of faith" in returning to Italy in these sad and anxious times is greatly appreciated by all who know them, and is taken as an augury of happier days in store.

Dr. Jasink, whose "Talks" at the British Institute on Buddhism and Oriental Philosophy have been so much appreciated during the last two winters, is now giving a series entitled "Indian Teachings on Life," including: A General Conception of Life; the Eternity of Life; the Continuation of Life; Moral Life; Mystic Life; East and West Confronted.

### PSYCHIC PUBLICATIONS

The present year has been rich in Italian publications on psychic subjects. Several of these have issued from the "Dante" Press in the little Umbrian town of Città della Pieve, where Dario Rebuffo, "The Spiritualist publisher" and lifelong friend of Prof. Bozzano, devotes himself to the work of printing and circulating books, pamphlets and leaflets on all branches of the subject.

Other publications have come from the offices of the various psychic papers. And the "Domus Nostra," Institute of Science, Letters and Art in Venice, has brought out a large illustrated volume by Dr. Luigi Bellotti, entitled "The Splendid Harvest of a Century." This handsome volume, in its sky-blue cover with gold lettering and design of wheatears and sunrise, is the first instalment of a complete History of Spiritualism. It opens with an explanation of the principles and methods of experimental Spiritualism and Spiritism, with quotations from the extensive cosmopolitan literature on the subject, and the opinions of many learned investigators of all nationalities.

After several chapters on God and the Universe, Matter, the Soul, Life, etc., the author goes on to describe remarkable seances and the various forms of mediumship. There are chapters on D.D. Home and Eusapia Paladino, with numerous illustrations and portraits of leaders in the movement.

The second part contains an analysis of a long poem, "A Pilgrimage in the Heavens," received many years ago through the hand of the Medium Fanciullacci, and purporting to be inspired by Dante. Dr. Bellotti says that Longfellow was much impressed by this poem and was engaged on a translation of it at the time of his death. Many other matters of interest are treated in the 427 pages of this interesting book, the first of its kind to be published in Italy.

Another recent publication is the first volume of a comprehensive work entitled "In Search of God," by Arturo De Santis Mangelli.

### "THE GREAT SYNTHESIS"

It is announced that Prof. Pietro Ubaldi has finished the monumental work in twelve parts, *The Great Synthesis*, transmitted through his hand by an entity who signs himself "His Voice." These remarkable communications have been published month by month in *Ali del Pensiero* and will shortly appear in book form.

A number of separate messages received by Prof. Ubaldi from the same source, some of them published at the time in five languages, have already been collected in book form. The messages, which were very beautiful and highly spiritual in tone, are entitled "Christmas Message," "Message of the Resurrection," "Message of Pardon," "Message to the Italians," "Message to Men of Goodwill," and "Message to Christians."

Elio Falchi, whose Italian translation of *On the Edge of the Etheric* has been widely read, has just completed

the translation of *The Rock of Truth*, which will appear shortly. Among Signor Falchi's other translations is a pamphlet, *The Miraculous Birth of Christ*, taken from Mrs. St. Clair Stobart's volume, *Ancient Lights*. He has also edited two pamphlets by Francesco Peyronel, a Waldensian Minister and Spiritualist: *The Resurrection of Jesus Christ in Relation to Modern Science*, and *The Doctrine of Grace or Salvation*.

Among the newer magazines are *Elevazioni* and *Preludi Spirituali*, published by the "Alfa" Association of Psychic Studies (Rome) and edited by Signora Laura Légrande Bussolin, which contain articles by various well-known writers and reviews of psychic books; *Il Mistero*, a monthly magazine edited by Fernando de Rio (Milan); and *Il Grande Quesito*, edited by Ettore Florian Petrausch (Rome).

Prof. Bozzano, whose analytical reviews of psychic books, principally English, form a leading feature of *La Ricerca Psichica*, devoted many pages to "No More Tears" (Mrs. Stuart) and "Modern Mystics" (Sir Francis Younghusband), quoting largely from both volumes, and ending with an appeal to scientific students of phenomena to classify their cases, so as to provide cumulative evidence of the facts examined. He adds: "In expressing myself thus, I judge by my personal experience, since it was through registering and classifying every kind of supernormal phenomena that I, a positivist and materialist of the school of Herbert Spencer, reached scientific certainty, on the basis of facts, as to human survival."

Dr. V. Brussi, in *La Ricerca Psichica*, gives a long and thoughtful analysis of the Italian translation of "The Road to Immortality," which had already been reviewed at some length by Dr. G. De Boni in the same paper.

Readers of *La Ricerca Psichica* were invited some time ago to send in accounts of their psychic experiences, and there have been some interesting responses, mostly concerning premonitory and symbolical dreams.

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Thursday, December 12th at 8.15 p.m.,

A Discussion on "Beyond Human Personality" (the important new book through the hand of Miss Geraldine Cummins.)

For full particulars see announcement on page 770.

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Mr. Stanley De Brath: Fridays, 3—6 p.m.;

The Secretary: Every day (Except Saturdays), 10.30—12.30 and 2.30—5.30, and during Evenings when Meetings are held (it is advisable that appointments be made).

### L.S.A. AND QUEST CLUB NOTES

#### "BEYOND HUMAN PERSONALITY"

ON Thursday next, December 12th, there will be another discussion—this time at our rooms at 16 Queensberry Place. Miss Geraldine Cummins' new script, with its challenging title, is to be discussed by Sir Lawrence Jones, Bart., Mr. H. F. Prevost Battersby and others. Miss Cummins will preside and answer questions.

This, the last meeting of the session, should be a splendid climax to a fine session's work. The script, purporting to come from that great scholar and psychological researcher, F. W. H. Myers, is full of interest. Much of it, in the nature of things, is, to us, speculative, and comes under the head of "unverifiable matter." That is simply because we have no means of checking it by the standards we know. Regarding the next life, we are in the position of those who have to take information of any part of the globe we cannot visit from those who have visited it, or those who live there. We have to rely upon our knowledge of the personal honesty and integrity of those who give us the information. The same rule applies to information coming from the other side.

Personally, I use one simple rule: it is, that what is physically true will not be spiritually false. There must be continuity, a linking-up of experiences, of state with state, in which there are no contradictions. However, that is a personal view, but I find it helps to keep me anchored to fact, while at the same time allowing for many flights of speculative imaginings.

#### OTFORD BRANCH

The last meeting of the Otford Branch was attended by Mrs. Craydon (Evelyn) Thomas, who gave great

satisfaction. The descriptions given by Mrs. Thomas were recognised, and the meeting much appreciated her sympathetic manner and accompanying information.

#### OUR HEALING WORK

Just a note on this important branch of our activities. May I again appeal to any who can, and would like to, help in our group work for absent healing? We need sitters for this work. I would also like to announce that the groups will meet all through the Christmas season. I shall be in attendance every day, Christmas Day included, to carry on the work, and I would suggest that friends may send a little healing to those in need as their Christmas present from the Master. In the midst of our enjoyment we might spare a few minutes to pray for some sufferer who may, by our efforts, be comforted and helped. If people only realised the comfort and help these groups are to those in pain, they would feel it a privilege to serve.

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#### BEING

There is a deep within the deep,

A light within the light,

And many veils enfold the flame

Of spirit in its flight.

We seek to know, yet never know,

To see what is behind

The weaving substance of the worlds

Where form does ever bind.

The weaver now I know is I,

Who round myself hath drawn

The many veils which hide the light

And splendour of the dawn.

Yet, dancing on a waveless sea

The light transcendent glows,

Time fades into eternity

As Being ever flows.

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"A comparison made by Dr. V. Brussi between the work of Dr. Osty and Sir William Crookes is quoted in *La Revue Spirite* (Paris) for November. "Both of them," he is reported to have said, "are in agreement as to the imperative need for further research, in order that the truth of to-morrow may be neither kept back nor contradicted by the precipitate pronouncement of to-day. From this point of view, I regard Crookes, with his calm convictions, as far superior to Osty, in that the former drew up his reasonable hypotheses on the basis of actual facts, whereas the latter formulates his affirmations chiefly in a negative sense, as which they may one day come to be recognised as erroneous conclusions. I maintain that as a general rule in the present state of our knowledge, it is a mistake to either over-admit or over-deny facts which our reason cannot as yet explain."



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6.30 p.m. Mr. GEORGE H. LETHAM, Address.

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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11th, at 7.30 p.m.—

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Subject—"Hands, Scientific, Medical, and their use in  
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Tuesday, December 10th, at 8 p.m. MR. ERNEST HUNT.

Subject—"The Psychology of Life and After-Life."

Wednesday, December 11th at 3 p.m. CIRCLE. Mr. Glover Botham

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Clairvoyante: Mrs. Helen Spiers.

Sunday, December 15th, at 11 a.m. Mr. HORACE LEAF

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Sunday, December 15th, at 6.30 p.m. Rev. C. DRAYTON THOMAS

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Wednesday, December 11th.—Speaker: Mr. Ernest Hunt.

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Monday.

**WEEKDAY ACTIVITIES**

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

2.30—Mrs. Bird's Ladies' Healing Circle. For appointments write to

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

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

7.45 p.m.—Mrs. Bird, Circle for Trance Diagnosis and for Instruction

of potential healers.

Tuesday. Mrs. Livingstone, by appointment.

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

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

6 p.m.—Mrs. Bird's Ladies' Healing Circle. For appointments write

to Miss Robertson, Hon. Sec.

Thursday. Miss Lily Thomas, by appointment.

7 p.m.—Mrs. Bird's Mixed Healing Circle. For appointments write

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