

Light

on

Spiritualism and Psychical Research

Founded in 1881.

No. 2866. VOL. LV.

(Registered as THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1935. a Newspaper)

PRICE TWOPENCE

THE EVIDENCE FOR SURVIVAL CRITICS DIVIDED IN THEIR ARGUMENTS AGAINST IT

CAXTON HALL, WESTMINSTER, was filled in every part on Thursday evening last week (December 5th) when, under the auspices of the London Spiritualist Alliance and Quest Club, a discussion took place on "The Challenge to Modern Thought and Action by the Evidence for Survival." Miss Lind-af-Hageby, president of the L.S.A., was in the chair and was supported on the platform by the Duchess of Hamilton, Miss Nancy Price, and the speakers—Dr. Oscar Parkes, Professor A. M. Low, Mr. James Laver, Mr. Arnold Lunns, and Mr. C. E. M. Joad.

The discussion did not adhere at all closely to the line suggested—which was: What would be the probable results in science, religion and politics if the evidence for Survival were generally accepted?

Dr. PARKES did outline what he thought would be some of the results in medical treatment, particularly of the insane.

Professor Low said he believed in survival, but not because of the evidence advanced by Spiritualists, which he criticised severely.

Mr. ARNOLD LUNNS, speaking as a Roman Catholic, accepted survival, said he was grateful to the Spiritualist movement for proving Telepathy, which was fatal to Materialism, but he did not admit that the identity of alleged communicators had been established. He credited Professor Low with being "chock-full of faith."

Mr. LAVER said he did not believe in Survival, which he regarded as due to "wish-fulfilment."

Mr. JOAD said the evidence indicated that if the soul survived, the brain did not, so that what survived was less than a human being. Therefore, he did not believe in survival.

Major C. M. Mowbray, Admiral Armstrong, and the Duchess of Hamilton briefly gave reasons for accepting the evidence for survival, and Miss Lind summed-up.

Before the addresses were given, Miss NANCY PRICE gave a fine dramatic reading of Browning's Epilogue to *Assolando*, which may be taken as epitomising the attitude of one who has a secure knowledge of survival

and its implications:

One who never turned his back, but marched breast forward;
Never doubted clouds would break;
Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph;
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to awake.

THE PRESIDENT OPENS THE DISCUSSION

Miss LIND-AF-HAGEBY, opening the proceedings, welcomed the distinguished speakers and expressed her pleasure at the largeness of the audience.

"The attitude of the L.S.A.," she said, "is, of course, as most of you know, that Survival has been proved; that through very many years of patient research from study and observation, Survival has been established, and not only Survival but that there is also the possibility of communion between the so-called dead and the so-called living. The L.S.A. holds that there is no death, only a change of consciousness, functioning in another plane.

"Now," she continued, "there are a great many subjects that excite anger and hostility, fear or resentment of one kind or another. What we call Spiritualism has passed through all the phases of opposition, and I do not think there is any criticism or any attack that can frighten the true Spiritualist. Whether we are accused of relying upon fraud or imagination, or resorting to that which is blasphemous and forbidden; whether we are accused of being mentally more or less defective and incapable of judgement, those who have the evidence and who have gained conviction through experience are quite prepared to bear any sort of criticism.

"There is nothing better for us than to be criticised; and, if our convictions are strong, contradiction is the very best tonic. There is also always the danger that, having found something, we may still stand and be content. That is why I particularly welcome the discussion to-night, when we shall have the light of the criticism of very different minds from distinguished speakers who

are free to say anything they please. They are free to say there is no evidence for Survival, and they are free to say that, even if there is, it constitutes no challenge to modern thought and action.

"It is not merely a question of perpetuation, not a question—for we are not discussing eternal life at all—of remaining the same old self, thinking the same old thoughts, perpetuating *form* only. It is a question of life, life increasing, life expanding as the result of greater knowledge. Spiritualism, as we understand it, stands for life, and for the conviction that there are, in the vast universe, seen and unseen, actual possibilities and endless delights of learning."

SURVIVAL AND HEALING

Dr. OSCAR PARKES said he spoke as one who had been interested in Survival from the medical point of view for only a short time—not that he had ever doubted Survival, because he was brought up as a Swedenborgian, and had a good liberal religious education.

From the medical point of view the evidence for Survival took on a very real significance. Patients credited doctors with critical faculty and scientific knowledge, and when doctors were assured of the evidence of Survival it was a very great comfort to patients to be able to share in that assurance with them.

But, more than that, one had to ponder upon the evidence for Survival leading along paths which were hitherto closed, or only vaguely seen—that is, along the lines of treatment. Medicine was not an exact science. There were very few things proved to be true in medicine. He could almost count them on the fingers of one hand. They practised an art, and a very generous art. They were told the knowledge acquired one year would have to be thrown overboard in ten years, and they must adapt themselves to ever-changing knowledge and be ready to investigate some entirely new path. Survival appeared to him to be one of those paths. How was it to be investigated?

By a curious chain of circumstances he had been led into friendship with a man who ought to have qualified for the profession, but did not. He practises healing, and is a very good Medium; and sitting with him was a group of doctors, who were, through him, enabled to get in touch with helpers on the other side.

"So far as medicine is concerned," Dr. Parkes added, "I know for a fact that there is a growing interest amongst a quite considerable portion of the profession in the evidence for Survival. Doctors have brought me mental cases and said: 'Can you do anything with this? I don't know anything about it. Just see what you can do, I can't do anything.' Before us is the whole of that awful population of this country who are

in confinement—the lunatics. Somehow or other I feel we have got to accept the evidence of Survival in order to draw from the other side a power to heal a proportion of these people. Up to now a few of us have been privileged to do so. We are only experimenting, every case is different. We have got to call on powers, of which we know, with a certain amount of hesitancy."

SCIENTIST BELIEVES—BUT DOES NOT KNOW

Professor A. M. Low said when he received the invitation to speak he was asked: "What is your view—what would be your reaction (if I may use that horrible word) should you discover that the evidence for Survival is true?" He utterly refused to speak on that question. If he did, all he could do would be to say he would be remarkably pleased, and then sit down.

As far as Spiritualism was concerned the issue was hopelessly muddled. He believed in Survival, and thought his belief was stronger than that of the vast majority of Spiritualists, and based on incomparably better reasons. Spiritualists were right when they said that life persists, for the very excellent technical reason that we have not discovered anything in this world which can be destroyed, and it would be very strange if human life were the one exception.

They should remember that we are animals, that we are apparently descended not merely from monkeys, but that we are part of the chain of life which includes everything. It was very likely, almost certain, that we go on living—or whatever you like to call it—after we are dead, but only because life happens to be some form of energy, and they could not destroy energy.

"I think it exceedingly probable," he added, "that personality may persist too. But when it comes to proof of Survival—proof, good heavens! People would not be prepared to invest money on tests so casually made as those with which Spiritualists were satisfied. The Spiritualist tries to run before he can walk. If he would say 'thank God, life persists,' that would be enough for me."

Professor Low then criticised the evidence from voices. Did they recognise that a voice was produced by the stomach, the vocal cords, the lips, the teeth and the mouth, all giving it characterisation; and that before a voice could be produced these details must be materialised? "If I hear a voice like that of a Medium," he said, "I would be inclined to believe it; but when I hear people saying: 'This is so wonderful, this convinces me,' about a so-called spirit voice, I just shut up. I suggest that is the most fair attitude that any of us can adopt."

"I believe we survive whether we want to or not, but I do not believe you can move from a one-time plane to another so easily as we are told. In this world, I—and you, many of you—eat other animals; these too eat other animals, and so on all through. That is the great scheme. How do we know that spirits do not eat us, brood on us and kill us? It is a perfectly logical thing to say. For all we know the very diseases from which we suffer may be the delight of these spirits from another world. Suffering can be a small thing, so we are told by religious people, and I find it impossible to argue with anyone who has faith.

"I want to know, I long to know; but I am not going to believe on evidence upon which very few people in this world would invest their money."

ROMAN CATHOLIC LAYMAN'S VIEW

MR. ARNOLD LUNN said that in the preliminary announcement of the meeting, it was stated that he would represent the authoritative point of view of the Roman Catholic Church. The Roman Catholic Church had made no pronouncement on this subject, and the views he was going to put before them were those he expressed many years before he joined that somewhat unpopular body.

Professor Low had said he did not understand faith,

The Quest Club

16 Queensberry Place, London, S.W. 7.

Kensington 3292 3

(2 mins from South Kensington Station)

TO-NIGHT

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12th, at 8.15 p.m.,

A Discussion

will take place on

A BOOK OF GREAT IMPORTANCE, entitled

"*Beyond Human Personality*"

purporting to be from the late Mr. F. W. H. Myers, through the hand of

Miss Geraldine Cummins

who will preside and answer questions

The following Speakers will participate:—

SIR LAWRENCE JONES, Bart.

Mr. H. F. PREVOST BATTERSBY

Apply to the Secretary for full particulars.

and that he could not argue with people who had faith; but no man was more chock-full of faith than Professor Low. He bases his beliefs to suit his complexion. He told you that you were all descended from monkeys and fish. How does he know that? If they compared the evidence for evolution with the evidence for the phenomena in which Professor Low did not believe, they would be struck with the enormous weight of the evidence for that which he did not believe.

There was a small residuum of supernormal phenomena which had not as yet been explained in terms of natural law. That was the conviction to which he came many years ago, and nothing that had happened since had exploded it. But when they got down to the explanation of these phenomena, they were in a very different realm. "I have never been able to accept the spiritualistic explanation of those things," he said, "never been able to believe that we have established the identity of the people who are purporting to communicate with us. In fact, I have an increasing feeling in reading, and in the seances, that we are not in touch with the dead. The whole thing is too much coloured by wish fulfilment.

"Some years ago," he continued, "I lost a great friend on Everest. He was with Mallory in an attempt to climb Everest. I mentioned this to Sir Oliver Lodge, and said it was a very fine test case, because if the Spiritualists could determine where the bodies were, they would be giving us information which is not in the possession of any living being, and so the bugbear of the subconscious mind would be ruled out. From that moment, various Mediums began to get busy, and a great many scripts were sent to me, every one of which made the two men get to the summit. The one thing certain and proved, is that the lost men did not get to the summit. There you had wish fulfilment."

"I am not a Spiritualist," said Mr. Lunn in conclusion, "but I am very grateful to this movement because I think it has done one or two very important things. It has established the fact of telepathy, which is completely fatal to Materialism, and that is a very big step forward. Of course, Materialists are very pleased with a new word like Telepathy—they will believe in the Resurrection when they can call it regalanisation.

"Spiritualism has established that mind can communicate with mind without a physical medium between. That helped me very much when I was an agnostic and a sceptic myself. I owe a great debt to the Spiritualists for breaking down this materialistic prejudice and putting me on the road which I claim has led me to something rather better."

SURVIVAL AND WISH FULFILMENT

Mr. JAMES LAVER said he had always regarded the idea of Survival as wish fulfilment and very little else. He had no belief in personal Survival at all. What they were told by religious people about a future life was more fantastic than that which comes through Mediums, because though some of the mediumistic pictures were difficult to believe, the orthodox Christian view was quite incredible. "We are told," he said, "that in the future life we shall be ourselves but purified, free of our passions, our faults. But what are we apart from our passions, our faults, our appetites? Should we recognise ourselves without them? That sort of attenuated (or, if you like, spiritualised) Survival does not interest me at all. What does interest me is Survival in the great soul of the world. If people survive at all, it is in their children and in their influence on their fellow men, and that is not a contemptible thing at all. It is a very pertinent reason for trying to do something worth while in this life, as this influence will go on spreading for ever if it has been exercised for good.

"Survival to me is survival in the memories of men, in books, in tradition or in memories of a few simple souls who remember a noble person who has died. I contain within myself the thousands of people who have

in the past preceded me, and the only sin against life is to refuse to continue it. The only mean thing is to cast down the flag, and not to pass on to our descendants, our spiritual descendants—using that word in the narrowest sense—the best that we have been able to accomplish in the world."

DIMINISHED PERSONALITY

Mr. C. E. M. JOAD said there were two views of Survival—the ancient view held by Cicero, Virgil and Horace that what survived was less than the whole human being; and the Christian view that what survives is more than human, because in some way the soul of man is defiled by the human body, and emancipation from the flesh meant the development of the soul. The evidence obtained through spirit-messages seemed to him to come from diminished personalities, such as those described by Shakespeare, which "did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets." He was shocked when he was supposed to make contact with great men and women who had passed over, and he found that the intellectual content of the messages they sent was such as would normally disgrace a half-wit. On such evidence one had to come to the conclusion that if ghosts had souls they had no brains.

It had been suggested by Dr. Broad, as the least unbelievable of many explanations, that when a person died, a "psychic factor" remained and was able by combining with the body and brain of a Medium to form a temporary mind, and that it was from such temporary minds that messages came.

"If I were to plump for Survival," said Mr. Joad in conclusion, "it would be in terms of my own dreams, of a pale, rather miserable wraith without proper occupation, with my brain diminished from my present quite satisfactory state. I am going to do my own rationalising. I do not believe in Survival."

THE EVEREST TRAGEDY

Major C. H. MOWBRAY said Mr. Lunn had told them that Mediums said that Irving and Mallory got to the top. "I want to ask him," he said, "how he knows they didn't?"

Mr. Lunn said all experienced climbers were agreed they could not have reached the summit (see page 790).

NOT A QUESTION OF FAITH

Admiral ARMSTRONG said they had been told that it was because they wanted to survive and because they expected to get in touch with those on the "other side" that they thought they were able to do so. "Well," he said, "when I first got in touch with the other side I did not want to survive, and I did not expect to get in touch with anyone. I went purely and simply as an experiment with an open and critical mind, and I got what to me was absolute proof. Sceptics since then, to whom I have talked, have put my experiences down to the subconscious mind, or to telepathy; but I have had so many of these experiences that it is not a question of faith, a question of one's mind being made to believe that Survival is true."

Mention had been made of the so-called trivial messages received. To the persons who received them they might be very important; but it was a fact that high and elevating teaching did come through. He had received such teaching. It was often given in simple language; the messages spoke of love and unselfishness, and he remembered that the teaching of the greatest of all Teachers who had ever been on the earth was simple, and inculcated love and unselfishness.

WHAT ACCEPTANCE OF SURVIVAL MEANS

The DUCHESS OF HAMILTON said it seemed to her, in listening to the learned and distinguished speakers, that they had been very unfortunate in what they had read as to what takes place in seances. It was almost as if an inhabitant from Mars came to this world and, after attending an infant class in a school, went back

(Continued on page 798)

MAGIC THAT MISSES FIRE

Review by H. F. PREVOST BATTERSBY

THE many attempts to weld Magic with Romance have proved, by a fairly constant failure, the difficulty in blending knowledge with technique.

Dion Fortune, who is both an instructed and skilled craftsman, has in this, her latest volume, illustrated at once her shortcomings and her accomplishments.

It is, perhaps, impossible to convey to the ignorant the implication of processes at which the expert can do no more than hint; and were it possible to realise the apparently tragic position in which Ursula Brangwyn has been placed by her fondness for Frank Fouldes, one could take a more intelligent interest in her spiritual extrication.

Alick Brangwyn, her step-brother, after doing admirable service in the Great War, has acquired a considerable aptitude in White Magic, and no little knowledge of its Black variety, and when Ursula asked for his blessing on her engagement to Fouldes, he saw in it a chance to remedy certain faulty elements in his make-up and in hers, could they be used as magnetic poles to complete the circuit through which a divine inebriation could be poured—"an intensification of life on all its levels."

Unluckily, after Ursula had fallen in love, Fouldes fell into the hands of an unscrupulous Mulatto, Hugo Astley, a man whose dossier was of interest to the police, whose magic was Black, and more powerful than anything Brangwyn could put up against it; and who, after thoroughly corrupting young Fouldes, and teaching him certain discreditable psychological practices, was using him to get Ursula into his power, in order that her naked body should serve as an altar for the Black Mass.

Fouldes' influence had gone so far that his mere arrival had an instant hypnotic effect on the girl, so that she was powerless to resist his advances, and he could do anything with her that he desired.

At this juncture Brangwyn met Murchison, who had once served as his subaltern, in a fog in the courtyard of the British Museum. Murchison, down and out of work, in a mood very near despair, had received a psychic shock from a winged Assyrian bull in the Museum, and shouting an invocation to Pan as he stepped down into the fog, was overheard by Brangwyn, who, renewing his acquaintance, and moved by the young man's plight and psychic stress, presently offered him a job as secretary, having formed a project to rescue Ursula by supplanting Fouldes with his entirely opposite type of manhood, and aided by the Mass of the Bull, to unite them by that circuit of divine inebriation which he had purposed to use with Fouldes.

That, roughly, is the story, but this telling of it will not in the least spoil the reader's interest in its breathless development.

The ignorant may fail to realise the potency of this magical Mass, and, in point of fact, as far as this perverse pair are concerned, Nature seems to get through her job without it, which is what one might expect; Cupid's ritual being quite as black and as magical a business as any other.

Of the actors, Brangwyn is consistent and conceivable, and no doubt had some reason to rely on the mysteries he propounds, even though they fail to prove effective.

Murchison is, at once, too uncouth and too receptive; he went straight from school into the war, as ill-educated, no doubt, as most public school boys, and, after it, in the struggle to keep himself alive on an occasional three pounds a week, had little chance to repair his deficiencies.

He is pictured as gauche and ill-mannered, so that his response to the influences brought to bear on him is somewhat surprising. One likes him best when he is using his fists, and he is more convincing when hurling

a burly interloper downstairs than when resisting with his berserk rage the same villain's invisible, but very palpable magic; and though Ursula describes him as "terribly heavy and unresponsive and slow in the uptake," he can remember the priest of Diana in the Arician Grove, and assert to Brangwyn that, "The symbols never change. If you start on them at all you have got to see them through."

Ursula makes, obviously, a difficult bit of drawing. Fastidious, yet fascinated by Fouldes' filth and Astley's abominations; with a sophisticated culture, yet akin to the Maenads that followed Dionysus and tore fauns to pieces in their mystical frenzy.

"Fouldes was her true mate, and yet she knew that mating with him meant unspeakable degradation and an early death. Murchison, pressed on her by her brother as her only hope of salvation, was distasteful to her by his roughness, and boring to her by his savourless normality. . . . Love and marriage, if it meant no more than housekeeping and child-bearing, had no attraction for her." Plainly a difficult bit of work.

In spite of that, she agrees to give the Mass of the Bull a chance to operate, and it comes near doing so. "She had given herself up to the rite, body and soul, and let the tremendous forces it invoked and focussed sweep through her"; and she had, in consequence, to be separated from Murchison for a time, lest the forces between them should become too strong for his control, and should 'short' in one of those psychic upheavals so dreaded by those who pursue strange arts."

So she slipped off to a remote cottage in Wales, where Fouldes finds her and is only prevented from carrying her off by the attentions of a sheep-dog, who deprived him of the seat of his plus-fours. She is borne back to town by her brother and Murchison, but owing to certain misunderstandings with the latter, which seem rather in the line of amatory misadventure than in that of the Bull, she succumbs, when again at home, to an invitation from Astley, and accompanies him to his foul abode, to await the Black Mass at which she is to serve as the altar.

Murchison, now madly in love with her, succeeds in double-crossing Astley—who, for all his knowledge of magic, is, like other characters in the story, surprisingly easy to fool—and agrees to the Mulatto's suggestion to be suspended on the cross which has been prepared for the ceremony.

The Mass ends in a confused hurly-burly, Ursula being rescued by Murchison, whom she had cut down from the cross, and after Fouldes has been knocked out, the pair make a dramatic exit with only a loin-cloth and a velvet cloak between them.

Most romances of this kind suffer from an excess of magic; in *The Winged Bull*, the magic machinery is not sufficiently effective. The control which Fouldes and Astley have acquired over Ursula could be accounted for hypnotically, and by the quaint perversity with which some women fall in love. All of magic which they achieve is the "telepathic" storm which does upset the girl till it is countered by Murchison's fury.

Astley is supposed to have acquired some Voodoo tricks from his nigger grandmother, but they show no sign of flourishing in English soil; he has even to rely on bribes and the telephone for information he requires.

Brangwyn is said to have an "unrivalled knowledge of strange sciences," but he quite fails to handle with them the problems he is up against, and is successfully fooled by the little book-shop scout.

The Mass of the Bull failed of its objective, but it provides the author with a charming scene, and Murchison with reflections as admirable as they are surprising in his possession.

It is only because Dion Fortune is one of the few people who could give us more, that one asks so much of her. Those who have read her previous romances will need no fresh incentive to read this one.

PASSING OF PROF. CHARLES RICHEL

By STANLEY DE BRATH

PROFESSOR CHARLES RICHEL has died in Paris, on December 3rd, at the advanced age of 85 years, leaving behind him the distinguished record of a physiologist, a poet, a psychologist, and a novelist. He was a member of the Academies of Medicine and of the Sciences, and to him was awarded the Nobel prize for the discovery of Anaphylaxis, which marked a decisive advance in modern medicine.

He never claimed to be a Spiritualist, but his *Traité de Métapsychique* (translated by the publisher's wish as *Thirty Years of Psychical Research*), established the claim of psychical research to scientific status. He was President of the S.P.R. in 1923. His scientific respect for facts led him to conduct for many years direct investigations on the work of Professor Crookes—a scientist as distinguished as himself—of whom he said:

"The idolatry of current ideas was so dominant at that time that no pains were taken either to verify or to refute Crookes' statements. Men were content to ridicule them, and I avow with shame that I was among the wilfully blind. Instead of admiring the heroism of a recognised man of science who dared, then in 1872, to say that there really are phantoms that can be photographed and whose heart-beats can be heard, I laughed."

He dedicated his book "To the memory of my illustrious friends and masters, Sir William Crookes and Frederic Myers, who, equally distinguished by their courage and their insight, were the first to trace the outlines of the new science."

That book is based on facts alone. At the conclusion of thirty years of experimental investigation, he laid down as incontrovertible, three fundamental phenomena of that science, in these words;

1. Cryptesthesia is a faculty of cognition that differs from the normal sensorial faculties.

2. Telekinesis is a mechanical action that differs from all known mechanical action, being exerted at a distance and without contact, on persons or objects, under certain determinate conditions.

3. Ectoplasm is the formation of divers objects, which in most cases seem to emerge from a human body and take on the semblance of material realities—clothing, veils, and living bodies.

The first (French) edition was speedily exhausted, and a second edition was called for and published. The whole work bears the impress of an acute scientific mind in its careful verification of facts. In his conversations with me as a personal friend and translator of his book, he laid no stress on theoretical considerations, but much on the factual aspect of the matter treated. He said that till the facts are generally accepted, all theory is necessarily premature.

His testimony to the reality of Cryptesthesia—the Sixth Sense—as subsequently explained in his little book under that title, is very fully given in the *Traité*. It occupies no less than 279 pages in that book. The instances given are not in the least abstruse. The style is eminently readable, and the book should be read by anyone who takes the matter seriously; the author is not looking beyond verification of fundamental fact. Numberless instances are stated of the lucid faculty, and he says (p. 180): "E. Bozzano has studied the possible part of 'psychometry' in the experiments with Mrs. Piper, and he thinks, with good reason, that neither telepathy nor cryptesthesia accounts for everything in these experiments; he concludes that the Spiritualist theory alone covers all the facts. But why go so far? Would it not be wiser to say, with me, that an unusual faculty of cognition exists?"

Under "Premonitions," Professor Richet gives some very remarkable instances—the premonition of accidental death of M. Lukawski, of Petersburg, in 1895, the Gallet prediction of the election of M. Casimir Perrier by 451 votes, and the Sorrel prediction of the Great War (p. 387). He did not at that time know of

the much more extensive prophecies of the war published by Dr. Osty in 1925. He concludes (p. 396): "I shall not allow myself to be led into vain speculation, I shall abide in the domain of strict facts. There are indisputable and verified facts of premonition. Their explanation may or may not come later, meanwhile the facts are there. *There are predictions.*"

It is in the latter part of his book that he deals with what he calls "Objective Metapsychics." He accepts cryptesthesia, telekinesis, ectoplasm, materialisations and premonitions, as abundantly proven, but faithful to his adherence to fact, he thinks levitations, the phenomena of the "double," and apports—doubtful, as he had no opportunities of examining any of these experimentally. Of psychic photographs, direct writing, musical sounds and psychic lights, he says: "I do not hesitate to think them fairly probable, but they are not proved." These also he did not examine.

In the whole of this book his devotion to fact is as remarkable as his clarity in experiment. In his investigations with Dr. Geley, he made an admixture of cholesterin with the paraffin in which materialised hands dipped to produce "gloves," dematerialising to release them. The presence of cholesterin could easily be tested chemically. His work in this direction is impeccable.

Nevertheless, there were those who endeavoured to force him to Spiritualistic conclusions of Survival, which he expressly disclaimed. "Even if a case were to appear more astounding than that of George Pelham, I should prefer to suppose an extreme perfection in transcendental cognition, rather than to suppose that this centre is a real personality—the surviving soul, the will and consciousness of a self that has disappeared, a self dependent on a brain now reduced to dust" (p. 213).

Now this gives the clue to Richet's intellectual position. He states (p. 619) that after death, "man is no longer man." "If, then (as I cannot believe), there are spirits, and they are endowed with mysterious powers (which I cannot understand), . . . they cannot be the consciousness of deceased persons. They belong to other worlds, different from our material and moral world."

In other words, the distinguished physiologist cannot get rid of the supposition that "the reasonable soul and flesh are one man." It naturally follows that till soul and flesh are re-united, man is no longer human. On this ground the Church maintained the monstrous doctrine of a general resurrection. Richet expressly refuses to solve the problem, but gives the three hypotheses by which it is currently met. He adds "a fourth proposition which has every chance of being true—we have as yet no satisfactory hypothesis to put forward."

Since he wrote this book (1920), an advance has been made, favoured as scientific by Sir Oliver Lodge: that the soul belongs to the realm of Energy. Its inanimate congeners are electricity, magnetism, heat, light and kindred forces. It draws its life from the spirit which is potentially akin to the Divine Life that pervades the world. The body, including the brain, is merely its material instrument in a material world. The essentially human soul knows good and evil, as the animal soul does not. In virtue of its animating spirit it carries its life and character away with it, and leaves the body dead.

Richet—eminent man of science, brave, kindly, courteous, devoted to truth alone, tolerant of others' opinions, but resolute in refusing all unproven hypotheses—wrote this book which reveals his deepest convictions. Those who use it as he meant it—as a store-house of valid experiment on which metapsychics is securely and scientifically founded, will find data which will satisfy their minds. They can add the later generalisation which will satisfy their hearts. Those who locate the human personality in the intelligence with its vast subconsciousness which forms the body, rather than in the brain, will have no difficulty in harmonising facts.

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 "RETURN" OF LEIGH MALLORY

Sir,—Among the many thought-provoking speeches made at the meeting at Caxton Hall on Thursday last week, I was particularly interested in that of Mr. Arnold Lunn. He referred to the death of Leigh Mallory and his companion in their attempt to reach the summit of Mount Everest some years ago. I understood him to say that in all the communications received through Mediums purporting to emanate from Mallory, the statement was made that they *had* achieved their object. Certain discoveries, however, now prove that these explorers had obviously lost their lives before they reached the top of the mountain. Therefore, in this instance at least, Mr. Lunn suggested that all Mediums had proved to be wrong.

This statement recalled to my mind the fact that Miss Cummins had received entirely contrary information in this connection.

Since I myself had risen at 3 a.m. when at Darjiling in 1911, and had made an expedition to a point some miles away in an endeavour to see the sun rise on Everest, I was naturally interested in the various attempts to conquer the mountain.

In November, 1924, Miss Cummins and I were conducting a series of experiments in automatic writing. Without telling the automatist of my intention, one evening I asked her guide, "Astor," if he could find a man called Leigh Mallory. I stated that he was a complete stranger to us, and therefore the only thing to be done was to give his name and await results.

After a pause the handwriting changed, and a communicator explained that he was extremely puzzled at being able to write, and, though anxious to do so, seemed very confused. He made no reference to Everest, but finally signed his name as Mallory, and asked if he might come again. Nothing of an evidential character was given. He soon "faded out," and another communicator entered into conversation with me. I thought the experiment a failure and put the matter aside. About three weeks later, however, Miss Cummins' guide announced that someone was waiting: "a man who was here before and found it hard to speak." This unexpected comer then wrote that he was Mallory, and began to speak of the awful cold. He went on to say he wondered if anyone would succeed: that it couldn't be done; "but it was always my dream—Everest." He wrote that nothing could give the necessary oxygen: that he "stuck out" everything else.

I then asked him if he had reached the summit? He replied: "Not quite. It rose right above me. I remember my despair. Oh! if I'd got to the summit and died I wouldn't mind... It wasn't death I feared, it was failure—Everest—it haunts me still."

My notes made at the time, state that the name of the mountain was written faintly and with emotion, the hand of the Medium shook. After this the communicator gave an account of his death, and asked if there had been any "fuss" about it. I replied that there had naturally been much conjecture as to whether or no he had succeeded or failed. "No, I failed," was then written large and falteringly.

Up to this point Miss Cummins had no idea as to the identity of the communicator. She takes little interest in travels, and seems not to have gathered any connection between the Everest Expedition and the name of this communicator. For it will be noted that I had stated his name in the first instance. After this sitting, she told me that she had an idea that some one had been killed mountaineering in the Alps. I told her that I should tell her nothing and, being very occupied with other matters, this communication was not again

referred to. However, having been a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society for a number of years, I received their journal. On January 1st, 1925, when Miss Cummins was coming for a sitting, I inadvertently left the copy on the sofa. While waiting for me she happened to pick it up, and suddenly exclaimed: "Oh, was it Mallory? I never thought about him."

On January 7th and 21st Mallory communicated again, giving an account of his experiences before and after death, and stating that he did not believe that they would ever get to the summit of Everest. The lack of oxygen could not, he thought, be overcome.

It may be asked why I never mentioned these scripts before. My reason is that I was unacquainted with anyone who knew Mallory, and had I approached the Geographical Society with these details I should probably have been considered insane. Moreover, I heard that messages were being received purporting to come from him in which it was claimed that he definitely stated that he had achieved the object of the expedition. So I put the scripts away sadly, counting the experiment a failure.

E. B. GIBBES.

PREVISION

Sir,—There is a small oversight in Mr. Prevost Battersby's reading of *He Who Sees* which yet makes a profound difference in the meaning of this work. Lord Duncan's psychic intuitions and his desire for guidance in these difficult realms are mentioned in the first few pages. The journey to Chinese Turkestan (amid the "Aurel Stein" country north of Peter Fleming's route) is followed by years of study, and the gradual development and perfectioning of his psychic gift are steadily portrayed. The precepts for development given in the book are hard, but not unfamiliar to those who have sat in serious spiritual circles. It is disappointing, therefore, to find Mr. Prevost Battersby writing: "The acquisition of this amazing power of precognition from reading a Buddhist manuscript is altogether too cheap a device." Arduous and painful development is something more than "acquisition."

"Beginning to undermine his sanity"—this idea of the Dr. Watson-like Savigne is patiently and completely destroyed as the book proceeds.

I am sorry Mr. Prevost Battersby did not give us his views about prevision not negating free will.

THE TRANSLATOR OF THE BOOK.

IS THERE AN ANSWER

Sir,—Is there an answer to the theory propounded in the book *He Who Sees*. Is it possible to "step outside" the limits of "time-measurement" and "look before and after," and still choose your way through life?

Westbourne Grove,
London, W.2.

A. G. THOMPSON.

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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.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"CREDULITY OF SCIENTISTS"

Sir,—Any who listened to the debate at the Caxton Hall, must have been struck by the extraordinary credulity of scientists, in anything outside their own sphere of experiment. Mr. Joad, for instance, appeared to believe that what survives is a diminished shadow of ourselves, which wanders about until it finds the dispossessed body of a Medium, when it combines with this body to make a complete whole, which is neither the personality of the Medium, nor that of the departed, but an amalgam of both. He evidently finds this hypothesis easier to believe than the simple one of a complete survival of personality.

Professor Low, while believing in survival as an act of faith, cannot believe in any of the evidence for it. He finds it easier to believe that, as we are animals and eat animals, which have eaten other animals, it is quite probable that we, in our turn, are eaten by the spirits, so as to complete the circle of life.

Another gentleman, Mr. Arnold Lunn, feels quite sure that what we get in a seance is the thought left behind by the people who have departed the earth. Presumably this thought is just lying around in chunks, waiting for the Medium to pick up whatever bits come in most handy for the various sitters. He did not tell us how authenticated cases of prevision are to fit into this theory. Are these thoughts not yet born, which are floating about in advance, also ready to be picked up?

I was astonished, not so much at what these eminent men do *not* believe, as at the extraordinary things that they are willing to believe, merely as conjectures, without proof of any kind. And when anyone believes the evidence of their own senses, after long and careful enquiry, whose results have beaten down scepticism and incredulity, then his final conclusion is merely a "wish fulfilment." It is all rather amusing and pathetic.

HETTY LANDSTONE.

ANOTHER KIND OF "CHALLENGE"

Sir,—I imagine every Spiritualist who attended the meeting at Caxton Hall last Thursday evening hoping to hear the "Challenge to Spiritualism" taken up in a serious and worthy manner, came away woefully disappointed; and I venture to make a suggestion for a different kind of "Challenge," and one which would give those who have *knowledge* of survival a chance to make it known.

I suggest that three or possibly four Spiritualists of known integrity and culture should be asked to give in as brief and telling a manner as possible two or perhaps three first-hand experiences of their own, in all of which telepathy and the subconscious should be ruled out. Three, or perhaps four, non-Spiritualists (not necessarily men of scientific distinction, but before all things, persons who had made some kind of study of the subject and were not so abnormally ignorant as all the critics of Survival were last Thursday), could be asked to take each experience quoted by the Spiritualists and criticise fairly and intelligently the details which were alleged to prove Survival.

Personally, I have no wish to cling to any proof which can be shown to be false or unfounded, and I believe the majority of Survivalists only want the truth and would be willing to subject their own experiences to fair criticism and analysis.

Rivermead Court, Hurlingham. ETHEL ASHTON JONSON.

[Note—Last week's Caxton Hall meeting was the second of a series for the consideration of "The Challenge to Modern Thought and Action by the Evidence for Survival." The next meeting of the series will take place on January 23rd at Caxton Hall. It will also be a discussion and will offer detailed replies to the attacks on Spiritualism made at the meeting of December 5th.—Editor.]

A GREAT PSYCHOMETRIST

By MAJOR C. H. MOWBRAY

THE evening before I sat with Frau Plaat, the psychometrist, I asked my daughter to give me something she had worn constantly to take to the sitting. She suggested a slave bangle, which I thought would answer my purpose admirably, and I told her to wrap it up in brown paper, put it in a large envelope, and seal it. This she did, and she then brought me some Egyptian mourning beads which I had got in Thebes from a first-rate dragoman and which I had every reason to believe were genuine and not made in Vienna, where so many of these so-called curios used to come from in pre-war days. These she wrapped up in exactly the same way, and I put a small mark on the outside of this envelope so that I could distinguish it from the other.

Next day I had the sitting, the Medium remaining seemingly quite normal; and I began by placing on the table the envelope which I thought contained the bangle. Frau Plaat picked it up, but immediately dropped it, remarking: "You have brought me something very horrible; it belonged to an evil woman who has been dead a long time."

"I answered: 'I don't know if she is an evil woman or not, but I do know she was alive this morning.'"

The Medium picked it up again, but again dropped it, saying: "She is dead; she has been dead a very, very long time."

A FORTUNATE MISTAKE

I then examined the envelope and discovered that quite inadvertently I had given her the wrong one and that she had handled the one containing the beads!

I said I was sorry I had made a mistake, "I think she is dead." Whereupon Frau Plaat said: "Of course she is. She has been dead for ages. She used to live in a country over the seas, further away than France or Germany. She was a dancer. She belonged to a religion that is not our religion. I can see her dancing in a huge temple with enormous pillars." (Great Temple of Amon at Karnak?) She then described her face, form, colour of her hair, height, etc., giving me a most vivid picture of a very pretty woman.

Here Frau Plaat put her two hands together and posed exactly like the figures one sees in ancient Egyptian sculptures, and added: "She died in great agony at the age of about forty from a disease peculiar to women."

Now, of course, there was no way of verifying the Medium's statement, but she most certainly described an Egyptian dancing girl, and it is quite likely the beads had belonged to one who lived three or four thousand years ago.

I was so glad I had muddled up the envelopes, as, under the circumstances, it would be difficult to put this down to our old friend telepathy!

I then gave Frau Plaat the envelope containing the slave bangle. After having given an excellent character reading of the owner, she said: "She has a bad leg," but gradually located the hurt to the ankle. She told me that there had been "rubbing" which had done no good, but in time it would get all right again.

Now, my daughter had hurt her ankle at winter sports in Switzerland; it had given her a lot of trouble.

Other people who tested this Medium got equally good results; and, if they would relate them, I am sure readers would be interested.

Later, I had many talks with Frau Plaat, and she told me of the good work she had done in a foreign capital when working with the police tracking down criminals.

I have had equally good results with Mrs. Osborne Leonard, when she has read the past *and the future* from articles I have handed to her, but these must be reserved for another time.

Light

All communications for the EDITOR should be addressed "The Editor of Light, 16 Queensberry Place, South Kensington, London, S.W.7." Phone: Kensington 3292-3

Subscription Rates (including postage) — 12 months, 10s.6d.; 6 months, 5s.6d., or from Newsagents, 2d. weekly.

Subscriptions should NOT be sent to the Editor, but should in all cases be addressed to the Manager of Light, 16 Queensberry Place, South Kensington, London, S.W.7. Cheques and Postal Orders should be crossed and made payable to L.S.A. PUBLICATIONS, LTD.

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ADVERTISEMENTS: For rates apply: The Advertisement Manager, LIGHT, 16 Queensberry Place, South Kensington, London, S.W.7. (Phone Kensington 3292-3), Telegrams: "Survival, London."

Entered as Second Class Matter, March 12, 1929, at the Post Office, at Boston Mass., under the Act of March 9, 1879 (Sec. 327 P.L. and R.)

EDITOR GEORGE H. LETHEM

As We See It

THE CAXTON HALL MEETING

THE discussion on "the Challenge to Modern Thought and Action by the Evidence for Survival," which took place at the Caxton Hall on December 5th, was disappointing to those who had hoped to find, in the arguments advanced by some of the distinguished speakers, support for the fundamental truths of Spiritualism. The meeting was the second of a series, the first of which was devoted to a detailed statement of the case for Spiritualism; and other meetings affording opportunity for the presentation of opposition and criticism will follow.

The idea underlying the series of meetings is that the cause of Spiritualism can only be strengthened by giving Spiritualists an opportunity of hearing views which are contrary, or even antagonistic, to their own—thus stimulating critical thought and the capacity to understand the standpoint of those who cannot agree with them. These meetings will also serve to draw into a discussion of Spiritualism people who otherwise would not attend meetings. The strength of our convictions may well be measured by our readiness to listen to "the other side" with patience and interest.

With the exception of Dr. Oscar Parkes, the speakers of last Thursday night's meeting confined themselves to criticism of the evidence for Survival: clever, courteous but uncompromising. The really interesting feature was that whilst they agreed in rejecting the evidence, they did so on grounds so different as to contradict each other and so, in effect, cancel out each other's arguments. Thus, Mr. James Laver, in a very amusing speech, set the evidence aside altogether and said plainly he did not believe in Survival. Professor Low said he did believe in Survival on scientific grounds but rejected Spiritualistic evidence, such as that obtained by the direct voice, because he did not understand how it is obtained. Mr. Joad accepted some at least of the psychic phenomena as genuine, but said the evidence pointed, not to full Survival of personality but to the persistence of something less than man—something that "did squeak and gibber." And rather astonishingly, Mr. Arnold Lunn, a Roman Catholic, twitted Professor Low with being "chock full of faith" and asserted that there certainly is a "small residuum of supernormal phenomena which have not as yet been explained in terms of natural law," but whilst he believed in Survival, he had never been able to accept the Spiritualistic evidence of identity.

The moral of the discussion would seem to be that, so far as scientific men are concerned, interest is still centred in the nature and credibility of the evidence, rather than on the implications which would follow its acceptance.

THOUGHT AND MATTER

By A. G. THOMPSON, M.B., Ch.B. (Oxon.)

PROFESSOR LOW asks for my views on the "possibilities of affecting the waves of matter by thought" (LIGHT, October 17th), a state of affairs that of course obtains whenever we laugh or cry.

He states that it is a subject with which I am well qualified to deal, but to him it remains somewhat of a mystery. I am afraid that it is equally a mystery to me as it has been to all the philosophers since the world began, and is really only part of the larger question of the nature of mind and matter and their relation to each other; the full knowledge of which is most probably beyond the comprehension of human beings.

We have, however, some reasons to believe that the brain must be a thinking apparatus and that ordinary thoughts have some sort of physical basis. Various observations by physicists and psychologists point in this direction. The discovery of possible form waves referred to by Sir Oliver Lodge in *Beyond Physics*, and the galvanometer experiments of the psychologists, in which the subjects of experiment register definite reactions to various types of thought and emotion, are examples; and, of course, Professor Low knows far more about these things than I do. But at the same time, we must not forget that behind and beyond the brain and its thoughts are regions quite outside the range of physics, only perhaps to be apprehended, and that but dimly, by unusual members of the human race—such as poets, mystics, and Mediums. We believe it is on these regions that the brain and its thoughts are dependent. If thoughts, however, have this wave-like nature, we can more readily appreciate their actions on the waves of matter, and understand how pleasurable or painful thoughts have their corresponding bodily reactions, and also get some idea as to the processes that underlie such undoubted facts as supernormal healing and the production of stigmata.

Then we come to thought acting on matter at a distance as manifested in such phenomena as telekinesis and materialisation. These, too, surely have a similar sort of physical basis and at the same time show the possibility of life in form of a nature that is quite different to the one with which we are familiar. Gustave Geley's book *From the Unconscious to the Conscious*, with its original and carefully-reasoned theories, seems to me to throw a good deal of light on these questions.

Psychometry, of course, presents a special problem, as apparently we have here thoughts more or less indefinitely associated with material objects. Again, the possibilities of thought acting on matter in the most extraordinary ways are exemplified in the feats of the Yogis. These men undergo a rigorous discipline of both mind and body lasting over years, from which results as a by-product the power of performing the most amazing feats.

The ancient and recondite philosophy by which they explain the production of these phenomena, overlaid as they are with Oriental imagery and symbolism, do not appeal much to Western minds, but are well worthy of study and in some ways correspond with certain of our own theories as to the nature of human personality. These adepts rely on help and teaching from so-called Masters and Powers of a superhuman character, just as in the West many believe themselves to be in touch with Intelligences that communicate from a super-physical state of being and claim to glean an appreciable amount of information from these sources. Such books as *The Road to Immortality* (the author of which is believed to be the late F. W. H. Myers), and some of the discourses of "Red Cloud" (the Guide of Estelle Roberts) deal with the nature of human personality and incidentally treat of the possibilities of thought in its action on matter. They are most interesting to read, but often very hard to comprehend.

LOOKING ROUND THE WORLD

S.P.R. PRESIDENT'S VIEWS

THE first of a series of articles on Psychical Research appeared in *The Spectator* of December 6th. It was written by Dr. C. D. Broad, Professor of Moral Philosophy at Cambridge, who is at present President of the S.P.R. This is rather fortunate, in view of the fact that Dr. Broad was quoted by Mr. C. E. M. Joad, at the Caxton Hall meeting, as the authority for the "psychic factor" theory which was made to appear so ridiculous.

Dr. Broad makes it clear that he has little or no belief in the reality of *physical* mediumistic phenomena; but with regard to *mental* phenomena he says "we have a different story to tell." The most interesting of the mental phenomena, he writes, occur in connection with trance-Mediums. "If," he continues, "we look only at the best features of the best cases of trance communication, it is difficult to resist the conviction that the spirit of a dead man has survived and is communicating; if, on the other hand, we consider the mass of irrelevance, error, ignorance and twaddle in which these gems are embedded, it is equally difficult to believe anything of the kind."

This, we suggest most respectfully to the President of the S.P.R., is an example of very bad reasoning, since good affirmative evidence cannot possibly be negated by defective evidence.

Moreover, it should surely occur to Dr. Broad that the proportion of good, clear, rational evidence in the communications of reliable trance Mediums (and no others should be considered), is at least as large as it would be if physically-alive men and woman, picked at random, were asked to try to prove their identity by means of messages which had to pass through two intermediaries (the "control" and the Medium) and over a telephone wire.

DR. RICHEL PASSES ON

Dr. Charles Richet, most famous of French Psychical Researchers, has passed on at the age of 85. Elsewhere in this issue, we publish an appreciation of his work from the pen of Mr. Stanley De Brath, which gives some idea of the great results he achieved. Spiritualists were sometimes inclined to regret that Dr. Richet never came out boldly—like Sir Oliver Lodge—in support of the claim that Survival is a scientifically-demonstrated fact. His caution would not allow him to do this, but he came very near to it; and it should be remembered that he gave the full weight of his name and scientific reputation to the claim that the reality of psychic phenomena is beyond reasonable dispute.

WOULD LIKE TO BE A SPIRITUALIST

Interviewed regarding the psychic features of his new novel, *When Sorrows Come*, Mr. Horace Annesley Vachell said to a representative of the *Bath Chronicle*: "I am not a Spiritualist, though I should like to be one." Further, he declared himself strongly in favour of the "open mind" on the great problems which Spiritualism raises, and deplored "the intolerance of those people who, although mentally capable of approaching the question fairly, prefer to treat it with contempt."

We could wish that one who knows so much about the subject as Mr. Vachell would declare himself as wholly convinced, but it is something to have his assurance that he finds Spiritualism attractive.

This is not an unusual attitude. Professor A. M. Low at the Caxton Hall meeting declared that he "wanted most dreadfully to know that Survival was a fact" although he had just previously said he believed in Survival as a matter of scientific deduction.

BRITISH COLLEGE PRINCIPAL

MR. S. O. COX is to be the new Hon. Principal of the British College of Psychic Science, Queen's Gate, London, taking up his duties as from January 1st. Since the much-regretted passing of Mrs. Philip Champion de Crespigny early this year, the position of Hon. Principal has been occupied by Mrs. Hewat McKenzie, the joint founder (with the late Mr. Hewat McKenzie) of the College, but she stipulated when she stepped into the breach that she should remain only until a successor had been secured. Now Mr. Cox has been asked to take the position, and he has accepted.

Mr. Cox spent many years in India in Government service, and whilst in that land of mystery he became deeply interested in Eastern philosophy and in the esoteric side of the Eastern religions. On his retirement in 1924, he returned to England, and soon embarked on psychic study. He became a member of the College in 1926, joined the Council in 1911, and has been actively interested in its affairs ever since. In *Psychic Science* of April, 1934, there appeared a long quotation from a script received by Mr. Cox through the mediumship of one of his family, which (like the Myers scripts that are to be discussed at the L.S.A. to-night) deals with the ultimate destiny of man.

We extend to Mr. Cox our congratulations on his appointment.

TO-NIGHT'S L.S.A. DISCUSSION

At the L.S.A. to-night (Thursday, December 12th), Miss Geraldine Cummins is to preside over a meeting at which her latest book, *Beyond Human Personality*, is to be discussed. This book (which is based on a long series of scripts received through the hand of Miss Cummins, and purporting to come from the late Mr. F. W. H. Myers) is a continuation of *The Road to Immortality*, and deals with the possibilities of human development on the "other side" up to the point where it passes beyond personality as we know it. Introductory addresses are to be given by Sir Lawrence Jones, Bart., and Mr. H. F. Prevost Battersby, who have made intensive studies of the messages; and then questions are to be answered by Miss Cummins and probably also by Miss E. B. Gibbes, her friend and collaborator. No better method could be devised for obtaining a real understanding of the many problems which face the reader in this remarkable book. There is certain to be a large and very attentive audience.

It has often been suggested—and may be suggested again—that if certain critics would read Miss Cummins' books, or attend a discussion such as that to be held at the L.S.A. to-night, they would be cured of the mistaken fancy that nothing of importance ever comes through from the "other side."

WHY NOT TRY?

Scientists are still discussing "fire-walking," and quite a number of them claim to know just how Kuda Bux performed the feat recently in a Surrey garden. Writing to *The Listener*, G. Walmisley-Dresser makes the practical suggestion that these gentlemen should put their theories to the test, using their own feet for the demonstration. "Surely," he writes, "this is a case in which all doubts can be set at rest by the scientific method—*solvitur ambulando*."

A PROXY SITTING

An excellent example of a successful proxy sitting with Mrs. Ruth Vaughan, at the L.S.A., is described on page 796 in this issue. It is hard to understand how even the most hardened sceptic of spirit-communication could suggest with any show of reason that the results were obtained by telepathy. It provides an excellent little bit of evidence, and incidentally proves once more the high quality of Mrs. Ruth Vaughan's mediumship.

TOPSY : THE STORY OF A SOUL

APPENDIX TO THE STORY

THIS Appendix, says Mr. Norman Swaine, the author of the book, *Topsy, the Story of a Soul* (from which long quotations have been given in LIGHT), contains a justification, not a proof. "Absolute proof," he says, the proof that renders argument superfluous, can only result from personal experience."

Those who have met Topsy need no further evidence, but "for those to whom she is but a name these personal testimonies have been collected to give them further assurance . . . Such evidence has been volunteered by people to whom Topsy has brought proof that their loved ones live on beyond the grave, and that both life and love are the flowers of eternity."

The first piece of evidence quoted is taken from an account printed in the *Sunday Mercury* of October 9th, 1932, and written by Councillor Blackwell, F.R.B.A., of Erdington, Birmingham. At a sitting to which this man went, Topsy described a boy who, she said, had been drowned in a reservoir. She told how he had left his bicycle at the foot of a certain hill and gone up on foot, and how he had walked along the bank of the reservoir, tried to cross a lock gate, lost his balance and fallen in. This was quite correct. The boy then told Topsy that he had seen Councillor Blackwell with his (the boy's) father at the funeral, "And," added Topsy, "he is very glad that you said what you did to his daddy."

"Well," asked the sitter, "what did I say?"

"You said: 'This is not the end but the beginning, you know that. Come along—buck up!'" "Which," admits Councillor Blackwell, "is exactly what I did say."

After further corroborative details, including the name of the Councillor's great-grandfather, the sitter asked whether Topsy could give the name of the boy who had been drowned?

"Give me a sheet of paper and a pencil," was the reply, "and I will write what he gives me."

This was done, and the entranced Medium wrote in capital letters the boy's Christian name, Kenneth, and also his surname, and underneath drew a bicycle—the "two-wheeled bus" on which he had been. She then asked that this paper be given to the lad's father with

the request that he would come and talk to his boy at a service to be held a month later at Sutton Coldfield Church. This actually took place. "The Medium on that occasion descended from the platform in trance state, walked to the father, placed her hands on his shoulders and gave him a message so conclusive as to leave no possible doubt that he was in touch with his son. . . . The evidence given throughout in this case leaves no loopholes for doubt, and constitutes an amazing proof of the survival of the soul after death."

Mr. J. L. Graham, of Bradford, a psychic investigator of many years standing, adds his evidence. He tells us in this Appendix how Topsy, through Mrs. Nash, not only told his daughter that an examination for which she was preparing would be held in Sheffield (not where they had expected) and that she would pass well; but furthermore that on another occasion she told the daughter, who was training to be a dancer, that she saw her doing Pavlova's famous "Swan Dance." Two hours previously the family had been discussing this very point, and Mr. Graham says: "We were all struck with this remarkable allusion to what we had been discussing. As a psychic investigator I was very much impressed. These are the things that do impress—they are far more important than some things that are considered important in seances. Had there been even a minute reference to dancing previous to the seance in Mrs. Nash's presence, it would have been different."

Mr. Cadman, President of Cannock Spiritualist Church, declares that "life has been brighter for having met Topsy." He writes: "Some years ago I received a message from someone cancelling a date I had booked some month previously (as Secretary). I felt the excuses were false, threw the card away in disgust and said to my wife: 'These are all lies, and I'll have no more of it. I'll pack all the books up and hand them in.' I can vouch for it that this was mentioned to no one, but at a sitting a few days later, judge of my surprise when Topsy said to me: 'Oh, it's all lies—I'll pack them up and hand them in!' 'What do you mean, Topsy,' I asked. 'You know what I mean. I was in your home when you said that to your missa lady.'"

Mr. Atkins, of Huntingdon, near Stafford, was told by Topsy at his first sitting with her that she had been to see him. "Naturally," he says, "I asked her where she had seen me, and to my amazement she told me that she had been with me in the pit. She told me how I had been inspecting the coal-face and how I had crawled along from one stall to another. I asked several questions about it, and each one was correctly answered. I even suggested several incorrect answers to try to mislead her, but she was never at fault and I was compelled to admit that she had been with me that day in the pit. She even repeated some of the conversation of the miners as they waited for me to fire a shot."

From Mrs. Aldridge, of Godsall, comes the following: "At my very first sitting Topsy said of my father: 'He says he took your mother as a flower': my mother's maiden name was Ada Flower. She described a shop in Darlington to which I thought of going, even telling me the amount of rent I should pay. All of this proved perfectly true. On one occasion I was worried about a letter from a brother in Canada. At the seance next day, Topsy at once spoke about him, saying she had been to see him—that he had been grooming his grey horse. This was news to me, but I have since verified it. She gave me excellent advice, the wisdom of which has since been proved."

Mrs. Parker, of Moulton, describes how Topsy brought her son "Elic" to a seance, adding: "He says I am a duffer because I don't say it properly—but I can say *Eric*." She then went on to describe my home to which she said my boy Eric had taken her.

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IN SOUTH AFRICA

By G. E. WRIGHT

THE period of our stay in Port Elizabeth having ended, we embarked on board the *Warwick Castle* for Durban on October 18th, many of the Church Members setting the seal on their kindness by assembling on the quay to bid us farewell.

Arriving at Durban at 7 a.m. on Sunday, we entertained but little expectation of seeing anyone present to meet us, and were therefore surprised and gratified to find ourselves surrounded by about a dozen friends, motored to the home of one of them for breakfast, and afterwards to a comfortable hotel, situated amid delightful surroundings.

The same evening we took the service at the Durban Spiritual Church, where, in spite of the heat, there was a large attendance, including many members of other churches.

During the 15 days which we spent in this beautiful city, following our fixed practice, we had the privilege of working in turn with each of the three Churches established therein, so that nearly every day was occupied either with public services, smaller gatherings or individual interviews with persons who sought comfort and counsel. Among those who came for this personal help we met with many whose stories disclosed conditions of great need, intense yearning, and poignant heartache; stories which, if it were permissible to publish them, would make interesting and pathetic reading, illustrating, if that were necessary, the truth that, whether in this country or that, human nature and human experience are much the same. These interviews also disclosed that, here again, the interest in the subject of Spiritualism is widespread and by no means limited to that of organised bodies.

As elsewhere, so in Durban, we found a regrettable condition of aloofness, or division; but, greatly to the credit of each of the Churches, when it became known that we on our part were resolved to eschew all discrimination between one and another and to disregard labels of every kind, they readily closed up their ranks to the extent, not only of accepting our services in turn, but also, on occasions, of attending meetings of Churches other than their own. Thus there came about renewals of friendships which had long been strained or broken, and the climax was reached on the last day of our stay when, at a reception arranged by one of the Churches, all of the three were represented by officers and members.

Among those who spoke were Mr. Allen, Vice-President of the Durban Spiritual Church, the President, Mrs. Merryweather, being in poor health; Mrs. Getcliffe, President of the Greater World Christian Spiritualist Church; and Mr. Akitt, President of the Spiritualist Church of South Africa.

In writing of Durban, it is difficult to refrain from mention of the natural beauties that abound in and around the city. Viewing for the first time the entrancing flowers of the jacaranda trees, the glorious hues of the bourgainvilleas, and a wealth of bloom and verdure besides, we seemed to have made an excursion into the heart of fairyland.

A POLISH MEDIUM IN LONDON

Members of the British College had the interesting experience of sitting on several occasions recently with Madame Sabira, of Warsaw, a sensitive whom Dr. de Radwan has invited to London on a visit. Madame Sabira is accompanied by her sister, and Dr. de Radwan and an interpreter were also present at the group sittings. Her particular powers are in diagnosis, character, health and general conditions, preceived through the handling of objects, photographs, letters or ornaments, which she holds in her hands or places upon her forehead. The delineations are given in a quick, concise manner, which make translation easy, and a number of the participants acknowledged correct readings.

CONFRATERNITY MEETING

REV. A. HAWORTH, an Anglican Vicar whose parish is among the Cumberland Fells, was the speaker for the Clergy at the Confraternity meeting at the Fortune Theatre, London, on Friday last. He described how he and his wife were led to obtain definite proofs of Survival and how his knowledge helped him in his work.

The Rev. C. Drayton Thomas, who also spoke, said he was not sure whether he spoke for Clergy or Spiritualists; but he had been a Christian minister for 39 years and a Spiritualist for 19 years—so his hearers could draw their own conclusions.

Admiral Armstrong spoke for the Spiritualists, telling how he was convinced, and quoting evidence which he claimed eliminated telepathy.

The Ven. A. F. Sharp presided, supported by Mrs. St. Clair Stobart, and clairvoyant descriptions were given by Mrs. Estelle Roberts. The attendance was not quite so large as at the earlier meetings.

ANCIENT EGYPTIAN LANGUAGE

Dr. F. H. Wood, of Blackpool, the recorder of the "Rosemary" scripts, lectured on the ancient Egyptian language tests in Queen's Gate Hall, London, on Friday evening last, under the auspices of the International Institute for Psychical Research; and Mr. A. J. Howard Hulme, of Brighton, the interpreter, showed by means of lantern slides the meaning and importance of the ancient Egyptian words and phrases obtained through "Rosemary's" mediumship.

Dr. Wood claimed that the tests fully established the reality of the communicator, the Lady Nona, and so gave proof of Survival lasting for over 3,000 years; and Mr. Hulme said that by means of the words and phrases spoken by the Lady Nona through "Rosemary," he was gradually discovering the vocalisation of the ancient Egyptian language, which thus gave promise of once more becoming a spoken language.

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DIARY OF EVENTS

TO-NIGHT

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 786.

Group Seances—Fridays at 7 p.m. (Limited to 10).

December 13th.—Mrs. Livingstone.

DAILY ACTIVITIES.

Private Sittings, Trance and Normal, are arranged daily with approved Mediums, including Mrs. Abbott, Mrs. Clifton Allen, Miss Naomi Bacon, Mrs. Brittain, Miss Frances Campbell, Mr. Leigh Hunt, Miss Jacqueline, Mrs. Livingstone, Mrs. Mason, Miss Lily Thomas, Ruth Vaughan.

Physical and Psychical Diagnosis and Psychometry: Ruth Vaughan Monday, Wednesday (morning) and Thursday.

Advice concerning the Psychic Faculties, also Private Sittings and Classes for Psychic Development: Mr. Leigh Hunt.

Spiritual Healing (Voluntary): Brig.-Gen. Kemp, C.B., C.M.G., every day Miss Ethel Topcott (Trance), Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

Devotional Groups for Absent Healing: Conducted by Mr. W. H. Evans; Sitters invited.

Mondays, 2.15—2.45; 6.30—7. Tuesdays, 6.45—7.15. Wednesdays, 3.30—4. Animal Group, 5—5.30. Thursdays, 3.45—4.15; 7.45—8.15. Fridays, 2.30—3, 7.30—8. Obsession Group, Saturdays, 3—3.30.

Special Assistance to Enquirers:

Vice-Admiral Armstrong: Tuesdays, 3.30—5.30;

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).

A CORROBORATED PROXY SITTING HELD WITH MRS. RUTH VAUGHAN

THE question of evidence is one which occupies the mind of every sitter. Standards vary, and it is admitted that first-class evidence such as our movement rests upon comes only occasionally in the mass of communications. Occasionally, correct information unknown to sitter and Medium is given and afterwards found to be correct. But to suppose that the bulk of communications emerge as the result of the mysterious action of reciprocal sub-conscious work of the mind of sitter and Medium is to apply an admittedly important theory too loosely.

The proxy sitting is a form of sitting which, if successful, most easily disposes of the theory of telepathy as accounting for the correct results.

Mrs. Ruth Vaughan possesses this rather rare gift of correctly disclosing facts concerning a departed spirit when the sitting is conducted by a total stranger, who has, as a rule, but a slender form of contact with the departed.

In the sitting described below, the contact was of the most slender imaginable. The form of contact was a letter written by an Indian gentleman concerning questions asked by a widow relating to her departed husband. The facts are as follows:—

Some months ago, a gentleman from Bengal, interested in psychic science, wrote and told us that he was greatly concerned about a neighbour of his, who was utterly inconsolable after the death of her husband. The gentleman, Mr. Biraj Mohan Neagi, sent us, enclosed in an envelope, some questions asked by the widow, and requested us to ascertain whether any evidence of the survival of the deceased husband could be obtained for the consolation of his distressed wife.

The envelope containing the questions was placed in the hands of Mrs. Ruth Vaughan, and Mr. W. H. Evans, after very briefly stating what was asked for, wrote down what the Medium said. A report of this was sent to Mr. Neagi, from whose reply we now make the following extracts:—

"Many thanks to you, to Mrs. Ruth Vaughan the

Medium, and to Mr. W. H. Evans for the trouble you have all taken in the matter; and the lady is grateful to you, specially for the keen interest you have taken in this case out of sympathy for her. You will be glad to know that the answers to almost all the questions are correct; the lady has perused the Bengali translation of the same and has been consoled. Her countenance, which was gloomy and pale so long, is now beaming with ineffable joy, originating from her conviction of the existence of her husband after death, due to the genuineness and correctness of the messages received."

These remarks are followed by detailed comments on the record of the sitting:—

"The first impressions the Medium had on holding the letter are also correct, save some minor details."

"It is reported that the spirit of the husband was accompanied by that of a delicate young man (description given). This appears to be his brother's brother-in-law, but the husband of the lady was not acquainted with him on earth." (We would point out that this would not make the companionship unlikely, especially in a nation where the family link is a very strong one.)

"The baby child referred to is his grand-daughter, who passed away two months after her birth."

"The spirit of the deceased is reported to have shown a picture of a very wide view, or the sea, and a huge building with which he was connected. This seemed to have no significance to me, and I asked the widow what could be the meaning of this. At once her eyes shone, as if something flashed in her mind, and she said that her husband had a very strong desire to erect a building at Seerajgarj, a few miles from her native village, by the side of a very wide view, as vast as sea; and a suitable site was selected for the purpose and a plan drafted according to his choice. He was attracted very much by the natural beauty and magnificent splendour of the place, with the vast river murmuring at the foot. He had decided to settle here, when cruel destiny snatched him away."

"The lady had been very glad to find that her husband sent a message of gratitude to the younger lady who is living with her for the help rendered to her."

"The spirit has communicated that he was in touch with his wife when she was on a journey six weeks ago. As a matter of fact, she was not away at the period, but six months before, she was at a religious festival at Maniharighat on the Ganges, and she then felt the presence of the spirit of her husband there. So you see that she actually undertook a journey, and there is only the discrepancy in respect of the time."

"In respect of the word 'wait,' this he did say near the end, though it was not his last word. Also it was said to his daughter and not to his wife. His condition was thought to be better, and his daughter was going to Dinajpur; but her father asked her to 'wait,' as he felt his days were numbered."

"Regarding the names of places in question No. 1, it is stated in the report that one of these places is connected with high mountains somewhere in the north, where he passed his early life. This is Darjeeling on the Himalayas, about 7,000 feet from sea level. He visited it several times, though he did not spend his early life there."

"It will be noticed that discrepancies here and there are minor and negligible."

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Clairvoyant: Mr. Thomas Wyatt.

Sunday, December 22nd.—

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11 a.m. Mr. RONALD McCORQUODALE.
6.30 p.m. Mr. FRANK WALL, Address.
Mrs. HELEN SPIERS, Clairvoyance.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18th, at 7.30 p.m.—

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Friday, December 13th, from 3.30 to 6 p.m.

CHRISTMAS PARTYOUR GUESTS—The Spirit Children and
their friends, Mrs. Sharplin, Mrs. Cooke, Mrs.
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11 a.m.—Mr. HORACE LEAF

Clairvoyant: Mr. Horace Leaf

6.30 p.m.—Rev C. DRAYTON THOMAS

Clairvoyante: Mrs. Stella Hughes

Sunday, December 22nd at 11 a.m. ...

Clairvoyante: Mrs. Helen Spiers.

Dr. H. P. SHASTRI

Sunday, December 22nd at 6.30 p.m. ...

Mrs. ST. CLAIR STOBART

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CHRISTMAS DAY at 11 a.m.—Mr. ERNEST HUNT.

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Mondays, 6.30 p.m.

Wednesdays, 12.30 p.m.

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Monday, December 16th.—Speaker: Miss Eddison

Clairvoyante: Miss Eveline Canon

Wednesday, December 18th.—Speaker: Mr. Frank Wall

Clairvoyante: Miss Lily Thomas

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).

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
to Miss Mitchell (Hon. Secretary).

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

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THE EVIDENCE FOR SURVIVAL

(Continued from page 787)

to Mars and said that the earth contained nothing beyond the mentality of a three-year-old.

As to the challenge to modern thought and action by Survival, Dr. Parkes came nearest to opening the door to show what it meant. If Survival is true, as Spiritualists knew it to be true from the experience of many, many years—the knowledge should completely change conduct in physical life.

"Think for a moment," said the Duchess. "Suppose a man has concentrated his whole mind on collecting riches for himself. What will he do when he knows he has got to face the Beyond? He knows he can take nothing with him—nothing of what he calls possessions on this plane. Suppose somebody is miserable, cannot face life, and feels that suicide is the only way out. When he knows the truth that we know, he knows that death is not a solution; that sooner or later he has got to face every moral issue, that there is no evading things. We know this is far from a simple and easy thing to do. It is the most difficult thing in the world. It requires an entire regeneration, and purification of the whole life."

PRESIDENT'S CLOSING WORDS

Miss LIND-AF-HAGEBY said they had listened with very great interest to the speeches which had been delivered, and had experienced the stimulus of opposition and very severe criticism.

Spiritualism was the conviction that the dead live. It was the conviction that identity had been established again and again. Those who look upon Spiritualism as the result of imagination, of the desire to survive, were faced with the fact that this movement was the most rapidly growing movement in the world to-day.

"Is that mass hysteria?" she asked. Is it a kind of mass insanity, or is it something very real, very serious, and well established?"

The other day, she heard the Bishop of London giving advice to those who were going out to preach for the Christian Evidence Society, and he said: "Whatever you do, do not take away the miracles from the Christian Church. Christianity is based on miracles, miracles of the Founder and miracles of the apostles."

"I am not going into the fact that the Christian religion, and all religions, are based on the records of visions, voices, inspiration, phenomena mental and physical," said Miss Lind, "but I am going to say this: that one of the reasons why Spiritualism is growing is that people find through it the rational explanation of all that has hitherto been a matter of belief and a matter of faith; and hundreds of thousands are brought back to religion, who had left religion, because the religious tenets defied their reason.

"That brings me to the last aspect—and that is the scientific. Science reaches a limit, a borderline, finds it impossible to explain. We can give names, place phenomena in categories, but really to *know* is quite another thing. We do not know how the tree grows, how the flower is formed. We can describe it, but we cannot really understand it—much less create it.

"Spiritualism and psychical research have carried science further than science would have gone but for that interest in finer forms of matter. The gross materialism of the nineteenth century is, I hope, gone for ever. We have now other forms of materialism on the moral plane, but the development of physics to-day is approaching the spiritual. I need only refer to the knowledge of rays, of finer forms of electricity, to those inventions which are now common-places in our homes, which would have been 'miracles' or impossibilities only a few decades ago. And I believe that the true

(Continued at foot of next column).

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(Continued from previous column).

function of psychic science is to bring reconciliation to religion and science. We need to apply to our religious and inner feelings rationalistic thought, criticism, judgment; and we need to apply to scientific research the higher promptings of the human spirit.

Most of the evidence of psychic research was evidence of the five senses—evidence of laboratory instruments, evidence physical, chemical and biological, the same kind of evidence that other sciences employ.

"But there is something else," she added, "there is the evidence of the spirit. There is the evidence of the mystics, the saints, those who do not need the seance room, who do not need psychic phenomena, whether those phenomena are mental or physical. And I believe that ultimately it is that knowledge which is innate, of the spirit, the seeking of the spirit, that will bring about real civilisation. And that is the challenge to modern thought and action impelled by that knowledge which goes beyond all physical evidence."

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