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PERIL WHICH THREATENS HUMANITY

SPIRITUAL REVIVAL THE ONLY WAY TO SALVATION

Lecture by MR. C. R. CAMMELL

Mr. Charles Richard Cammell, Author and Poet, lectured on "Matter and Spirit," under the auspices of the London Spiritualist Alliance and Quest Club, at Caxton Hall, Westminster, on Thursday evening, February 20th. Lady Harris presided. The following is an abbreviated report of the lecture.

THE whole Universe, visible and invisible, is a dual system, composed of two apparently irreconcilable elements: Matter and Spirit. I say "apparently," for Matter is actually only a densified and degenerated form of Spirit. But, because it is densified and degenerated, Matter is, to all intents and purposes, something very different from Spirit.

It is, indeed, not surprising that so many philosophers, theologians, and acute thinkers should have supposed these two elements to be not only distinct but absolutely irreconcilable and opposed, more especially when considering the peculiarly intricate, interwoven way in which they appear in Man, in whom they are almost perpetually at war.

This marvellous being, Man. Whither goes he? He that has, through the vast ages of time, lifted up his head and raised the dome of his brow, who has risen up on his feet, and made himself hands, who has laboured to change the face of the earth for his uses, who has dugged down for his wealth and driven his roads through the hearts of the mountains, and combed the seas for their fishes and the forests for their furs. Whither goes he?

Was all this done, this measureless sum of progress achieved, but for one lamentable end: self-destruction? I am loath to believe it; yet that this ultimate peril faces us, I do not hesitate to assert. Let no one be deceived into thinking lightly of the peril which threatens humanity.

That the path of human evolution should lead to invention and the devices of material improvement was inevitable and obviously beneficial. Man's most marvellous piece of ingenuity, the wheel, turned the savage into a civilised being, just as the probably fortuitous discovery of the use of fire, long before,

changed Mousterian man into the image of the gods. All this was a normal development, and so were the wondrous Sciences, the divine Arts which duly followed.

Without material improvements, there could have been no spiritual life for mankind. Without material inventions, man's life must have remained a purely material existence. The inventive urge in man is as much a heritage of his divine origin as is the artistic urge. The One, the Primary Cause, is Engineer as well as Artist: and what an Engineer.

GOD THE ENGINEER

Behold the stars, consider the law of gravitation, follow in its flight the comet; and then leave the telescope and take the microscope—look at a single drop of water and consider the life therein. All these are the work of God the Scientist, just as the exquisite landscapes of Nature, the glories of the setting sun and of the "rosy-fingered dawn" are the work of God the Artist.

But God the Engineer prepares the material worlds, on one of the least imposing of which we are living, for Spiritual purposes. There is nothing material that is not designed to support life in some form, and life is in a constant state of evolution towards higher planes of mind and ultimately of Spirit.

As long as the human engineer reflected his divine heritage, he, like the human artist, was unquestionably inspired—and that is why all his material improvements and inventions were beneficial to the human race: not only materially beneficial, but spiritually beneficial. They were the ladder by which man was enabled to climb up into the regions of Spiritual consciousness.

Where, then, comes the dividing line, the parting of the ways? When came Materialism once more to be the tyrant of mankind? By Materialism we mean the ascendancy of the material over the Spiritual.

In the Divine scheme of things, Matter is the servant of its master, Spirit. It only exists that we may Spiritualise it.

The more the material life of man is spiritualised, the more is it obeying the divine scheme. Beauty spiritualises life, just as the Spirit beautifies Matter wherever it breathes upon it.

Where was it, and when was it, that the Scientific urge, forgetful of its origin, left the domain of Spirit?

In some fields of science it clearly retains its spiritual aspect, in Astronomy, for instance.

There was a time when the scientific urge in man overreached itself. Already in the 18th century, the things of the Spirit began everywhere to be disdained by "clever" people. The occult sciences had been well-nigh exterminated in Europe and existed only furtively and strictly disguised among the most secret fraternities. Religion was everywhere rationalised. Philosophy was everywhere materialised. Mysticism was treated as a psychological curiosity.

THE ROMANTIC REVIVAL

With the dawn of the 19th century, came what is called the Romantic Revival—it was mainly literary and was the work of men commanding genius. Rousseau had sown the seeds of it. Goethe, Schiller, Uhland sent the blast of it blowing across the Rhine; Victor Hugo gave it a tremendous atterance in France; Wordsworth stole for it the tongue of his Cumbrian mountains; Scott made the North ring with it; Byron sent it flaming through Europe; Shelley gave to it the voice of the angels. But only the external features impressed the public consciousness. The public never absorbed the spirit, while a host of lesser luminaries, to which the painters joined themselves, aped these external features so cleverly that the public could not discern the true from the false, the gold from the tinsel.

And because the Romantic Revival of the nineteenth century never penetrated the skin of the public, and was only more or less an affectation with them, it did not impress itself at all on their lives or on the trend either of their politics or of their progress.

That very nineteenth century saw the complete surrender of European civilisation to Materialism. Religion became something distinct from Philosophy, and something remote from actual life. The Church, and especially the Protestant Church, took on a tea-party, mothers' meeting character from which it has never recovered.

The great Poets and Artists of the day (for there are always great Poets and Artists, whether the world receives their message or not), though praised and to outward seeming popular, were driven further and further out of touch with the life around them. They

made a world for themselves and lived in it, and people read their poems and gazed at their works of art simply for a recreation and a pastime. This is true of the greatest—of Tennyson and Watts and Rossetti—it is true of them all.

William Morris voiced the bitterness of their hearts when he turned his back deliberately on the world about him and set sail for his "Earthly Paradise."

BIRTH OF INDUSTRIALISM

And while the Poets turned in bitterness to search for Faeryland, and while their readers played in their idle moments at the pretty games of Romance and Mythology, the real business of people's lives, the only genuine thing about them, was making money by artificial means. Industrialism was born, and Industrialism meant the complete surrender of the Spiritual life, the absolute enthronement of Mammon.

The peasants were tempted or bribed or evicted from their villages, they were huddled together into cities that were never built to house them, with the resulting slums and squalour and progressive degradation of types. The once inspired inventive faculties of man found a ready and profitable market in every domain capable of supplying the financiers with money-making, labour-saving, mass-producing machinery. Wars on a gigantic scale followed, as surely as night follows day. Machinery was no longer man's servant, it was his master and his tyrant.

Meanwhile, the voice of the Spirit was not altogether silent; the divine whisper made itself heard. But its crying was in a wilderness, its accents grew ever more feeble and abortive; its very existence became an anomaly. Countless hospitals to keep the outworn and unfit alive are endowed by those very financiers whose fortunes have been amassed by exploiting and fostering the conditions which are the causes of degeneracy, or by the manufacture of instruments destructive of life and health. Children are protected and schooled to be driven into body-breaking, soul-killing factories and mines; and animals are preserved and petted, to be ruthlessly tortured in laboratories professedly designed for the promotion of progress.

"A MERCILESS MANIA"

Of all the evil acts of misguided men which cry out to us that this age is decadent, that it has abandoned its glorious spiritual birthright for a miserable mess of material pottage, none is so unequivocally to be condemned as this merciless mania of sacrificing our defenceless animal friends and comrades on the impious altars of selfishness and fear.

Yes, selfishness and fear! For it is the selfish and cowardly hope that some pathological secret may be discovered by the systematic torture of animals, that may enable unhealthy people to prolong, for a little, a very little while, their tedious material existence, which is the reason—and the only reason—why these inhuman operations are tolerated.

If there were no other indictment of the atheistical, materialistic mind of the times than this, it were enough to condemn it: that Materialism sponsors such cruelties as those which are daily perpetuated in the name of Science, and that it fosters the cowardice and lack of spiritual faith in a future life which is revealed by the public apathy to, and approval of, those practices.

Truly, the Healing Art is one of God's greatest gifts to man. But where is the gift of healing by faith by the laying on of hands? This gift is still possessed by some few rare spirits—by Christians, Buddhists, Moslem-Sufis, Spiritualists; but why has the Christian Church no longer the power? A Christian Church without the gift of healing the sick by faith is, I contend, an anomaly.

The world at the close of the world-war was in a pitiable state. Disastrous as was the physical condition in which mankind found itself, the spiritual condition was yet worse. The war had knocked the bottoms out of the sacred chalices of Faith, Hope and Charity. The downward grade of spiritual decadence which began long before the war had been vastly accelerated, and

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and

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LECTURE

TELEPATHY,

The Bugbear of Spiritualism

by

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rapidly assumed alarming proportions. All the symptoms of decay which had appeared in the declining Roman Empire were manifest in the post-war Western civilisation.

HISTORY REPEATED

When we read the Satires of Juvenal, we realise the extraordinary parallel: the debauchery, the immodesty, the unnatural vices, the crime, the over-importance given to games and physical culture, the usurpation by masculated women of the rights and provinces weakly yielded to them by emasculated men—it is all here to-day as it was then, in the crumbling Rome of Juvenal. And, as always happens in periods of decadence, we would seem to be reverting to barbarism. The superstitions of the lowest races of mankind are revived and practised amongst us. The ape-man reasserts himself in negroid images, repulsive and obscene, and in the incessant jangle of jungle music.

There is everywhere manifest a mania for novelty, a frantic search for something new; it is the subconscious call of the stifled spirit, and everywhere people fancy they have found truth in lies, wisdom in folly, beauty in ugliness; and everywhere beneath the surface of superficiality there is disillusionment, disappointment, despair.

Meanwhile, innumerable plans and schemes have been elaborated and experimented with as antidotes to the poison. None of these has proved successful. The reason is this: the symptoms of the disorder are manifest, but the nature of the virus is misunderstood. All the ways and means proposed or practised by all the political parties and social bodies, all the enthusiasms and patriotisms, the nationalisms and internationalisms, the Communisms and Fascisms, are fundamentally based on material ideals, not on spiritual ideals. The more we examine them, the more do we find this to be true. Their objects, and, still more, their achievements, are as solidly material as are the football fields and boxing stadiums, and Germanic physical culture camps.

We have seen revolutionaries tear down thrones and immolate emperors and the children of emperors; we have seen them pillage churches and slaughter priests and nobles, and renounce God and worship the State.

We have seen dictators, red, white and black, murdering their rivals in the coldest blood, and massacring women and children with infernal machines. The Borgias are alive again; their crimes are re-enacted in every shocking detail—nay, they are far surpassed for fiendish ingenuity: the Prince of Machiavel tramples on the Prince of Peace!

But for how long? The world is ready-till'd for the seed. It needs but a spark to kindle the fuel; only a voice to quicken the dead. That enthusiasm which sent the world marching to mass-murder to the tune of "Te Deums" twenty years ago; that enthusiasm which swept the Czars from Russia and the Caliphs from Stamboul; that enthusiasm which has set up tyrannic Dictators and flung down decadent Democracies; that very enthusiasm might be—yea, must be, if the world is to be saved from utter destruction at its own hands, diverted into other and nobler channels.

A SPIRITUAL REVIVAL

A Spiritual Revival is the one and only way of salvation; a religious revival in the loftiest and widest sense, a religion that transcends creeds and prejudices, an awakening of the Spirit, a renaissance of the beautiful, the renouncement of Materialism with all its greed and cruelty and ugliness, the renouncement of personal and national pride with all their truculence and all their vulgarity, the understanding of the dangers and difficulties of other people and of other peoples and of other creeds: that way alone lies peace. And without peace there can be no future for the human race.

If War ever had its uses, that day has forever gone. Man's misused inventive faculty has turned his inhumanity into an overwhelming danger, a peril which

must be recognised and faced and eliminated. The world, and especially the Youth of the world, must be rendered fully alive to the fact that an appalling catastrophe hangs, like the sword of Damocles, over their heads, and, at the same time, must be made sensible of the great truth: that the certain remedy lies surely in their own strong hands. Youth, with one voice of mature wisdom to lead it forward, could, if it would, sweep away for all time the nightmare of war that looms over the world, and with it would sweep away its parent, its cause, the poisonous germ whence war springs—Materialism. Youth has the power to disperse the clouds, dissipate the darkness, let in Light.

Man is not satisfied with the world as it is. He is longing, desiring, praying for something else, something better, something higher. The youth of the world turns feverishly left and right for help. Its longing is insufferable, its enthusiasm terrific. Here a Lenin, there a Hitler, points the path, and youth follows blindly, furiously, thirsty for a way to the light which is going out.

LIGHT STILL BURNING

But the light has not gone out. It is still burning, though dimly. I can see the way to the light, though now "through a glass darkly."

The message that is mine to give has always been this: Love of Beauty and hatred of Ugliness. How hateful is the ugliness of war, and vivisection, and crime and vice. Materialism is ugly and gross and hateful, but the Spiritual and the Beautiful are one, and I would see everywhere a re-birth of the Love of Beauty. I would have the understanding of the Beautiful taught as the quintessence of education—for is not Beauty the visible and audible sign of the Spirit of Divine Love, which is the highest of all the infinite attributes of God? Where Love is, there is Peace.

We want Arts that will give us lovely images of saints, and heroes, and of the great lovers, images that will move the hearts of all beholders to heroism and holiness and to Ideal Love.

And just as our need is for epic figures in Art, so is our need for epic figures in Literature. We have had enough of puling plays and nauseous novels about over-sexed, and under-sexed, and peculiarly-sexed men and women, and women-men, and men-women. They are unworthy of consideration. Don't read these books, don't talk about them; above all, don't buy them or order them from libraries—then they will quickly disappear from the bookshops, and the counters will be clear for a new and virile and lovely literature, a literature which will stir the heart to high hopes and glorious endeavours.

The influence of such Art and Literature on the lives of people would be incalculably great. A new heart would beat in the world, a heart which would find no room for War, which would not bow before the tyrant, Materialism.

If anyone should tell you that this is a poet's dream, a vision of Utopia, do not believe him.

The power of the spirit is limitless. The world has seen revivals among mere handfuls of men change the course of history.

If anyone should assert that material remedies are alone applicable to material ills, do not believe him. The mind can have mastery over matter—it has been proved a thousand times, and the Spirit is greater than the Mind.

A Spiritual re-awakening on a grand scale would confirm the divine destiny of mankind. No force on earth could withstand it; its victory would be certain, its triumph incalculably glorious.

Replying to a question, Mr. Cammell said that, although there were undesirable features connected with Spiritualism, and although, in his opinion, Spiritualists were sometimes in danger of contacting undesirable entities, he was convinced that there was much good in Spiritualism, and that, by giving definite evidence of Survival, it would play an important part in the Spiritual Revival which the world needed.

GHOSTS, ANCIENT AND MODERN

Review by H. F. PREVOST BATTERSBY

IN 1691, Mr. Richard Baxter was collecting material for his *Certainty of the World of Spirits*, and to-day, after two hundred and forty-five years of considerable uncertainty, we are just as incompetent to make up our minds about ghosts as were the quidnuncs of the 17th century; not a very satisfactory certificate as to the growth of knowledge.

It is curious, too, when one considers their antiquity, and their acceptance by all who live nearest to Nature.

In finding a title for this collection of stories*, Mr. Philip Sergeant was aware of the strain imposed by the label of Historic on the fragility of an apparition.

"Of course," he says, "if ghosts have only a period, as has been suggested, of something like a hundred years, few of the historic category can be about now."

Well, it is probable that ghosts may have periods of permanency; but there are ghosts and ghosts; and it depends on their composition not only how long they last, but what, while here, they are capable of achieving.

It is really surprising how long mere thought or fear-forms, such as recruit, perhaps, the headless brigade, can continue to perpetuate an impression of reality; but the majority of Mr. Sergeant's figures are of a more personable solidity, nor does he draw the line at human shape: apparitions that looked like cats, horses, bears, dogs, monkeys, foxes, or even more terrible, that didn't look like them, being also recorded.

A NON-COMMITTAL ATTITUDE

The author adopts a very non-committal attitude. He seems to agree with Dr. Johnson that the ghost question is "a question, whether in theology or in philosophy, one of the most important that can come before the human understanding," yet, after weighing the competency of observers against the improbabilities of the observed, he suggests that "what we have to explain is, not a body of illusions called ghosts in a world of 'reality,' but an illusory world itself, in which the illusions called men meet the sub-illusions to which they have given the name of ghosts."

In alleging that there both *is and is not* evidence for the existence of ghosts, he explains that though there may be evidence, and very good evidence, that the observers *saw*, there is not evidence that they *saw ghosts*; and that to define *what* they saw, to say for *what* there is evidence, is asking almost too much for language to express.

Gurney's suggestion that an apparition might be "the survival of a mere image, impressed, we cannot guess how, on we cannot guess what, by (a deceased person's) physical organism of sensitiveness," has, at least, a ghostly appropriateness to its subject.

The trouble of evidence, when it goes back a century or so, is the disinclination of science to believe that anyone in that benighted period, if capable of speaking the truth, which is more than doubtful, could be trusted to describe with any accuracy what had been seen.

Newton, indeed, could be believed as the observer of an apple, but few of his contemporaries could be relied on as observers of a ghost.

If the observer were alone, his evidence would be said to lack corroboration; and if he could appeal to a cloud of witnesses, "contagious hallucination"—that curious disease, peculiar to the psychic—would be held to account for it.

"We cannot discredit all we are told merely on the ground that it is a tale of the seventeenth century," says Mr. Sergeant; but we can go as near disbelief as makes no matter.

Even when the ghost comes with a forceful purpose, to achieve something that only his knowledge of hidden circumstance could reveal, we give him a very doubtful

credence, armed as we now are with that blessed word—telepathy.

Occasionally there seems to be no escape from a ghostly solution; as when a troubled spirit appeared again and again to a certain Anne Simpson, bidding her go to a priest, though she was a Presbyterian, and beg him to discharge a debt of three and tenpence. The priest traced the debt and paid it, and the ghost returned no more. Here it seems utterly impossible to devise any but the one explanation for such a story, for Anne Simpson knew nothing of the ghost's debts, and only had a very casual acquaintance with her person.

Mrs. Merry warned us in *Spiritual Knowledge* to beware of conceiving the spiritual world as a kind of glorified copy of the earthly world, but a world in which we still worry about debts of three and tenpence is only glorified from an accountant's point of view. However, it is impossible to define with any exactitude the dimensions of the ghost-world.

The ghost who makes some sort of social contact with humanity seems able, at will, to vary its vibrations, and to flick to and fro across some dimensional border-line, visible on one side of it and invisible on the other.

CATEGORIES OF GHOSTS

One might make categories of ghosts according to their abilities and intentions. Ghosts with a purpose are in a class by themselves, and generally disappear when their purpose has been accomplished. They often make but a single appearance, generally with a preventive mission. They are not "haunters," really, nor do they possess a "craft."

The faculty of speech distinguishes another variety; though here the distinction is not always possible between audible sounds and the impression of ideas. Communications have been reported even where there has been no language in common. The talking ghosts are not "haunters," as a rule; their speech is for a purpose, and so they come into that category. The mere drifters, who float aimlessly about houses, or on a definite "craft," unaffected by any contact with humanity, are probably etheric shells in process of dissolution, the Polynesian *unihipili*; and only a shade nearer their lost mortality than the forms stamped by an emotion upon the ether.

Mr. Sergeant mentions some ghosts with personal peculiarities; one which, on being accosted, "crawled on its hands and feet over the wall again, and so vanished in white, with a most melodious harmony;" a musical exit which was noted in another case, which "disappeared with a curious perfume and a most melodious twang." Ghostly perfumes are generally supplied with a much more caustic epithet.

In 1690 the reappearance of a murdered woman led to the execution of the murderer; and in another instance, where the evidence of a ghost was invoked, Lord Chief Justice Raymond, who was trying the case, while asserting that he knew of no law which would admit the testimony of an apparition, bid the Crier "Call the ghost." Which, we are told, was *twice* done to no purpose; "it appeared not."

Some interesting accounts are given of the "laying" of ghosts. The ritual for their exorcising was omitted from the First Prayer-Book of Edward VI., but in the Canons of 1604 it was laid down that no minister must, without license from his bishop, attempt to "cast out any devil or devils, under pain of the imputation of imposture or cosenage and deposition from the ministry."

The Bishop of Exeter in 1665 agreed, under pressure, to issue his license, but added: "Let it be secret, Mr. R. Weak brethren! Weak brethren!"

Then Mr. Rudall had a great time with the ghost. With a ring of brass on his index finger, inscribed with the *scutum Davidis*, and surrounded by circle and pentagon, he chaunted his commands at the spectre—the third time in Syriac, "the speech which is used,

* *Historic British Ghosts*, by Philip W. Sergeant. Hutchinson and Co. 1936. 18/-.

REINCARNATION OR PRE-EXISTENCE?

By HORACE LEAF, F.R.G.S.

WESTERNERS have an almost instinctive dislike for Reincarnation. This might be regarded as arising from a natural disinclination for what is not true about ourselves, were it not for the fact that so many Easterners regard Reincarnation as not only true, but as an essential part of man's spiritual evolution. Obviously, the difference of opinion must be caused by education.

The importance that the Buddha attached to "Right Teaching" becomes apparent when it is remembered that what we are taught, when children, largely determines what we shall favour during the rest of our lives. Christianity accepts personal responsibility as all-embracing in a person's life, although there is no sound reason for believing this. Environment, for instance, is always outside personal choice, although we do seem able to modify it to some extent. Western thinkers have always found themselves, when considering Freewill, on the horns of a dilemma, owing to the undeniable effect of both heredity and environment. Nevertheless, belief in the freedom of the will has had a marked influence on Western civilisation, which would have made much less advance had it adopted the Fatalism of the East.

This, however, does not worry believers in Reincarnation, owing to their having related the belief to Natural Law. Karma, they argue, makes us act as we do, no matter how freely we think we act.

No modern materialistic philosopher or scientist who believes in Natural Law as all-embracing can seriously attempt to refute this notion, as it fits nicely into their own fundamental thesis regarding existence. This fact

(Continued from previous column).

they say, where such ones dwell and converse in thoughts that glide;"—and, at last, drew her into the circle. But when there, unfortunately, her conversation was too spectral. "Pen and ink would degrade and defile the thoughts she uttered."

However, on another occasion, after hearing "the penitent words of the man she had come up to denounce, and the satisfaction he would perform . . . she peacefully withdrew, gliding towards the west. Neither," adds Mr. Rudall, "did she ever afterwards appear, but was allayed until she shall come in her second flesh to the valley of Armageddon on the last day."

A very impressive finish, and her reappearance, "in her second flesh," must be, according to some authorities, about due.

But the exorcisers were not always so successful. An Archdeacon and twenty-three of the clergy, "who invoked in various classic languages," failed to subdue the "insubordinate spirit" of Benjie Gear, till "one more learned than the rest addressed him in Arabic." But, even after he had been turned into a colt, and drowned on Dartmoor, he came to ghostly life again.

Twelve of the Shropshire clergy dealt with the ghost of a farmer which had taken the shape of bull, and distressed the whole neighbourhood with its bellowing. They drove it into Hessington Church, where, after it had "split a wall from top to bottom," they forced it into a silver snuff-box, which was thrown into the Red Sea!

Another posse of clergy, though they failed to expel the Squire's ghost from Bagley House, near Bridport, persuaded it to limit its activities to one chimney for a period of years; but even that partial success was denied, as Mr. Sergeant relates, to many another effort of the clergy.

No attempt is made, in this volume, to extract a thrill from ghostly happenings, nor is it likely to impress "the many, both lewd and learned, who cannot understand how or why ghosts should appear."

is one of the outstanding defects in their logic; for, whilst proclaiming the reign of Natural Law, they believe, as a rule, in Freewill.

This acceptance of thesis and anti-thesis is significant; for the Easterner has a similar belief. When the Reincarnationist says each individual returns to earth to suffer as the result of past experiences, he is laying the entire responsibility for whatever happens on the returning soul. This is a contradiction as pronounced as that of the Westerner who rejects Reincarnation but believes in Natural Law and Freewill.

The solution may be found in the paradox that we are both free and yet bound; but only if we are prepared to divide existence into two parts, namely, environment and a self-existent ego with a will to choose and influence its environment, but not entirely to make it.

BASIS OF THE MORAL LAW

The ego certainly seems to have qualities of its own which are related to environment but which in a fundamental way are able to act independently through what is known as the Moral Law. The basis of the Moral Law is not its material setting but Motive. Two men may be in precisely the same environment and called upon to act in the same way, yet their intentions may be different.

For example, they may give largely to charity—one because he wants a title, the other because he desires to assist the needy. There can be no doubt which of these attitudes of mind is praiseworthy, as one may be devoid of any good motive owing to selfishness. This man is not really giving, but buying. Had he not thought he would receive a return for his money he would have kept it in the bank.

Motives act wherever there is a rational mind, often without any choice of doing a good deed, as when a person is an invalid and poor. It is quite possible for such a person to develop a state of mind wherein he would be charitable, although the opportunity is denied him. This shows how the will can act morally without acting physically, as it were, and indicates that moral worth is a matter of Self and not of behaviour.

Pre-existence may be more easily justified than Reincarnation, as it is only an assumption that one must return to *this* world to work out one's "salvation." In an infinite universe there may be an unlimited number of environments. The example of the invalid shows that it is not essential for the soul to be confined to one world only in the working out of its better qualities.

Evidence, I believe, points to the truth of the saying that we have come from heaven trailing clouds of glory, for one often feels and sees something of exalted spiritual conditions in oneself, which have no relation to this material world. Emmanuel Kant showed that the mind arrives on earth with an equipment of faculties, tendencies and powers, which, centuries before, Plato had attributed to a spiritual past. Pre-existence will account for much that perplexes the psychologist and philosopher, but until the evidence is more convincing we ought not to insist that every soul has, willy-nilly, been compelled to *return* to this earth.

Up to now Spiritualism has not helped much in the solution of this question, at least in the West. True, Continental Spiritualism has embraced the doctrine of Reincarnation, and among Hindu and Buddhist converts it prevails strongly; but this may be due merely to education. We know that Alan Kardec influenced his hypnotised Mediums, and in consequence gave Reincarnation to France and contiguous countries; but we require less biased sources before we can securely attach any belief to the theory.

I for one accept pre-existence on what I regard as a reliable personal experience, but that, alas, cannot go beyond myself as a matter of fact.

THINGS SPIRITS FORGET

By Rev. WILLIAM A. REID, M.A., Glasgow

ONE of the things which strikes many who have got into communication with spirits whom they knew on earth is: that the spirits quite often tell enough to identify themselves, but fail to tell things they are expected to remember about friends. The inquirers resent this, and begin to doubt if they have really been in touch with their friends after all. They think they have received only good guesses from Mediums; or if they are philosophically and psychologically inclined, they account for the facts given by supposing they arise from telepathy. The obvious explanation, however, is that spirits, like human beings, forget things.

I shall consider this matter of spirits forgetting things by assuming that man is a spirit using a body, and that the spirit survives the death of the body. It has been very often asserted that death of the body makes a tremendous change in the spirit, which is said to become a poor, characterless shade, or only a part of its former self, by forgetting its past.

I feel quite entitled to say from facts ascertained by modern psychic research that death means no more to the spirit than laying aside the worn-out body it has been using. If that is so, the spirit might well forget things out of the flesh as it did while in the flesh; for memory does not inhere in the brain but in the spirit using the brain. Hence we should treat the disembodied spirit as we do the incarnate spirit; and regard both as subject to the same laws. Both may cease to function through similar causes; and both may have the action of the spirit retarded or veiled. I shall say more of this anon.

WE ARE CONTINUALLY FORGETTING THINGS. We all are gradually forgetting things we once knew. Take an instance. A few days ago I began reading the Gospel of John in Greek; and I am now quite conscious that I could follow the Greek better before I entered the University than I do now. I have forgotten. Ask quite small children if they remember when they could neither talk nor walk; and not one is able to look back a few short years and remember these important incidents in life. We often say about an old man: "Ah, poor soul, he has no memory!" But while this is more apparent in old age, children and students have forgotten quite as much as old people.

MEMORY LIKE A SIEVE

The human memory is like a sieve, it filters things out. Names are forgotten before faces, and faces before experiences. The memory sieve filters out names first, next faces, then experiences. A Westerner, accustomed to our food, may, if compelled to live with certain Blacks and Indians, get quite to like snails and ants, and actually forget the taste of lamb and rabbit.

Is it not wise, then, as well as natural, to regard the life of a human being as a continuation of interlocked experiences which suffer no break at any time if similar experiences keep repeating ourselves? We should not allow ourselves to be misled by such superficial analogies as that the caterpillar, the chrysalis, the butterfly, are different creatures: they are the same creatures functioning in different material forms. Nor should we dogmatically say that what appears to be an idiot is an idiot: all we can say is that the individual may be functioning in an imperfect human body. Death of the body cannot change us, however much it may change the material with which we work. Assertions to the contrary are based on assumptions and dogmatisms.

Dean Matthews, of St. Paul's, in his first broadcast talk on "The Hope of Immortality" (*Listener*, January 22nd, 1936) says: "Much of what goes to make up our personal existence is trivial and unimportant. For instance, I like marmalade and cats, but I do not honestly say the universe would be poorer if my likes and dislikes of this kind were wiped out."

Evidently, the Dean cannot conceive of himself entering into his discarnate life with a liking for marmalade and cats. Therein the Dean's psychology is probably at fault. He certainly would remember his liking for marmalade and cats if the liking were strong enough. If not strong, it would probably gradually diminish; but only if he ceased to desire these otherwise harmless things.

I discuss this not as a mere jest. We are reasonably certain to remember and often to be adversely affected by fixed ideas, because we are all adversely affected now by erroneous, fixed earth ideas. If we enter the new life with erroneous fixed extravagant expectations, these will live and hinder us. On the other hand, we are certainly sure to remember and profit by the good we have tried out on earth and profited by—such as a habit of helping others, teachableness, prayer, welcoming help from God and others. We may take it for certain we shall forget nothing we wish to remember, and drop no fact or experience we have used and desire to use.

Yet we do forget fairly rapidly what we find of no use to us in the new life in which we find ourselves. The whole earth-past may become shadowy if we withdraw from it or progress out of it. Thus, an advanced spirit may now be utterly ignorant of earth-conditions, and so be a very unsafe guide for us earth-born strugglers. These high spirits cannot always put themselves into the skins of earth infants; while they may be competent teachers of the spiritual values of awakened souls.

A NAME FORGOTTEN

A boy in spirit was exactly described and recognised by a friend of mine, certain details of his life being given so that he was identified. When asked his name, he said it was John. "No," said my friend, "that was not your name." The boy replied, "They call me John here." We could not get him to tell us his earth name; he had forgotten it, at least for the moment.

This I give as an instance to show how we are sure to go on forgetting things. Need you wonder? If you lived in a place ten years ago, try to reconstruct the place and the scene and the people. They are getting dimmer. Scenes once vivid are fading; yet the people left may remember you and some incidents in your career better than you do. I recall a former spirit-friend whom I knew well some 10 or 15 years before, trying to get me to recognise him by reminding me he had once given me a turkey at Christmas. I had completely forgotten, but he remembered; and I have very little doubt that his memory was more to be trusted than mine. Life is full of buried things and forgotten people.

In conclusion, I say there is a reliable kind of memory we all have: we remember our past in the sense that we remember *what* we have made ourselves; because our character has become a habit, which begins to act automatically just because we are still alive. Yesterday always lives in to-day. We are therefore conscious of our character, our likes and dislikes, our capacities; and our past proceeds to make history in our present. The dead worm will not wake up a blackbird, nor the blackbird a bullfinch. We "go to our own place" because we remember.

We may put it thus: We might be completely unconscious, blind and deaf either in heaven or in hell; but there may be a mid-place where we have eyes to see, and ears to hear, and an intelligence capable of grasping things in the mid-area. Details of the past don't really matter so much as memory of the realised result of our past, which is often an alarming feat of memory, none the less so because it is largely unconscious memory. Some of the things we shall remember are of great value, but some are sure to be trashy and trivial and hurtful; but, *do what we will, we cannot forget ourselves.*

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).

SPIRITUAL HEALING

Sir,—The Spiritualist Movement is mustering its forces in order to fight the Medicines and Surgical Appliances (Advertisement) Bill, which will have its second reading on March 27th.

This is the Bill, sponsored by the British Medical Association, which, if it became law, would subject all Spiritualists who practise healing and diagnosis to fines and imprisonment.

Its terms, as originally drafted, are so stringent that even the announcement of a meeting for the purpose of spiritual healing would be illegal!

In order to centralise the opposition of Spiritualism to this Bill, the Spiritualist Joint Council on Healing has been formed. This body embraces the British College of Psychic Science, the London Spiritualist Alliance, the Marylebone Spiritualist Association, the Spiritualist Community, The Survival League, the Spiritualist's National Union, and the W. T. Stead Library and Bureau.

The Council has already approached the promoters of the Bill asking for healing conducted under Spiritualist auspices to be exempted, but their request has been ignored.

The Bill constitutes the gravest menace to all forms of psychic healing, and would put an end to the alleviation of the sick, usually done without charge, at hundreds of Spiritualist centres all over the country and by scores of our healers.

Arrangements are being made to form a Parliamentary Committee, using as a nucleus those M.P.s who are known to be Spiritualists or sympathetic to our case. Plans are being made for the systematic lobbying of Members of Parliament, and for the holding of a public protest meeting.

But all this will cost money. The Spiritualist Joint Council on Healing decided, last week, to raise a national fund for the purpose of opposing this Bill. The honorary treasurer is John M. Stewart, and his address is 51 Silverleigh Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey.

We earnestly appeal to all Spiritualists to contribute to this fund and thus safeguard our healing activities. We have only one month in which to organise our opposition. Please help us to make it effective.

FRANK T. HARRIS.

THEOSOPHY AND SPIRITUALISM

Sir,—A reading of Mr. Prevost Battersby's review of Mrs. Merry's *Spiritual Knowledge* makes one inclined to wonder whether the new Anthroposophy does not bear a striking resemblance to the old Theosophy. It clings to the doctrine of Madame Blavatsky that the only thing that communicates through a Medium is "the cast-off etheric body."

As this cast-off body is said by the Theosophists to be itself in a state of decay, like the physical body, then how do they account for the fact that well-authenticated and amply recognised messages are often received from people who have been dead for twenty to forty years, besides others, that carry very strong evidence of being from those who passed over from 200 to 2,000 years ago? Is the etheric body, in these cases, like the physical body of King Charles II., "an unconscionable time a-dying"?

I have heard at least one well-known Spiritualist say, in public, that the Theosophists have never brought forward any convincing evidence in support of this theory; and, as far as one can gather from Mr. Prevost Battersby's review, Mrs. Merry merely repeats the same old tag. She also goes back to Mme. Blavatsky's seven-fold nature of man, which, according to Bechofer

Roberts (Ephesian) in *The Mysterious Madame*, that lady borrowed from Paracelsus. I am not sufficiently well up in the literature concerned to know whether any adequate attempt has been made to reply to this devastating exposure of Mme. Blavatsky. If not, then Theosophists and Anthroposophists would be well advised to drop these unfounded attacks on the overwhelmingly proved beliefs of Spiritualists, especially as the attitude of Mrs. Besant, as shown in *The Ideals of Theosophy*, gives no support to their theory about the "cast-off decaying etheric or astral body," which, in some strange way, manages to keep a tight, though only temporary, hold on the "reminiscences and thoughts" of the defunct, while "the individuality" passes on to another state.

Mrs. Besant, in the little book referred to, says that medical men use the term "internal autoscapy," adding: "Names do not matter. They are only describing the same old common-sense that we call clairvoyance, the astral vision. . . . Astral vision convinces you that there is no death in the sense in which the word is used, and no separation; you would see that you had not lost your friends, that you could speak with them, feel with them, live with them, since for you the barrier of death would have fallen away."

Such words make one feel that, between the really earnest truth-seeking Spiritualists and Theosophists there is but a small margin; so that it seems a pity that the latter should apparently take an endless delight in teaching and repeating the threadbare tale about the "cast-off, shrivelling astral body," or etheric body, that is able to come back to us, carrying its bundle of Memory under its arm, and with, apparently, no other motive than a desire to deceive and make fools of its best and dearest friends.

Raphael street, S.W.7.

C. FERGUSON.

IMMORTALITY

Sir,—In last week's issue of *LIGHT*, the Rev. C. L. Tweedale quotes St. Paul: "God who only hath immortality." St. Paul is also reported to have said: "When this mortal must put on immortality" (I. Corinthians, 15, 53).

Furthermore, the Vicar writes: "Man is a created being and has a beginning at birth." Which birth—the spiritual or the physical? If the former, where and when does it take place? If the latter, the question of immortality, or eternal life, surely does not arise?

Ipswich.

JOHN R. BENNETT.

INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS

Invitations are now being sent out for the Sixth Triennial Congress of the International Spiritualist Federation which is to be held by invitation of the Glasgow Association of Spiritualists from September 3rd to 10th inclusive, next year (1937).

The Organising Committee announces that invitations to attend the Congress and submit papers have been accepted by Signor Ernesto Bozzano, of Italy, and Dr. L. R. G. Crandon, of Boston, U.S.A.

The Congress will meet in two sections, dealing with (1) Propaganda, Organisation, Philosophy and Ethics of Spiritualism; (2) Experiments and Theories of Psychic Phenomena and Mediumship.

Twelve papers will be selected for presentation and discussion, in addition to which, relevant extracts or summaries of other papers dealing with the same subject will be made. The papers submitted and the above-mentioned extracts will be printed in advance in English, French and Spanish, and available to delegates. These will not be actually read at the Congress. The authors will make brief verbal statements on the papers, which thereafter will be discussed. In order that this programme may be adhered to, papers must be received in Paris not later than December 31st, 1936, otherwise their consideration cannot be guaranteed.

Light

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EDITOR GEORGE H. LETHEM

As We See It

"MERE SURVIVAL"

QUITE frequently, critics (kindly and otherwise) seek to damp down the enthusiasm of Spiritualists by telling them that proof of *mere Survival* is of comparatively small importance, and that what is really important is the knowledge given by revelation of a superior type of life, variously described as "eternal life," "life with God" or "life in heaven."

It cannot be pointed out too often that this criticism ignores the fact—which should be obvious—that unless there be conscious personal Survival there can be no conscious after-life of any kind; and that evidence of *mere Survival* is, therefore, of prime importance, since all the possibilities of life (including the highest conceivable) depend on whether Survival is a fact or not.

Indeed, the use of the word "mere" is an absurdity when applied to "Survival," even when Survival is regarded *only* as the entrance to the Life after Death. As well might one seek to belittle the importance of the entry into earthly life by speaking of it as "mere birth."

It is not only to the individual that assurance of Survival is of value. Through the individuals who make up the community, it is—or would be, were it accepted—of enormous importance to the world at large. Proof of Survival should, as Mr. R. C. Cammell said in his Caxton Hall lecture, help greatly towards the "spiritual revival" which he looks to as the "only way to salvation" for the world, in face of the present drift towards war. Were Survival accepted *as a certainty*, Material values would shrink and Spiritual values would expand—Materialism would give place to Spiritualism (or Idealism if the word be preferred) and Man's conception of life would be transformed.

Clergymen fall into the error of speaking of "mere Survival," perhaps more frequently than others; and it is therefore interesting to be able to quote a clergyman—the Rev. A. F. Webling, Rector of Risby—as putting the matter in its correct aspect. "Proof of Survival is, of course, only the first step," said Mr. Webling at Tankerton, "but it is one of *enormous importance to our distracted world*, puzzled or bewildered by conflicting theories. We need facts upon which to build our faith and our hope."

Just as assurance of conscious personal Survival is the preamble to all Religion, so also it should be the preamble to all speculations regarding the quality or conditions of the Life After Death, and of the spiritual value of experiences in the life on earth. It is, in short,

(Continued at foot of next column).

"COURAGE FRIENDS"

EXPERIENCES IN THE PRESENCE OF DEATH

IN the article, "What Happens at Death," quoted from the writings of Andrew Jackson Davis (LIGHT, January 30th), and in "Crossing to the Other Side," by Mrs. Osborne Leonard (LIGHT, February 20th), the passing is described from the point of view of the observer—in both instances a clairvoyant observer. In the January number of *Zeitschrift fuer Seelenleben* (Leipzig), Herr Wilhelm O. Roesermueller, of Nuernberg, in an article entitled "Deathbed Studies," lays the emphasis on the sensations experienced by the one who is actually crossing the threshold.

His own observations (supported by assurances both from eminent medical men and by the testimony of countless persons who, after having seemingly "crossed the bourne," have, nevertheless, returned to earthly life and consciousness), contains for those who are called upon to be present on such occasions, a consolation, and also a solemn warning—a consolation in that it appears to be quite definitely established that so much that is so distressing to the watcher (the laboured breathing, the struggle, the whole of the so-called "death agony") is the purely mechanical letting-go of the body, and is entirely unfelt by the departing spirit. A well-known German researcher, Johannes Illig, quotes in support of this the expressions of radiant joy frequently uttered by the dying during moments of lucidity, such as: "More and more glorious! If only you could see what I am seeing!"

The joy on the part of the dying of seeing around them their loved ones already on the spirit side, has been voiced over and over again.

Plato knew this when he wrote: "Just as in sleep the soul loosens its association with the body and is enabled to obtain glimpses into the future, so still more at the advent of death does this separation take place, and the dying can behold pictures of the future, and frequently observe the forms of those already dead."

If, however, there is comfort in the thought that the physical struggle is already beyond the ken of the dying loved one, the watchers should bear in mind that, though no longer in close partnership with the body, the higher consciousness of the departing spirit is in correspondingly greater activity: *i.e.*, the dying patient is often fully aware of what is going on, not only in his immediate vicinity, but even irrespective of distance. It is on record that at such times the departing one has accurately and fully described people and scenes taking place, for instance, at his home, while he himself was in hospital, which descriptions were later fully verified.

There was a certain Major Axel, who was struck by shrapnel early in the war. Carried into a dug-out and surrounded by a number of fellow-officers, he calmly gave directions about his affairs, after which he said to those standing by: "Comrades, I would have you listen now to the words of one who knows whereof he speaks. Never be troubled as to what it feels like when death has laid his hand upon you. There is no suffering about it, and no fear. I want you all to know that dying is by far the easiest thing I have ever been called upon to do. You will, all of you, find that is so, when your time comes. Courage, friends, and never grieve for me."

Then, gazing fixedly towards the corner of the dug-out, he exclaimed: "Why—they are waiting for me over there—they have come to fetch me!" With which exclamation his spirit passed.

(Continued from previous column).

as Mr. Webling said, "of enormous importance"; and Spiritualists should resist, kindly but emphatically, all attempts, from whatever source, to minimise it, or to deflect them from the task of seeking to place the psychic evidences of Survival within the reach of all who desire them.

LOOKING ROUND THE WORLD

"THE BUGBEAR OF SPIRITUALISM"

BY a long series of decriptive articles in *LIGHT*, Major C. H. Mowbray showed how "Telepathy, the Bugbear of Spiritualism," could be effectively met and overcome. Recently, he has delivered a number of racy lectures on the same topic—one at the L.S.A. last session and one at the British College on February 19th.

On Thursday next week (March 5th), he is to deliver yet another at the L.S.A., and it is quite safe to prophesy that he will have a large and appreciative audience. Major Mowbray's lecture plan is to relate incidents from his own extensive psychic investigations, and these have been so numerous that he is seldom tempted to repeat himself. The meeting will be at 8.15 in the L.S.A. lecture room.

As bearing on the question of telepathy, we are informed that recently a series of experiments have been held at the British College by a group under the leadership of Mrs. Hewat McKenzie, and that the results show a very small percentage of successes. This does not mean that telepathy is disproved—quite the contrary; but it does mean that the idea that telepathy is easily invoked, and can be used to explain all evidential mediumistic messages and predictions, is quite contrary to fact.

AWKWARD QUESTIONS

In the *Sevenoaks News* (February 20th), Major Mowbray replies to an attack made on Spiritualism by the Rev. C. H. E. Freeman, and, in doing so, exhibits a very commendable knowledge of the Old and New Testaments. Amongst Major Mowbray's points are the following:

"St. John tells us to 'try the spirits if they be of God.' How can we try them if we are not allowed to contact them?"

"St. Paul informs us that some people have the gift of discerning spirits. The people who have these gifts should keep very quiet about them, I suppose?"

"Finally, to my knowledge, Spiritualism has brought many people back to a belief in a future life when the churches absolutely failed to do so."

Rather awkward questions these for Mr. Freeman.

MR. GEORGE LANSBURY, M.P., AND SPIRITUALISM

Encouraged by the success of their lunch-time meetings in the Fortune Theatre, London, the "Confraternity" (Clergymen and Spiritualists acting in co-operation) are planning a new series, the first of which is to be held in the Caxton Hall, Westminster, on Friday, March 13th, at 12.30 p.m.

This meeting will be notable, because Mr. George Lansbury, M.P. (ex-Leader of the Opposition in the House of Commons) has promised to support the speakers, who will, as usual, be drawn equally from Clergymen and Spiritualists. There is no arrangement, so far, that Mr. Lansbury will take any particular part in the proceedings; but he will, by his presence on the platform, give proof of his interest in the movement and his approval of the common front presented by the "Confraternity" against present-day Materialism.

Mr. Lansbury was 77 years of age on Friday last (February 21st), but says he is active and well, and that he is leaving shortly for a lecture tour in America.

AMERICAN S.P.R.

The *Journal* of the American Society for Psychical Research has adopted a new form, the chief feature of which is a smaller page. In the January issue (which is No. 1 of Volume XX), the intimation is made that the Editorship "has been taken over by the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees, assisted by the Society's staff."

It is also announced that Dr. Nandor Fodor has become English correspondent, and is to contribute a London letter to each issue.

MINISTER'S TRENCHANT CRITIC

IT is not quite so safe now as is used to be for Ministers of Religion to attack Spiritualism—especially in Scotland. A young Minister, the Rev. W. F. Wills, who denounced Spiritualism from his pulpit in Montrose has, indeed, had an awkward experience. Someone who heard him—presumably one of his own flock—immediately took up the challenge, and contributed to the local Press (*Montrose Review*, February 14th), a pungent criticism which the Minister may find it hard to answer.

As the Minister admitted that he knew nothing personally of Spiritualism, his critic quotes from Paley as follows: "There is a principle which is a bar to human progress and which cannot fail, where adopted, to keep man in *everlasting ignorance*, and that is *contempt prior to investigation*."

As the Minister spoke with scorn of the Medium's fee, the critic asks: "By what right does he declare (in effect) that the reliable Medium, trained and sponsored, for instance, by the British College of Psychic Science is less deserving of a fee for his time and work than he himself—but perhaps Mr. Wills gives his labour and his time for nothing!"

"If Mr. Wills' position is tenable," says the critic in conclusion, "then there is no such thing as clear and logical thinking."

We do not know who the critic may be, but Mr. Wills will find it difficult to meet what the journal calls the "scathing indictment" of his sermon on "Voices in the dark."

PRIEST WHO KNOWS THE DEVIL

The Rev. Father Owen Dudley has been saying unkind (and untrue) things about Spiritualism in Dublin. He was described by his chairman as "one of those who are fighting that great fight to bring the people of England back to the faith of their fathers," so that presumably he belongs to what an Anglican Bishop has recently described as "The Roman Mission in England."

His knowledge of Spiritualism (or want of it) may be judged by passages to which the *Irish Times* gives prominence, such as:

"In so far as spiritualistic messages are genuine at all, they are from lying evil spirits masquerading as the souls of the dead."

"Spiritualism is not merely not right; it is an insult to God. There are thousands to-day broadcasting these blasphemous impertinences towards their Creator. They are calling themselves Christians. The Devil gets a mighty good laugh out of Spiritualism."

Apparently Father Dudley is on intimate terms with "the Devil," seeing he can write about his "mighty good laugh" so confidently. We doubt if he has a similar qualification to speak on behalf of "the Creator" as he seems to claim.

WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT?

Dudley Fletcher, who describes himself as "an agnostic on the subject of spiritualist messages," puts a number of questions to Father Owen (*Irish Times*, 20th February), which that gentleman will find difficult to answer. The first is: How does Father Owen *know* that such messages are from lying spirits? If completely honest, he will have to admit he does not know, but only thinks so because he is biased against Spiritualism.

Mr. Fletcher expresses special interest in Father Dudley's information regarding the Devil's "mighty good laugh." "I am glad to hear it," he writes, "for in my ignorance I thought that his life was not a very happy one. It can't be too bad if he can have a good laugh now and then."

As a final shot, Mr. Fletcher says: "We must remember that the Rev. Owen Dudley is only an Englishman, and was brought up in Protestantism; so what could you expect?"

DOUBTING CHRISTIANS

REV. A. F. WEBLING ON THE EVIDENCE FOR SURVIVAL

REV. A. F. WEBLING, Rector of Risby, Bury St. Edmunds (and author of *Something Beyond* and *Deep in the Forest*), two books of psychic interest), lectured to the Tankerton Hall Society (Kent) on Monday, February 17th, taking as his subject "Proof of Survival: The Present Situation."

The majority in the world of science, Mr. Webling said, do not yet accept Survival as proved, and there are doubting Christians amongst all denominations. "Most of us," he said, "know that beliefs which used to be held without question are now being rudely assailed. For example, multitudes based their belief in a future life on the Bible. But now it has filtered through to the consciousness of simple yet thoughtful folk that many scholars who have studied the Bible most thoroughly throw doubts on what used to be accepted as beyond question. 'Gospel truth' is a popular expression which implies that in the Gospels we had absolutely certain fact, and yet these clever people seem to feel sure that in many instances we have not."

"From my own knowledge," Mr. Webling added, "I am convinced that these doubts and perplexities are felt by many. A canon of the English Church told me he had practically lost all his old religious convictions. A vicar with strong Anglo-Catholic views lost by death one very dear to him, and wrote to me imploring me to tell him whether I thought his loved one could hear him speak to her and know when he was thinking of her."

EMINENT CHURCH DIGNITARIES

"It astonishes me," said Mr. Webling, "to find that some eminent ecclesiastics will accept, without any evidence worth speaking of, the records of events found in the Bible, yet when they are offered facts witnessed to by men of such outstanding ability as Crookes, Wallace, Barrett and Lodge, they take up an impressive attitude of scientific caution! I have talked to or corresponded with a half-dozen eminent dignitaries of the Church of England on the subject, and the surprising fact that emerged was that none of them knew much about it. Two said that they did not think that any beliefs and hopes could safely be based on the evidence which so far had been offered, but were quite willing that scientific men should study the matter; oblivious apparently, of the fact that they have been doing so for at least seventy years. Another bishop, referring to Spiritualism, said to a friend of mine, 'Isn't that some stuff about spirits having whisky and cigars on the Other Side?' To which she replied that this seemed the only matter in Lodge's *Raymond* that interested the clergy!"

"A clergyman who knew something of the subject told me that he was quite put off it by the weak so-called evidential matter offered to him by certain excellent but not very wise Spiritualists. On the other hand, when I quoted to a very high dignitary in the Church of England a piece of evidence that I had personally verified, he honestly replied that 'on the face of it, it was very remarkable.'"

In order to produce conviction, what is needed is such a sufficiency of first-rate evidence as will amount to proof. People do not always distinguish between the two. We must collect the best evidence, as would be done in a court of law; subject it to the closest examination; listen carefully and respectfully to everything that can be said against it as well as for it; and then, if we have had access to sufficient material of the right sort, we can reach a decision worth listening to, and are in a position to help others.

"Proof of Survival is, of course, only the first step," said Mr. Webling, "but it is one of enormous importance to our distracted world, puzzled and

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DR. MATTHEWS ANSWERS QUESTIONS

PROGRESS IN THE AFTER LIFE

SPIRITUALISTS who listened on Sunday evening to the Dean of St. Paul's (Dr. W. R. Matthews) would notice that, in his broadcast answers to questions arising out of his three lectures on "The Hope of Immortality," he made no reference to psychic evidences of Survival. But they would also notice that in all he said there was nothing out of line with the teachings and implications of Spiritualism.

Dr. Matthews reiterated his belief that Man is only potentially immortal, and that "Eternal Life" is the "gift of God," the acceptance of which is not dependent on creed, although right belief is important. Sins may be forgiven, but imperfections remain, and there will be opportunity for progress and improvement in the After-Life. There will be means of recognition in the After-Life, although it is not certain that people associated in this life will be reunited there. He did not believe in Reincarnation, but was not prepared to say the theory was without foundation. Similarly, he did not believe in the Survival of animals; but if it were argued that a loving dog might survive, he would not seek to deny the possibility.

To a mother who said her son had been wicked, but that Heaven would be no Heaven to her if he were not with her, Dr. Matthews held out the hope that purging and progress in the After-Life would bring her son to her again. In conclusion, he expressed belief in the desirability of prayers for the dead, which was, he thought, an essential of the "Communion of Saints," which formed part of the Church creed.

Dr. Matthews said he had received 1,700 letters, most of them containing several questions. A few were abusive, but most of them were relevant. The lectures and his answers to questions are to be published in book-form, with some alterations in the text suggested by friendly critics.

"WHITE EAGLE LODGE"

"White Eagle Lodge," described as "a Church of the New Philosophy," was opened and dedicated on Saturday last (February 22nd) in Pembroke Hall, Pembroke Gardens, Kensington, London, W.8. Miss Estelle Stead presided, and spoke of the high teaching which "White Eagle" had given for many years at the Stead Bureau and elsewhere, through his Medium, Mrs. Grace Cooke.

The dedication ceremony was performed by "White Eagle" (speaking through Mrs. Grace Cooke), who called for the presence and help of the Angels of Light, Wisdom and Power.

The premises consist of a chapel with seating accommodation for three hundred people, rooms for healing work, a club-room and a writing-room. There was a large and representative gathering.

(Continued from previous column).

bewildered by conflicting theories. We need facts upon which to build our faith and our hope. The Dean of St. Paul's, in his broadcast talks, gave us many arguments which suggest the probability of immortality, but they are only probabilities. He did more, however, and for the first time, I should think, so high a dignitary of the English Church spoke clearly and definitely of the value of psychic evidence for Survival. He said that he himself was not yet fully persuaded that the evidence available established it beyond question. In a word, he is really only waiting to receive further evidence which will bring conviction. As I know him slightly, I ventured to send him one such instance, with which he was, I gather, really impressed."

FOREIGN NOTES

LOST FARMER'S APPARITION

THE January issue of the *Zeitschrift fuer Seelenleben* (Leipzig) quotes the following from the *Daily Globe*, of St. Paul, Minnesota, U.S.A.:

"Many of those who are still living will remember something that happened in January, 1892, during the great blizzard that cost many people their lives. January 7th began with a steady fall of snow. About midday the wind veered to the north-west and blew fiercely for two days. It was during the early morning of the 7th that John Weston, a well-known farmer, set out with a load of timber from Graham's Lake. He was overtaken by the storm and completely disappeared. When the storm abated his neighbours found the wagon and animals, but not a trace of John Weston. Ten days later, one of his friends, John Gasper, went into the barn to feed his cattle. As he came out, he saw the missing man standing by the door, dressed in his usual winter fur cap and old army coat. 'Halloh, John!' he exclaimed, 'it's you, is it! We thought the cold had got you.' 'So it did,' was the reply, 'you'll find my body a mile and a half beyond Hersey Station,' and the figure vanished—'like a word you wipe off a slate,' said Gasper.

"This story was published at the time by Major E. P. Evans, who had been appointed by Governor Austin to head the Relief Commission. But it was not until three months later, when the snows melted, that the corpse of John Weston was found exactly where the apparition had declared it to be lying."

A PIED PIPER

Another quotation, taken from a local paper, relates that in a certain village, Isaszeg, in Czecho-Slovakia, there lives an old countryman, Josef Krenko, who acts the part of a Pied Piper, in that he "rids the town of rats," when called upon to do so. But his methods smack of ancient magic. First of all, he carefully places a number of grains of different kinds of corn in separate little pots. These he places in front of the rat holes, together with various objects that evidently serve only a spectacular (or ritualistic?) purpose. Hovering over these pots, the old man begins to mutter in some ancient language; faster and faster becomes the muttering and the swaying, until he falls over in trance. When he recovers he returns to his hut, but according to the newspaper quoted, next morning there is not a trace of the rats, alive or dead.

HIS FRIEND'S SIGN

The February issue of the *Zeitschrift* contains an article by a German Minister, Dr. C. Vogl, who was at one time an intimate friend of the late Psychical Researcher, Johannes Illig. On one occasion, while staying for some weeks with his scientific friend, Dr. Vogl discussed with him the popular belief that clocks will sometimes stop when a death takes place. Herr Illig regarded this as mere superstition. He likewise definitely refused to listen to his friend's suggestion that whichever of the two passed over first should give some sign to the remaining friend, maintaining that he was himself so fully convinced of survival that he cared nothing about "signs."

On the morning of November 7th last, the Minister woke up and glanced at the clock by his bedside, to find that it had stopped at 7.5 a.m. It was a comparatively new clock and had certainly been wound up the night before. After a short time, he called to ask his wife what the correct time was, and was much surprised to hear from her that their thoroughly reliable wall-clock in the living-room had stopped shortly before eight, also a very good clock in Frau Vogl's room. Both these clocks had likewise been wound and were in perfect order. In fact, when the clockmaker was sent for, he could give no explanation whatever of what had occurred: the three time-pieces were in perfect

(Continued at foot of next column).

SUBCONSCIOUS MIND

By H. ERNEST HUNT

III.—EMBRYONIC FACULTIES

YET another aspect of the subconscious mind remains to be touched upon in a preliminary survey. It is becoming the fashion to refer to the hidden potentialities not yet revealed to consciousness as those of the super-conscious, there being a disinclination to attach the prefix "sub" to these greater manifestations.

In any case, it is a fact that there are faculties resident within us embryonically which in scope are far beyond the capacity of the brain-and-sense mechanism. These, no doubt, as we proceed along the road of our evolution, will gradually develop and come into action; but there is no need to wait for this extremely tardy march of evolution to bring these to the birth, for even now they may be first recognised and then utilised.

The resources of perfect memory can be explored, the intuitions can be harnessed, inspiration can be provided with the right conditions to favour its exhibition, and, as we know, there are the psychic powers, and beyond them again the specifically spiritual endowments. These are no part of the machinery of intellect and brain, they must be assigned to some other source, sub- or super-conscious as the individual may choose.

As the senses are peculiarly adapted for making contact with the material environment which is now with us, giving us our store of experience and knowledge, and thus contributing to our growth, so these greater powers are intended to inform us of other realms of experience already existent and waiting but our own awareness to make contact with them also.

From a study of these subconscious faculties themselves, we are able to infer much as to the nature of the worlds with which they deal, and, furthermore, experimentally we can make some acquaintance with those worlds by the subconscious faculties liberated to action in sleep and trance conditions. Just as psycho-analysis is able to make exploration into the subconscious as a reservoir of past and hidden experiences, so also hypnosis and psychic experiment demonstrate to us something of the nature of those interior states we commonly regard as future worlds.

Very quickly do we get out of depth in these adventures, and beyond the region where logic and argument can serve us. We leave Time behind and find ourselves confronted with a condition wherein past, present, and future seem to merge, and where our ideas of causation and sequence are sadly shaken. We pass beyond the limitations of space and mundane measurements, for with the stilling of the senses, so does the world of sense slip from us. We are in a dream world which is more real than the tangible realm of seeming-solid things, a world of essence rather than of substance; a world where things are no longer "made with hands" and where temples may be raised in three days.

These strange subconscious faculties, of which we shall have more to say, are the indications within each of us of realms having a like strangeness; and in these superconscious powers we have the intimations of our own immortality. But while we are only awake to consciousness, we sleep to all these wider worlds, and it is indeed high time that we should awake out of sleep and consider the marvels that God has written for our learning.

(Continued from previous column).

condition, as was proved by the fact that they had never stopped like that before and that they had kept accurate time since they were set going again.

A few days later a letter arrived from the son of the Researcher Illig, saying that his father had been ill for some weeks, during which he had very frequently spoken with great affection of his friend Dr. Vogl; that he had died in the first week of November, and been buried in the early morning of November 7th. Had he after all given a "sign?"

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DIARY OF EVENTS.

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Miss EVELINE CANON. Public Meeting for Enquirers.

Wednesday, March 4th, at 3 p.m.—

Miss EVELINE CANON. Demonstration of Psychometry.

Thursday, March 5th, at 8.15 p.m.—

LECTURE. Major C. H. MOWBRAY on

"Telepathy, The Bugbear of Spiritualism"

Chairman: Lt.-Commander J. SCOTT DOVE, O.B.E.

(See special announcement, page 130)

Friday, February 28th, at 7 p.m.—

Mrs. ROSE LIVINGSTONE. Group Seance (limited to ten sitters).

Friday, March 6th, at 7 p.m.—

Miss JACQUELINE. Group Seance (limited to ten sitters)

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PRINCIPLES AND RULES

By STANLEY DE BRATH

"There are no two words in the English language used so confusedly the one for the other, as the words *RULE* and *PRINCIPLE* . . . You can make a rule, you cannot make a principle; you can lay down a rule; you cannot, properly speaking, lay down a principle. It is laid down for you." (*Century Dictionary*, vol. vi., p. 4731).

I THINK that many persons will be glad of a few thoughts which may make this clearer. We all know the hopeless pedantry of those who make the most trivial actions "*matters of principle*," and the hard illogical conduct that results. Rules are absolute, Principles require judgment for their application. It is rather amusing to hear a man say: "I make it a principle never to buy at the door," and perhaps he turns away some poor fellow who has no other source of maintenance.

Judaism was the religion of Rule. It was superseded by the religion of Principle. The Ten Commandments are Rules of Life, and were supplemented by a mass of rules that led to plain Pharisaism. The Commandments were given at a time when humanity at large was quite unable to understand the difference. They proceed from the Principle of Monotheism, and are perfectly valid for all ages and for all men.

Jesus stated the Principle of Love in a more positive form than Rabbi Hillel had done before him. Hillel said: "What is unpleasant to thyself, that do not to thy neighbour." Jesus said: "Do unto others as ye would that they should do unto you." Both are *Rules*, and both are founded in the same *Principle* of Love. St. Paul develops the idea in his letter to the Corinthians (I. Cor., xiii.).

To this day the distinction between the essential meaning of *Rule* and *Principle* is very imperfectly realised.

There are rules of arithmetic and principles of science. Newton stated them in his *Principia*, and reduced the Laws of Motion to three mathematical expressions which

were admitted by every nation all over the world. They explain how the facts of gravitation and motion cause the revolution of planets in orbit round the sun, but they do not explain the Principles of Gravitation. That is still unknown, even by Einstein, whose "*Warped Continuum*" is quoted by many, who, like myself, cannot understand how a continuum can be warped, or how it could "*explain*" the phenomenon, apart from mathematical symbols.

I am not arrogantly setting out to question the arcana of modern science, and am perfectly aware that the "*rising*" and "*setting*" of the sun is due to our being on a revolving planet. We know by experience that matter in some forms is solid, because a knife cuts and a stick bruises. These are final facts, but they belong to our bodily existence: they do not negative a state in which neither would be true to the discarnate soul.

PRINCIPLE OF ALL ACTION

What I am endeavouring to suggest is that Science is seeking for the real Principle of all Action, and is finding it in a non-material world which inter-acts with Matter—the non-material world of Energy. It has found that Matter itself proceeds from the interplay of electrons and protons whose motion would seem to negative the law of the Conservation of Energy, unless they draw the energy for their continuous motion from a spiritual world, or are moving in a frictionless medium, in which case their motion would be perpetual.

But this tenuous form of matter does not affect the value of a £1 note, nor what it can buy. This fact makes it remote from practical life, and we can get along quite well without it, but we have to admit that "*scientific principles*" are going beyond the material world, in which we act by rule derived from experience.

Moreover, they do not affect the world of Moral Values. Here the difference between Principle and Rule is most marked. The one comprehensible Principle is Love. This is laid down for us, and from that principle all our ethical rules are derived. St. Paul states that it is better than Wisdom, better than Knowledge (*scientia*) and better than Faith, for both the latter "*vanish away*." Love is permanent.

If anyone doubts this, he has only to compare the science of to-day with that prevalent fifty years ago. The Newtonian teaching stands firm, because it deals with measurable facts of material nature, but the moment it goes beyond this, it is confronted with larger problems that are answered in a quite different way from the positive and final affirmations of 1890. These latter have vanished away. The Principle of Love remains.

My Teacher tells me that Love in the Beyond means much more than personal affection, though that is not excluded. It is recognised that love is the very essence of evolutionary progress. Love is permanent, because it is a spiritual Principle.

I notice that the term "*subconscious mind*" is very largely used as if "*Mind*" were an entity. It is a function or attribute of Life, from the amoeba to the man. It is an attribute of Life, as extension is an attribute of Matter. The subconscious mind does act in this world, but has it not its origin in the soul which is an entity and not a function? This would seem more accurate.

MRS. GEIKIE-COBB

The following announcement appeared in *The Morning Post* of Monday, February 24th:

"GEIKIE-COBB.—On February 22nd, 1936, at 26 Drayton Court, S.W.10, after 20 years of suffering borne heroically, HARRIETTE EMILY GEIKIE-COBB, the adorable and adored wife for 51 years of William Frederick Geikie-Cobb, D.D., noblest woman, sweetest wife. No mourning, no flowers. Service at St. Ethelburga's, Bishopsgate, Thursday, 27th, 5 p.m.

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Monday, March 2nd, at 5 p.m.—Mr. S. O. COX will speak on the difficulties encountered in Psychic Investigation, and will answer Questions.

Wednesday, March 4th, at 8.15 p.m.—Miss H. M. BOULNOIS "Mystic India" (Author of "Mystic India.") (Non-members 1/-)

Friday, March 6th at 3 p.m.—Mr. W. S. HENDRY "Psychic Healing: Haunted Persons and Houses." (Non-members, 2/6)

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MONDAY, MARCH 2nd, at 3 p.m.—Mrs. GRADON THOMAS

FRIDAY, MARCH 6th, at 5 p.m.—Miss A. GEDDES

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11 a.m. Mr. W. H. Evans.

6.30 p.m. Mr. George H. Lethem, Address.
Mrs. Maude Bateman, Clairvoyance.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4th, at 7.30 p.m.—

Mrs. Annie Patterson, Clairvoyance.

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Subject: "Why We Fear Death."

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SUNDAY, MARCH 1st, 1936.

11 a.m.—Mr. DAVID BEDBROOK

Clairvoyante: Mrs. Helen Spiers.

6.30 p.m.—Dr. H. P. SHASTRI

Clairvoyante: Mrs. Evelyn Thomas.

Sunday, March 8th, at 11 a.m. ...

Mr. G. H. LETHEM

Clairvoyante: Miss Lily Thomas.

Sunday, March 8th, at 6.30 p.m. ...

Mr. GRAHAM MOFFAT

Clairvoyante: Mrs. Helen Spiers.

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Clairvoyante: Mrs. Grace Cooke.

Wednesday, March 4th.—*Speaker:* Mrs. Hewat McKenzie
Clairvoyant: Mr. R. E. Cocksell.

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 and Mr. Dayer Smith. Class of Instruction for 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 Michell (Hon. Secretary).

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March 11th 2.30 Mrs. Eveline Canon. 6.30 Mrs. Evelyn Thomas.

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Saturday, February 29th, at 8 p.m.

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PSYCHIC PILGRIMAGE IN SOUTH AFRICA

By G. E. WRIGHT

OUR fourteen-days mission in Pretoria having ended, a train trek of 12 hours brought us to Bloemfontein, the journey being remarkable in that it revealed to us the miracle, as it seemed, which a belated rain-fall had wrought in a few days; for, whereas through a long drought, the land had become parched and arid, here, within a week, it had grown verdant and fair, and such of the cattle as had survived the drought were browsing contentedly in green pastures, apparently wholly forgetful of the hardships they had so long endured.

In Bloemfontein, for the third time in succession, we found that the proprietor of our hotel was interested in Spiritualism; so much so that, since the Church folk have a hall for Sundays only, he kindly granted us the use of the large hotel dining room for week-night meetings. Indeed, the interest seemed to be widespread; but here, as in other places, there is a decided preference for circles rather than for the formation of churches or centres; with the result that the solitary organised association stands at a very low ebb. The Church members were therefore very glad to avail themselves of such services as we could offer, and rejoiced to see the large increase in attendance which the novelty of our mission induced.

DEARTH OF SPEAKERS AND MEDIUMS

What they require, however, is a continuous attraction in the form of local ability; the prospect of help from visiting Mediums being extremely remote.

As it is, they sometimes have no speaker or clairvoyant, and so have to be content with a reading from some book or other. Obviously such efforts do not rank as propaganda.

In spite of these conditions—perhaps because of them—out visit to Bloemfontein was one of the most pleasing periods of our tour, and the busiest of them all, owing apparently to the great, unsatisfied yearning that exists among the citizens. It would seem that there are few cities in the Union in which the need and the desire for enlightenment on Spiritualistic teaching and practice are more clamant; and few, again, which are more destitute of organised effort to meet the need and to satisfy the desire.

Following a brief visit to friends in Jagersfontein, one of the townships rendered sadly derelict through the closing of the diamond mines, we turned towards Kimberley, missing by two and a half hours only an earthquake, which damaged the home in which we had been staying, and other buildings besides.

Kimberley, reminiscent of exciting events in the Boer War, a city compact and remarkably clean, promised a pleasant time for us, as also did the kindly welcome offered by Spiritualist friends. Working with both Churches, we were kept very busy both in the halls and in private houses. One Church has the good fortune to possess its own building, provided largely through the efforts of the devoted founder of the Church, President for 30 years, Mr. W. J. Indge. This is one of the brightest and best appointed Spiritualist Churches in the Union. Among its chief supporters are the President and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Mitchell, who have been associated with the Church from the beginning; and Mr. Norman Gow, the Honorary Secretary.

The other Church, unfortunately, has only a hired hall, one that is quite in keeping with the locality in which it is situated, where the inhabitants are mostly natives, many of whom are members of the Church. Here for the first time in South Africa we had the privilege of speaking to a congregation of Indians, Chinese and natives.

Even in this association of worship, the colour-bar, that troublesome problem, intervenes, and separate seating is provided accordingly. So far as we could judge, however, the dark-skinned people did not resent

this discrimination, for they made up more than half of the large congregation. It was very interesting to watch their faces, many of them by no means unattractive, as they joined in the service with reverent attention, and in the singing with hearty enthusiasm. This is one of the few Spiritualist Churches in South Africa that make a marked feature of providing for the needs of natives, and a tribute of admiration is due to the leaders, Mr. and Mrs. Farrell, for the many years of devoted service that they have rendered, largely single-handed and in the face of many difficulties, financial and otherwise.

On the occasion of the passing of King George, it was interesting and gratifying to note the many expressions of loyalty that this sad event called forth in Kimberley. The boy who brought our morning coffee said simply, "The King is dead," just as it might have been spoken at home; not "The King of England," but "The King"; and we felt that no elaborate public oration could have expressed more eloquently the unity existing between the peoples of the Dominions overseas and those of the Homeland. By 10 o'clock in the forenoon the word had gone round that all businesses, including banks, offices and bioscopes, should be closed for the day; and the city, with flags, both Union and British, at half-mast, quickly assumed the tranquil aspect of a Sabbath morning. In common with Churches of other denominations, our Spiritualist friends held a memorial service, in the course of which their feelings of sympathy and loyalty were expressed in terms no less sincere and heartfelt than those which we are accustomed to at home.

PASSING OF MRS. MARY LORD

We greatly regret to have to record the transition of Mrs. Mary Lord, the well-known worker in the Marylebone Spiritualist Association, which took place suddenly on Wednesday, the 19th inst., after an operation for goitre. Her husband, Mr. W. H. Lord, has been a distinguished worker in the M.S.A. for upwards of twenty-five years, and to him and Mrs. Lord's mother and their relatives we extend our deep sympathy.

The funeral took place at Golders Green on Monday last, the service being conducted by the Rev. C. Drayton Thomas, assisted by Mrs. Lord's brother, the Rev. Percy Mellor. The large attendance of friends, and the number of floral tributes bore further testimony of the love and esteem felt for the arisen one. L.H.

A SPIRITUAL MARCONI

Although he died five and a half years ago, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle still keeps in close touch with his family and advises them on all their concerns.

I spoke with members of the family at Windlesham, Crowborough, Sussex (writes a Special Correspondent in the *Daily Mirror* of February 13th), and they told me that his advice had in every instance proved correct.

"We used to ask father's advice when he was alive," said Mr. Denis Conan Doyle, "and now he continues to give us his advice, even before we ask it. In our home here we feel he is just as much with us as when he was alive. He is buried in the garden, and he often lets us know his appreciation of the flowers we have laid on his grave.

"My father's work during his life was to put the facts of Survival before the public in a form they could understand. Now he is continuing his work with the greater powers at his disposal. He is a spiritual Marconi."

Readers will be sorry to learn that Lady Conan Doyle is seriously ill.

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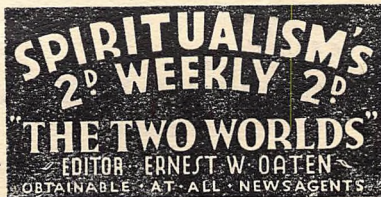
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