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SPIRITUALISM AS SEEN BY DR. W. R. INGE

A POINTED REPLY AND A CHALLENGE

By MRS. ST. CLAIR STOBART

*In the course of an address delivered at the Spiritualist
Community Service at the Grosvenor Hall, London, on
Sunday evening, April 19th.*

WHETHER we believe or disbelieve in Spiritualism, whether we desire or do not desire to live beyond the grave, surely the question as to whether there is, or is not, a future life, is of the greatest importance to mankind. If we believe that Life—our life, with full consciousness—persists after the process of life which we call Death, this belief must inevitably, to some extent, colour our actions and influence our mental, moral and spiritual outlook; whilst on the other hand, disbelief in or ignorance of the fact of Survival stamps its victims with an influence of its own. It is therefore of more than ordinary interest to take note of the belief as to Survival held by those who are in positions of influence and authority in the realm of Religion, because we must, I think, assume that belief in a future life is the basis of Religion. As the historian Buckle put it, "If Immortality be not true, it matters little whether anything else is true or not."

Now, it will be agreed that the Very Rev. W. R. Inge, until recently Dean of St. Paul's, should be in a position to speak with authority on a subject which so nearly concerns his profession.

But first, what is Religion? Religion is both Art and Science. It is Art, inasmuch as inspiration plays an important role, and it is, or it should be, Science, because, to be effective, Religion must be proved to be demonstrably true. Matthew Arnold's definition of Religion as "morality touched with emotion," falls lamentably short of a full interpretation. And the reason—one reason—why Religion is on the wane, in the Churches of to-day, is because the scientific aspect of Religion is wilfully ignored by those in authority in the Churches.

If we are correct in assuming belief in a future life to be the basis of Religion, this belief in a future life

must be capable of scientific demonstration, *if* Religion is to be of general acceptance with the intellectual world to-day. Is this a practical possibility? What have the religious experts to say upon the subject? What does Dr. Inge say?

DR. INGE AND SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE

In the *Evening Standard* of April 8th, in the second of his articles on the subject of "A future life" Dr. Inge says—"We are told that there is scientific evidence for Survival. Cases are reported with much parade of impartiality, but this is emphatically a case where the wish to believe is a reason for doubt. If there are such things as psychic waves in the atmosphere which may be a vehicle for the communication of thoughts, the discovery would be wholly in favour of Materialism. We should see a revival of the notion that spirit is an ultra-gaseous condition of matter, a retrograde theory which obstructed the belief that God is Spirit. The moment we are asked to accept scientific evidence for spiritual truth, the alleged spiritual truth becomes for us neither spiritual nor true." Dr. Inge thus refutes the possibility of scientific evidence for Survival, or even its desirability, and this is in line with the lately proclaimed statement of the Archbishop of York upon the subject.

Dr. Inge definitely bases his Religion (and this I find is the general attitude of the Churches) on the traditional Church *hope* of Immortality. For in referring to the fact that Robert Browning rested his belief in Immortality on the imperishableness of human love, he remarks that "unfortunately, this type of belief too easily slides into necromancy—a miserable substitute for Christian Hope."

Very well. Let us assume that no scientific evidence of a future life is obtainable and that supposed communications with that life are, and must always have been, unwarrantable assumptions. Where then does the Christian Hope of Immortality stand? The Religion of Christianity, the Religion of the Churches, is based upon the story of the life of Jesus of Nazareth

contained in the records of the New Testament. Those records are bulging with accounts of communications between the living and the dead. If there is no scientific evidence of such communications available to-day, there was no scientific evidence for similar communications in the days of Jesus, and the whole Christian story, with its phenomena—the communication with the spirit-world of Joseph and of Mary, of Jesus with Moses and Elijah, of the disciples with Jesus after the Crucifixion, etc.—must all be relegated to the category of “unwarrantable assumptions.”

A “STARVELING HOPE”

And is it surprising that 20th century people, who are no longer interested in “unwarrantable assumptions” should keep away from the Churches? “We do not wish,” says Dr. Inge, “to be unfeeling to those who long for some external and tangible evidence that their dear ones are still in existence, but *what a starveling hope Spiritualism offers*”: an existence, he assures us, as poor and unsubstantial as that of the Hebrew Sheol or the Greek Hades, and with no guarantee of permanence, even if the power of comforting or frightening the living is supposed to persist for a few years. Such a prospect would add a new terror to Death. “Would anyone,” he asks, “desire it for himself?”

Spiritualism offers, we are told, but a “starveling hope” of a future life. Now, this “starveling hope” is based upon the evidence provided by thousands of contemporary men and women of good faith and intelligence, by many scientists of international repute who have made a life-long study of the subject, and this “starveling hope” is further corroborated by the evidence supplied throughout the ages by many of the world’s greatest intellectuals and noblest characters. (See *Torchbearers of Spiritualism* and *The Either-Or of Spiritualism*).

Let us compare this starveling hope with the Church’s Hope of Immortality. This hope is based upon a tradition for which the historic evidence is distinctly weak, a tradition dating back 2,000 years—the tradition, namely, that Jesus of Nazareth appeared to His followers after He had been crucified and buried. Upon one individual case of Survival, for which—if the claims of Spiritualism are unjustifiable—no scientific evidence, or evidence which would for a moment hold good in a Court of law, and extremely little historic evidence is obtainable. Upon such slender foundation has been based the Religion which conquered the world, the Religion of Christianity of which Dr. Inge is one of the chief custodians to-day.

If the belief of Spiritualists is but a “starveling hope,” what can be said of the hope based upon the unscientific credulity of Dr. Inge and his fellow Churchmen? Should we Spiritualists to-day dare to base our belief in a future life upon the reported survival of a single individual reputed to have lived even a hundred years ago, 50 years ago, 10 years ago, one year ago? We should not expect our claim to be seriously considered unless and until it was corroborated by similar instances of Survival, until it came to be recognised that Survival is a law of Nature which operates indifferently in the case of every human being.

It is because the Churches insist upon uniqueness for the Survival of Jesus and obstinately refuse to accept, for that Survival, the corroboration afforded by Spiritualism to-day, that the Christian Churches are being deserted for Churches which teach the glad Gospel of universal life beyond the grave—of a future life, not as a “starveling hope,” but as a proven fact.

This, the teaching that Man’s survival of physical death is demonstrably true, this is the first stage in the religious revolution which is being enacted to-day—rejection of a teaching based on a tradition for a teaching based upon what its devotees believe to be demonstrable facts.

During the first centuries of Christianity the Churches

by no means considered the Survival of Jesus to be an isolated example, nor was Spiritualism regarded as a “starveling hope.” Spiritualism was practised in the first Christian Church (as recorded by Paul in his first Epistle to the Corinthians) in a more extensive way than in our Spiritualist Churches to-day, and communication between Christians and the spirits of the dead was of such common occurrence that precise instructions were circulated on the subject.

The Fathers of the Church were firm believers in and practised what we to-day know under the term of Spiritualism. Gregory, Bishop of Caesarea, declared that he received in his Church, from John the Evangelist, in a vision, the symbol of the Faith he preached. Origen, the Sage, whom St. Jerome considers as the greatest Master of the Church after the Apostles, often in his works speaks of the manifestations of the dead; St. Clement of Alexandria, St. Gregory of Nice, and St. Jerome, all speak in the same strain. In a book supposed to have been written by Hermas (the disciple of the Apostles who is mentioned in the 16th chapter of Paul’s Epistle to the Romans) the writer indicates the means of distinguishing good from evil spirits, and this book, we are told, was read in the Churches, in the same way that we now read the Gospels and Epistles, until the 5th century. St. Clement of Alexandria and Origen speak of it with respect. It has a place in the most ancient catalogues of the canonical books received by the Roman Church.

A CHALLENGE

Now, in view of the fact that the original Christian Church, from which Dr. Inge is a lineal descendant, not only proclaimed but openly practised Spiritualism of the same nature as that in vogue to-day, and in view of the fact that the much revered Fathers of Dr. Inge’s Church not only proclaimed but openly practised that self-same Spiritualism, is Dr. Inge prepared, upon due consideration, to pronounce Spiritualism as a “starveling hope”?

(In concluding, Mrs. Stobart referred to the efforts being made by the “Confraternity” of Churchmen and Spiritualists to show that the messages of Christianity and Spiritualism can be combined with advantage to both).

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As already explained, donations to the Fund are greatly needed, not only to meet expenses of publication, but to secure adequate publicity for LIGHT; and friends of LIGHT and of the L.S.A. are asked to contribute generously to the Fund, by means of which the interest and scope of LIGHT may be sustained and extended.

Contributions should be sent to the Hon. Treasurer of the LIGHT Sustentation Fund, 16 Queensberry Place, South Kensington, S.W.7.

PSYCHIC MESSAGES FROM LIVING PEOPLE

By E. B. GIBBES

THE case reported by Mrs. Vasey in *LIGHT* of April 2nd would seem to be analogous to the "Gordon Davis" case, in that events which subsequently took place were given by an alleged contributor who was, later on, found to be still living. Mrs. Vasey states that she ascertained that her communicator was ill at the time of the communication, and that a guide told her that "his spirit was travelling astrally."

It seems probable that that is the explanation. South African time would be about two hours in advance of Greenwich. Mrs. Vasey does not mention the hours at which the sittings took place; but it is possible that the communicator, being ill, was in a drowsy condition or dozing at the time the communications were made. This hypothesis, however, does not apply to the Gordon Davis case described by Dr. S. G. Soal, for he definitely states: "We know that his (Gordon Davis's) conscious mind was busy interviewing clients on both occasions on which he was supposed to communicate." (*Proceedings*, S.P.R., December, 1925, page 561).

From the above it appears that, if we accept the supposition that our consciousness can communicate across space while we are still in the flesh, we need not necessarily be asleep or even dozing in order to do so. In this matter, the Gordon Davis case raises a very baffling problem.

Some years ago the following experience was related to me by a friend who attended a direct voice sitting at the British College of Psychic Science. A voice spoke to him, giving him a name and declaring that he (the alleged communicator) had been his soldier-servant many years previously. The sitter did not recognise the name, and said so, disclaiming all recollection of the relationship in connection with him and his regiment. The communicator then gave the nickname "Ginger," which instantly recalled to General —'s mind the fact that a private in his old regiment was known by this name, and that he had at one time been his servant. Six months later, General — ascertained that this man was still alive. Beyond the fact that the sitting at the College was held in the early afternoon, and that "Ginger" might have been indulging in an afternoon nap, there is no evidence to show that this communicator was in a drowsy condition or "travelling astrally."

ASLEEP OR SOMNAMBULISTIC?

The following cases, however, clearly indicate that the communications came from living people who were asleep or in a somnambulist condition at the time of the sitting. The first was recorded by Miss H. A. Dallas in the *Occult Review* of July, 1924, and requoted in *LIGHT* for September 26th, 1925. It runs as follows:

"A gentleman called Mr. Arundel Mackenzie-Ashton (the latter name had been recently adopted) paid a visit to a vicarage in Notts in September, 1882. After his visit, he went to his home, 130 miles away. A few days later, Colonel and Mrs. Nicholson arrived as visitors at the vicarage, and one evening they amused themselves with 'table-turning.' When they asked who tilted the table, they received the name Arundel Mackenzie. Colonel and Mrs. Nicholson were *not* acquainted with Mr. Mackenzie-Ashton, and the latter did not know that these visitors were at the vicarage.

"What followed was so strange that Col. Nicholson wrote to Mr. Mackenzie-Ashton and asked him what he had been doing between 10.30 and 11.30 on this particular evening. Also he asked for an assurance from him 'on his word of honour' that he had 'heard nothing whatever from the vicarage that evening.' This assurance was given, and an account of his actions was written and sent to Colonel Nicholson.

"Mr. Mackenzie-Ashton was not given any particulars as to what occurred after the question, 'How is his

body occupied' until he had himself stated by letter what he had been doing during that evening . . ."

Table-tilted communication recorded by Colonel Nicholson, September 13th, 1882, 11.15 p.m.

"We . . . asked to tilt if a spirit was present, it did so. Asked whose spirit?—Arundel Mackenzie. Where is he?—His soul is here. What is his body doing?—Playing billiards. Who is with him?—Father. Who is winning?—Son. How many games have they played?—Two. What has he been doing during the day?—Shooting."

Letter from Mr. Mackenzie-Ashton.

"I had been shooting during the day, and in the evening I had two games of billiards with my father. I won both of them, and after that I lay down on a couch in the billiard room and fell asleep. Then I had a dream that I was back in W—— Vicarage."

"NOT SOUND ASLEEP"

The other cases are taken from Mrs. Hester Dowden's book, *Voices from the Void*, pages 48-49:—

" . . . The name of my cousin's brother was spelt out on the board; he described in what room he was sitting, and said he was asleep before the fire. The message was a short one, and I have not the record of it by me, but it was proved correct in every detail. . . . After this the name of Mr. D. (an intimate friend of mine) appeared. He stated that he was not sound asleep, and therefore the message would come in jerks, which it did. He said he was sitting before the fire in his drawing-room; no one else was in the room. I asked him to give my sister a message from me: he said, 'Sorry, I can't; I shall forget all this when I wake.' He then went on to tell me what had happened on Christmas night—quite a long communication—and mentioned a friend of his and mine who had come in, and whom I certainly should not have expected would be there. He then said goodbye, and that he could not speak any more, as he was getting more wakeful. This was an absolutely correct statement of facts, as I found out when I came back to Dublin."

Readers may be interested to learn that the "Miss C." and "Astor" so frequently referred to in Mrs. Dowden's book, are Miss Geraldine Cummins, the well-known writer of so many important psychic works, and her Guide. The book is of value in that it is a record of the early phases of the mediumship of Mrs. Dowden and Miss Cummins.

Re-reading *Voices from the Void* makes one ask if the time has not come when we can look for a revised and enlarged edition of this excellent little volume. Since its publication, Mrs. Dowden has had many psychic experiences which would be of value if recorded in book form. Incidentally, it would be of interest to the psychic public if, after these last years of study and experience, Mrs. Dowden would openly state her conviction regarding Survival.

London Spiritualist Alliance

and

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LECTURE

"ON TRUTH"

by

Mme. LAURA FINCH

(Editress of "Annals of Psychic Science")

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A TEST CASE: THERESA NEUMANN

Review by H. F. PREVOST BATTERSBY

THERESA NEUMANN was born on 8th April, 1898, in Konnersreuth, a peaceful village in the Bavarian Mountains, on the borders of Germany and Czecho-Slovakia, where "the telephone, the radio, and the motor-car are practically unknown quantities, and daily toil forms the recreation and amusement of the people;" a people who seem to be both charming and devout.

Theresa, when twenty, was the strongest girl in the village; but in March, 1918, while helping to put out a fire, she strained her back; and, a little later, carrying a heavy bag up from the cellar, fell and was obliged to go into hospital. In August she had another fall on the stairs, which affected her eyesight, and it was found that her spine was dislocated. In October, when trying to resume work, she fell once more, and a period of almost complete invalidism began with violent cramps, days and even weeks of unconsciousness, convulsions so violent that all the teeth in her upper jaw were broken; and in December she took to her bed for good.

However, she managed even to fall out of bed, injuring both her legs; and in the following March, trying to resume her work, she had a fresh fall, giving rise to convulsions, which closed her mouth for several days; she became totally blind and suffered from intermittent deafness.

Forced to remain in bed in one position, sores formed on her body, she was almost incapable of taking food or drink, and from the Spring of 1919 till December, 1926, it was a mystery to the doctors how she remained alive.

The story of these misfortunes is important, since without them it is unlikely she would have developed the aptitudes which have established her fame.

The case may be remembered of Mollie Fancher, who, as the result of two terrible accidents, was left blind, paralysed, and hideously crippled, yet in the possession of powers even more remarkable than those of Theresa; there was also the acquisition of psychic abilities, as the outcome of extreme ill-health, by Frederica Hauffe and St. Hildegard.

On 29th April, 1923, during the Beatification in Rome of the Little Flower of Lisieux, whom Theresa had adopted as her patron saint, the miraculous cures began. She recovered her sight, which she had lost for four years. Her pains and sores increased, but the sores on her leg were at once healed by a few rose leaves which had touched the tomb of the newly Beatified. On, it would seem, the same day, she was enveloped in a bright light; her twisted leg became straight, her spine was cured; the paralysis and sores on her back disappeared. She got up and walked, with help, across the room. While the light was about her she heard a gentle voice promising a cure, but also much more suffering, by which souls were to be saved. (The words quoted were found, later, in the sixth letter of the Little Flower to a missionary.)

The fourth miraculous cure took place on 30th September—the exact anniversary of the death of St. Theresa of Lisieux; a coincidence which should interest the psycho-analyst. She was once more enveloped in light (we are not told if she alone was aware of it), and the voice promised complete restoration. On 7th November of the same year (1925) she had an acute attack of appendicitis. Praying to be spared the operation which had been prescribed, the light returned, and the voice directed her to rise and go immediately to church—it was ten o'clock at night—which she did, a well woman.

The sixth cure, on 13th February, 1926, freed her from terrible though inexplicable pains which she had been

enduring, and the voice explained that they were training her for still greater suffering.

The last, on 19th November, relieved her of pneumo-bronchitis so severe that prayers for the dying had been recited over her: but the voice assured her that the sufferings were to show the world that there is a superior power, and to obtain the conversion of sinners.

With that assurance the third part of Theresa's life began, though it seems to have overlapped the second, since it was on the 5th March, 1926, that her visions and stigmatic bleedings began. On that day blood flowed from her side, and continued flowing for a week. On Good Friday blood streamed both from her side and from her eyes, and next morning there were wounds in her hands and feet. The wounds gradually penetrated the flesh, till on Good Friday of the following year they completely pierced it. "Right through the wound of each hand," we are told, "from front to back can be seen a piece of hard flesh, inserted like a plug, quite distinct from the flesh of the hand itself, and having the form of a nail." The same phenomenon can be seen in the wounds of the feet."

DEVELOPMENT OF THE STIGMATA

It would take too long to describe the progressive development of the stigmata. Wounds appeared round her head; there was a reddish swelling that sweated blood on her right shoulder; her whole body was marked with red weals, fresh and bleeding; the wound in her side was "believed to penetrate right through the heart."

"On ordinary Fridays blood flows only from the wounds in the eyes and on the head. On the first Friday of each month the wound in her side bleeds also. Bleeding from the wounds on her hands, feet and shoulder takes place regularly during Lent. The red weals of the scourging appear only on Good Friday, when the veil which she wears on her head and the garment which touches her side are saturated with blood. About one pint of blood flows in this manner every Friday from the stigmata of the eyes, head and heart, amounting in all to seven gallons a year. Each vision is also accompanied by a loss of weight of from five to eight pounds, which she regains on the following day."

Such happenings are remarkable, but there is no reason to distrust them. Spiritualists are cognisant of cures quite as surprising as those of Theresa Neumann, by means just as inexplicable. Some day we may discover what are the curative potencies, which, like music, float unapprehended about us, to be grasped and used by some psychic instrument which, normally, we are not able to control.

The Reverend authors of this book* tell us that "Our Lord wants all Christians to produce to some extent His Passion in their bodies by penance and mortification. There are a chosen few, however, in whom He wishes to reproduce it . . . in actual reality, as He Himself endured it . . . they must bleed at regular intervals and must be caused intense pain . . . Real and authentic stigmata must be God's work exclusively."

Far be it from me to pose as an interpreter of the Almighty, but such a view of His pursuits does seem somewhat pre-Copernican; and it is curious that all inspiration to such exhibitions of piety was lacking for more than a thousand years after the sufferings of Christ, and that, following the example of St. Francis, they became for some time a competitive affair between two rival Orders.

But the most remarkable achievement of Theresa has still to be mentioned.

From Christmas, 1922, she has not taken a single mouthful of solid food. From that date till Christmas, 1926, she used to drink a glass of water on most days. From Christmas, 1926, to September, 1927, she would drink a few drops to enable her to swallow the Sacred Host. Since that time she has taken neither food nor

(Continued on next page).

Theresa Neumann of Konnersreuth, by Rev. C. E. Roy, D.D., D.Ph., and Rev. W. A. Joyce, P.P. London. Alexander Ousley, Ltd. 1936. 3/6.

drink, not even a drop of water; neither has she had any natural sleep.

It was suggested that the authenticity of such marvels should be confirmed by Theresa's removal to hospital: but her father resented the suggestion, and four Franciscan nuns were appointed, under the direction of Dr. Seidl, to keep her under observation for fifteen days. No detailed record of that period seems to have been issued, but an episcopal report was published to the effect that the stigmatist's fast was a well-proved fact.

Her weight, about one hundred and twenty-five pounds, only varies during her Friday visions; and, for nearly nine years, she has lived entirely on the Holy Communion which she receives every day.

Mollie Fancher was also for nine years without food or drink, but she was intermittently in a condition of coma, whereas Theresa, save for her ecstasies, has been living a normal life. Like Mollie, she also developed clairvoyant faculties, and was able on more than one occasion to receive the Holy Viaticum as an apport.

As a psychometrist her faculty has been used to confirm or confute the authenticity of relics. We are told that her penetration is unfailing, but it must be remembered that on the pedigree of but few relics can perfect reliance be placed. Joyful visions, sometimes ecstatic in character, increased yearly, and were concerned chiefly with the life of Christ, to which she contributed many picturesque details, which do not always agree with modern research.

TERESA'S SUFFERINGS

Her sorrowful visions were tragic affairs, especially those that culminated on Good Friday, and her prolonged agonies, with her body drenched and her face streaming with blood, might well have seemed too sacred for public exhibition.

But her Church regards such things from a different angle. Theresa's sufferings are to it somehow explanatory of the ways of God with men. They are regarded as of three kinds—expiatory, impetratory, and substitutive. "They apply to both the living and the dead. She makes expiation for sinners, either individually or in groups," the latter causing her special sufferings on the occasion of each carnival. She obtained for one dying of cancer the grace of a happy death, and the speedy release from purgatory of a deceased priest, receiving his thanks as she saw him entering Paradise.

Many conversions of Jews and Protestants are to her credit, often at the cost of acute suffering, and numerous cures at a similar expense.

It is small wonder that she has a European reputation, nor can her Church be charged with undue exploitation. Bishops and Cardinals have, indeed, testified to her integrity, and His Holiness, the Pope, on his own initiative, sent special Apostolic Benedictions to Theresa and to her parish priest.

On the other hand, there are Catholics who contend "that Theresa's case is the most extraordinary instance of diabolical possession ever known."

To Spiritualists her experience is of considerable interest. The cures, the clairvoyance, the command of language, do not suggest to us the direct intervention of either heaven or hell; they are achieved by powers we do not yet understand, but they are achieved quite independently of any religious conviction which may be held by their instrument, Pagan, Protestant, or Catholic.

One must respect the devout conviction of the authors of this memoir, yet wish them a somewhat less hampered conception of the Director of the Universe.

SCIENTISTS AND SURVIVAL

IN the course of an address, opening a new session of the Edinburgh Psychic College last Friday night, Mr. Scott-Harrison, Edinburgh, whose subject was "The Proof of Survival and its Implications," combated the prevalent idea that science pronounced against proof of Survival.

Whatever they thought about the prejudice of the average scientist, he said, they must admit that his method was good. When he was called on to deal with new facts, he propounded a hypothesis that would fit them, and patiently proceeded to test out that hypothesis by further facts. What the scientist must not do was to stress any fact in order to bolster up his hypothesis. This was a method which very few non-scientific people were capable of using.

In this question of Survival, the most valuable testimony of all should be the testimony of the trained scientist. They often heard that such testimony was against proof of Survival. On the contrary, it was overwhelmingly for Survival. Those scientists who had been sufficiently interested to study psychic phenomena as a subject for scientific investigation, and had used their training in investigation, came to the same conclusion—that Survival was a fact and that communication was possible. There was one exception—the late Professor Richet. He thought, however, that Richet's work had been of more importance than was realised. Although Richet would not admit the Spiritualist hypothesis, he did more than anyone to clinch the evidence that the phenomena of the seance room did take place.

There were still, however, a large body of people who were sceptical. Usually the sceptics did not know anything about the subject. The scepticism, in nine out of ten cases, was rooted in fear. (*The Scotsman*, April 17th.)

MR. WILLIAM BUIST PICKEN

Mr. Alfred Wigglesworth, writing as "an old friend" of Mr. William B. Picken (whose transition we recorded in last week's issue), says:

"Perhaps the pivotal point of Mr. Picken's life was his long friendship with Andrew Jackson Davis, the seer of Poughkeepsie, whose works he treasured and knew by heart, and with whom he kept up, until the death of Davis, an illuminating correspondence. What Boswell was to Johnson, William Buist Picken was to Davis. From his works he derived inspiration and wisdom; he was thereby attracted to the higher thought of Spiritualism, far removed from its sensational aspects. He measured human life and progress in the light of 'duality,' which explained to him the eternal truth underlying all true philosophy. 'The spiritual and the material,' he wrote, 'are never isolated, they are the duality elements of the Universal Dual-Unity.' And again, 'Whilst embodying the mechanical, humanity transcends it, therefore to construct its human systems according to merely mechanical laws is to suffer grievously and put a cruel brake upon the wheels of progress.' 'In a happy social system each unit will do its proper work, that for which its form fits it, contentment and progress thereby resulting.'

"What a happy and comprehensive philosophy is herein expressed! Does it not diagnose with singular insight the woes of a troubled world while indicating the direction in which humanity should travel if progress is to be secured along the lines of divine law?"

TANKERTON HALL SOCIETY

We learn that the Tankerton Hall Lecture Society (Kent) has changed its name to the Tankerton Hall Psychic and Lecture Society. While the lectures, which have been a feature of this Society, will be continued, it has been decided to hold Sunday evening services as soon as the necessary arrangements can be made.

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Recorded by Grace Grinling.

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).

DR. ALEXIS CARREL

Sir,—In reference to Dr. Carrel, some of your readers may be interested to know that the formulation, at least in part, of his present convictions is of by no means recent date. In a little book on Lourdes published by the late Mgr. H. Hugh Benson (the brother of E. F. Benson, the novelist, and the son of a former Archbishop of Canterbury), the preface (dated March, 1914) tells us of a conversation which Mgr. Benson had at Lourdes with "a famous French scientist" and his wife. The name is not given, but a little later I heard from Benson himself that he had referred to Alexis Carrel.

Carrel inclined to think that in the Lourdes cures there is a transference of vitalising force either from the energetic faith of the sufferer or from that of the bystanders:

"He instanced an example in which his wife, herself a qualified physician, took part. She held in her arms a child, aged two and a half years, blind from birth, during a procession of the Blessed Sacrament. As the monstrance came opposite, tears began to stream from the child's eyes, hitherto closed. When it had passed, the child's eyes were open and seeing. This Mme. [Carrel] tested by dangling her bracelet before the child, who immediately clutched at it, but from the fact that she had never learned to calculate distance, at first failed to seize it. At the close of the procession Mme. [Carrel], who herself related to me the story, was conscious of an extraordinary exhaustion for which there was no ordinary explanation. I give this suggestion as the scientist gave it to me—the suggestion of some kind of *transference* of vitality; and make no comment upon it beyond saying that, superficially at any rate, it does not appear to me to conflict with the various accounts given in the Gospel in which the faith of the bystanders, as well as of sufferers, appeared to be as integral an element in the miracle as the virtue which worked it."

Mgr. Benson describes Carrel as "not a practising Catholic," but the great surgeon is not of those who hold that scientists alone have anything to say worth listening to. Of the three friends to whom his book, *Man, the Unknown*, is dedicated, the second, Cornelius Clifford, is a Catholic priest who was well known to me when he lived in England some forty years ago.

HERBERT THURSTON, S.J.

MAN'S FOUR TERMS

Sir,—May I offer a suggestion for an explanation to Spiritualists who are puzzled by the strongly obstructed progress of their irrefutable belief? The reluctance of the average practical man to believe in ghosts is largely due to the fact that he views himself as living in two terms—the bodily self in the external world, of which his senses give him a plain and sufficient depiction; and the sentient and percipient self, whose post is in the brain.

Those who have given attention to the work of Kant and Schopenhauer recognise that man lives in four terms:—

(1) The subjective self which never appears as an object in the world which it forms as a highly conditioned mental vision from sense-data. This is the self that lives the life of the individual.

(2) The world from which his mind must derive the sense-data. These give only a partial and conditioned report of the universe-entity with which they have contact, and its outer and inner nature, apart from our limited and conditioned perception, is unknown.

(3) The bodily self as it appears in the vision formed by term (1). This is wholly a mental vision. If the

percipient could really "project," to borrow the physiological term, what he sees in the world outside his mind he would lose perception of it.

(4) The subjective self supposed to be seated in the head of term (3).

To ignore terms (1) and (2) is to ignore the terms which make survival of bodily death at least not improbable.

43 Cedars Road, S.W.4.

GODFREY BURCHETT.

MISINTERPRETED WORDS

Sir,—I cannot agree with my friend Mr. J. Arthur Hill (LIGHT, April 9th) that we must discard words which have been misinterpreted. If we act on this principle we shall lose noble words such as love, sacrifice, faith and God: each one of these terms has been debased by misuse. Words are coins, and if their significance has been proved by experience to be valuable, surely we should be careful not to waste the precious ore they contain. They can be re-minted for better use.

H. A. DALLAS.

IMMORTALITY AND PANTHEISM.

Sir,—I wonder by what process of reasoning the Rev. Charles Tweedale arrives at the conclusion that "every man is God" because Mr. Bennett stated that "the spirit of man has no birth, but is incorruptible, indestructible and definitely immortal?" Let us examine Mr. Bennett's assertions.

1. THE SPIRIT OF MAN HAS NO BIRTH.—Birth implies a separation of offspring from parent, a separate existence becoming more divergent as development proceeds. Is the cord which binds the spirit of man to God ever severed? Can we give an affirmative answer?

2. THE SPIRIT OF MAN IS INCORRUPTIBLE AND INDESTRUCTIBLE.—This cannot be said of the body. It is not certain that it can be said of the soul, but it can be stated of the spirit of man. If the spirit of man is corruptible, then there is the grave possibility that not everyone survives physical death, and further, that a percentage of those who do will disintegrate later. Another important point is that if the spirit of man is not corruptible, then we are faced with the possibility that with man lies the power of corrupting and destroying one of the affections of the Divine Love. Thus Infinity and Omnipotence could not be predicated of God.

3. THE SPIRIT OF MAN IS UNCHANGEABLE.—From the Love of God arise an infinity of affections which must find an outlet in service, otherwise the Divine Desires must remain unsatisfied. In each soul is implanted one of the Divine Affections. This is man's spirit. It is this which gives individuality to man's personality, which is of the soul. Changelessness is predicated of God, therefore the spirit of man is unchangeable.

4. THE SPIRIT OF MAN IS IMMORTAL.—This is a self-evident corollary. What is without birth, is indestructible, incorruptible and unchangeable, is obviously immortal. Man himself is not immortal, but that is his own fault.

The reason for man's creation is that, being in God's image, he is properly organised for the duty of performing the service which will give satisfaction to God's Desires as expressed through that part of the Divine Love which is the spirit of man. When man elects to do this duty he will be automatically arranging for his own immortality.

As regards Pantheism, like all philosophies it contains its errors; but, in view of the transcendental nature of the process of evolution, I do not think even Mr. Tweedale can escape its general principle. Substitute "All-God's-Love" for "All-God" and the real error is removed.

Taff Street,
Pontypridd.

TUDOR A. MORGAN.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

WHERE DOES TELEPATHY COME IN?

Sir,—Dr. S. G. Soal, like the Bishop of London, attributes the messages received from the Other Side to telepathy, and infers that especially is this so in the case of Mrs. Osborne Leonard.

Some time ago, my wife, who was going to stay with friends in Town for a few weeks, fixed up a sitting with Mrs. Leonard during the time of her visit. I have two brothers on the Other Side, whom we will designate A and B; B's wife we will call C, and myself D.

Feda almost at once said that A and B were present, mentioning their names, both quite unusual. Also B gave a message to his wife, C, and mentioned a pet name he used to call her by. So far all this Dr. Soal would put down to telepathy.

Then A said, of course through Feda (1), "I have a small test for D. When you get home, ask him if a broken finger nail conveys anything to him." He next said (2), "Also ask him why he does not get his watch chain mended. I notice that he is still wearing mine, and that the hasp of his own broken chain is attached to his watch."

When my wife came home ten days later, she told me what A had said. With regard to (1) I said: I broke my little finger nail four days after you left, in a peculiar manner, and had to go upstairs and get some nail scissors to put it right. As to (2) the facts are as follows: On getting out of my car some weeks before my wife went to Town, I caught my watch chain on the door handle, and as I stepped out the link of the chain next to the hasp broke. I went into the house with the broken chain in my hand and asked my wife if she had a spare chain. She said, "Yes, there is the one that belonged to your brother A," and she went and fetched it for me. I went upstairs to my dressing room with the two chains in my hand. I put the broken chain in a small drawer and took my watch from my waistcoat pocket. I then noticed that the hasp of the broken chain was still adhering to the watch. I was about to take it off and put it in the drawer with the chain when it occurred to me that it would be just as safe if left on the watch, so I did not remove it but put my brother's chain on beside the loose hasp, and have worn it thus ever since. It was such a trivial thing that I never mentioned it to my wife, and when she came home she said, "What did A mean about the broken hasp?" I immediately took my watch from my pocket and showed her the broken hasp hanging loose on the watch.

Now, my wife knew absolutely nothing of either of these two cases mentioned by my brother A, so where does telepathy come in?

I have never met the Bishop of London, though I was at school with his brother; but if ever I have that pleasure I shall relate the above experience and ask him the same question. RUSTICUS EXPECTANS.

"ETERNAL"

Sir,—The letter from J. W. Parry in your issue of April 2nd discusses in a most interesting manner the meanings of the Hebrew words in the Old Testament and the Apocrypha which are translated into the English word "eternal." Similar variations in the meaning of the Greek word so translated in the New Testament occur. In the passage referring to the so-called "unpardonable sin," in Mark iii., 29, we have the phrase, "eternal damnation." The word rendered "eternal" here is given in Liddell and Scott's Abridged Lexicon as follows: "lasting, eternal." Now these two English words have vastly different meanings. It would therefore be interesting to know if any of your readers can tell us just why our translators chose "eternal" and not "lasting." The Greek word here is the adjective of the word "aion," and there is still more diversity,

in the same dictionary, in the renderings of the noun, which is given as "a space or period of time, a lifetime, life; an age, generation, definite period; an infinitely long space of time, eternity; one's age or time of life."

It would be further of interest if someone can tell us what was the original Aramaic word alleged to have been used by Jesus in this connection, especially if this information can be accompanied by a positive assurance as to exactly the significance of that Aramaic word which existed in the mind of Jesus, if and when He ever made the statement on which is founded the hideous and terrifying meaning attached to our English version. Knightsbridge.

C. FERGUSON.

IMMORTALITY

Sir,—The Rev. C. L. Tweedale and Mr. Macdonald are surely arguing about two different things.

Mr. Macdonald's theme is Absolute Spirit, which is Deity, and must be, he says, immortal and unchangeable.

Mr. Tweedale's theme is the *human* spirit—that is to say, the portion of the Absolute that has become separated and individualised, and, as such, is not immortal: that is, the *individual* is not necessarily immortal.

The death of the body provides an analogy. Its substance does not perish, but is returned to the Absolute—in this case the storehouse of Nature. But the identity of that body is destroyed for ever.

The immortality of the individual is, I suggest, dependent on whether his choice is for good or for evil. If he is obstinate, "stiff-necked" and unyielding in his will to do evil through a succession of lives, and in spite of opportunities for betterment, I would ask: What can even the Almighty Himself do with such an one except destroy his identity? But not the substance of his spirit, which is returned to the Absolute. This is the "second death."

Herein is the answer to Miss Dallas' difficulty. If the individuality is destroyed, then surely its emotions and memories are destroyed with it, and it cannot know regret.

Zig-Zag Road, Wallasey.

E. PARRY.

A TEST MESSAGE

Sir,—On the 26th of March, I had a private sitting in my own house with Mr. Fred Edouin, the direct voice Medium, and had a very good test of mental evidence. I have been in communication with my husband for some time (he passed over in December, 1933), and this sitting took place on the anniversary of our wedding day. After greeting me his voice said (through the luminous trumpet): "Do you remember Penylant [with an accent on the "d"] Denbighshire?"

The very first letter my husband wrote to me, when we first met, bears the superscription, "Penylant, Wrexham." It went astray, as the real address was "Pen-y-lan, Ruabon," but I eventually received it, and this incident always remained a jest between us. He also gave the year we were married, 1913. Wrexham is in Denbighshire, and nobody except myself knew about this, and the envelope, 24 years old, is still in my possession. C. J. PURNELL.

BIRD PUZZLE EXPLAINED

Sir,—I note in your issue of April 9th a letter written by a correspondent who is puzzled by the behaviour of a cock sparrow who has a habit of tapping on the window of her house. I would assure her, however, that she need have no fear. The explanation is simple, and has been explained in several recent editions of a famous sporting paper. Her visitor is merely interested in his own reflection; and in trying to determine the reason why the "other bird" does not fight or go away, he continues to tap and irritate your correspondent.

It is significant that it is the *cock bird* only who taps, because it is a well-known fact that at this time of the year the male of the species becomes aggressive.

ARTHUR CLAYTON.

Light

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EDITOR GEORGE H. LETHEN

As We See It

A LABORATORY RECORD

WE hold, and proclaim, that human Survival of bodily death has been proved, and that there is now on record authenticated evidence sufficient to convince any inquirer who examines it with intelligence and a mind reasonably free from bias.

But one of the difficulties to be faced by those who try to spread the knowledge of Survival is that many people who might be convinced cannot be induced to study the evidence, because they know that scientists generally disregard it and therefore suppose that it cannot be worth consideration.

Before this difficulty can be effectively overcome, a change in the attitude of orthodox science must somehow be brought about—a change which will make scientists willing to consider the evidence and the means by which it is obtained.

As a step in this direction, the work now being done in Duke University, North Carolina, U.S.A., is of great importance. There, in what is described as "the Parapsychological branch of the Psychological Laboratory," a series of experiments has been carried through for the purpose of developing a "method of evaluating mediumistic material." Mrs. Eileen Garrett was the Medium, and the experiments are described in full detail by Mr. J. G. Pratt and Dr. J. B. Rhine in Bulletin XXIII. of the Boston (U.S.A.) Society for Psychic Research, just issued.

No attempt was apparently made in these experiments to decide the source of the information obtained through Mrs. Garrett's trance mediumship, or whether the information told in favour of Survival or against it. "The question of the ultimate source or means of acquiring knowledge without the known senses is not gone into," says Mr. Pratt. The object was "to see whether the correct information given is more than can be attributed to chance."

There were two series of experiments. Of the first, Mr. Pratt says the odds against chance as an explanation were 725 to one. Of the second (in which the procedure had been changed and the conditions made much more rigorous), the odds against chance were about 1,700,000 to one.

These results do not surprise us, nor will they surprise any experienced psychic student; but they should surprise those who assume that all information received through Mediums can be explained by guessing or fraud.

Here is a report of work done in a University Laboratory which deserves attention, and which,

(Continued at foot of next column).

AN ENGLISH MYSTIC

WILLIAM LAW

THE Sufi, a quarterly "Journal of Mysticism," published in Holland, draws attention in the April issue to the writings of William Law, an English Mystic not as widely known as he might be.

Born near Northampton in 1686, the fourth child in a family of eleven, his father, a humble grocer, nevertheless contrived to send this son to Cambridge, where he was ordained. His outstanding characteristics appear to have been simplicity—both of life and of doctrine—and boundless charity to the poor: his house was always surrounded with beggars. The following are extracts from his writings:

"We starve in the midst of plenty, groan under infirmities, with the remedy in our own hands; live and die without knowing and feeling anything of the one only Good; whilst we have it in our power to know it and enjoy it in as great a reality as we know and feel the power of this world over us: for Heaven is as near to our souls as this earth is to our bodies . . . God, the only Good of all intelligent natures, is not an absent or distant God, but is more present in and to our souls than our own bodies; and we are strangers to Heaven and without God in the world for this only reason, because we are void of the Spirit of Prayer, which alone can, and never fails, to unite us with the one and only Good and to open Heaven and the Kingdom of God within us."

"When the first spark of a desire after God arises in thy soul, cherish it with all thy care, give all thy heart unto it; it is nothing less than a touch of the divine Loadstone that is to draw thee out of the vanity of time into the riches of Eternity. Get up, therefore, and follow it."

"The difference of a good man and a bad man does not lie in this, that the one wills that which is good and the other does not; but solely in this, that the one concurs with the living, inspiring Spirit of God within him, and the other resists it, and is, and can be only chargeable with evil because he resists it. Therefore, whether you consider that which is good or bad in a man, they equally prove the perpetual indwelling and operation of the Spirit of God within us, since we can only be bad by resisting, as we are good by yielding to, the Spirit of God; both of which equally suppose a perpetual operation of the Spirit of God within us."

"Through all the universe of things, nothing is uneasy, unsatisfied or restless, but because it is not governed by love, or because its nature has not reached or attained the full birth of the spirit of love. For when that is done, every hunger is satisfied, and all complaining, accusing, resenting, revenging and striving are as totally suppressed and overcome as the coldness, thickness and horror of darkness are suppressed and overcome by the breaking forth of the light. . . . Divine Love is a new life and a new nature, and introduces you into a new world; it puts an end to all your former opinions, notions and tempers; it opens new senses in you, and makes you to see high to be low, and low to be high; wisdom to be foolishness, and foolishness to be wisdom; it makes prosperity and adversity, praise and dispraise to be equally nothing. . . . Whilst a man is governed only by worldly wisdom his life (however old he may be) is quite childish; that which he has and that which he has not serve only to carry him from this friction of evil to that friction of good, from one vanity of peace to another vanity of trouble. But when Divine Love is born in the soul, all childish images of good and evil are done away, and all sensibility of them is lost, as the stars lose their visibility when the sun is risen."

if properly appreciated, should do something towards bringing about the change in scientific outlook which is so much to be desired. We hope it will be studied by the scientists of this country.

LOOKING ROUND THE WORLD

SPIRITUAL HEALING

REV. JOHN MAILLARD (the Anglican Spiritual Healer who is soon to open Milton Abbey as a healing centre) gave an excellent explanation and defence of the underlying principles of Spiritual Healing in a broadcast talk on Sunday afternoon. Answering the objection that illness is a visitation from God which ought to be borne patiently, he said if that were so people should not call in a doctor. The fact was, he said, that when the Church was no longer able to heal the sick—as Jesus had commanded—it fell back on the idea that sickness was from God.

Behind all Spiritual Healing, he said, was the life-giving and quickening spirit of God. It was not Faith that healed, it was God.

Wisely, Mr. Maillard did not introduce any controversial comparisons between the various kinds of Spiritual Healing. He asserted its efficacy and, quite naturally, quoted some of his own cases in proof of his assertion. Many Spiritualist Healers adopt methods very similar to his own; and, like him, they often have the satisfaction of seeing beneficial results.

STUDY OF MEDIUMSHIP

Testimony to the value of the help given by Mrs. Eileen Garrett to the serious scientific study of Mediumship during her recent stay in the United States of America is contained in the current Bulletin (xxiii., March, 1936) of the Boston Society for Psychic Research. Referring to the trance sittings given by Mrs. Garrett at Duke University, Dr. J. B. Rhine says: "It is doubtful if there is another professional Medium who would have braved the Laboratory as she has done, and who would have worked throughout with so fine and co-operative an attitude at every point."

It must be a matter of satisfaction to Mrs. Garrett—who is shortly to be in London—that the results of the experiments to which she submitted are clear and confirmatory of the value of Mediumship.

UNIVERSITY STUDY

In his comments on the Duke University experiments, Dr. Rhine pays a compliment to Mr. J. G. Pratt, who carried them through, and urges that young Psychologists should be encouraged to follow his example. "As things stand at present," he writes, "there is no opening, no permanent position in Parapsychology to which a well-trained Parapsychologist might look forward."

Dr. Rhine writes about American Universities, but what he says is equally applicable to British Universities—even more so, for he is able to add that "provision has generously been made, for a time at least, to help in the training of a small number of graduate students, partly as an aid to research in the Parapsychology Laboratory at Duke University." So far as we remember, no such provision has ever been made at a British University.

A CHILD PRODIGY

Quoting from the Portuguese journal, *Constancia*, the *Revue Spirite* has a report of Moreira, the Blind Boy of Lisbon. This 12-year-old boy, blind practically from birth, of very rudimentary education and humble origin, is another example of the child prodigy type and the problem of supernormal faculties. He has repeatedly been examined by groups of mathematical, medical and psychological experts, sometimes for hours at a time, during which he instantaneously supplied the answers to lengthy mathematical problems, up to the multiplication of 21 digits by 15 digits; at the termination of the test, he will even amaze his interlocutors by dictating a long row of figures representing the sum of the total answers previously given.

ALL CHRISTIANS ARE SPIRITUALISTS

MANY years ago, Bishop Welldon (then Dean of Durham) declared that "all Christians are Spiritualists." Now the *Catholic Herald* (April 17th) asks, "What is a Spiritualist?" and claims the title for Christians, saying: "Spiritualism is no other than Christianity in the long run."

Spiritualists will not object—although they may refuse to be content with the title of "Spiritists" which the *Catholic Herald* would give them. It is one of the claims of Spiritualists that, historically, Christianity was based on what are now known as Spiritualistic phenomena, and that in its primitive form the Christian Church was Spiritualistic both in teaching and practice. This is brought out clearly in Mrs. St. Clair Stobart's reply to Dr. Inge, reported in this issue.

To-day many Christians (including not a few Roman Catholics) are Spiritualists in the commonly accepted sense of the word; and it is safe to say that a large proportion of Spiritualists in this country also claim to be Christians.

"CONFRATERNITY" CARAVAN CAMPAIGN

As readers of *LIGHT* know, the "Confraternity" movement is intended to give practical demonstration of the possibility of Churchmen and Spiritualists working harmoniously together on behalf of the basic principles of Christianity. This week, a series of Confraternity meetings has been held in the Isle of Wight, the principal speakers being Mrs. St. Clair Stobart (for the Spiritualists) and the Rev. Maurice Elliott (for the Churchmen).

A fine new caravan, presented to the movement by a well-wisher, has been brought into use in connection with these meetings; and during the Spring and Summer it will be seen in many places in the South and West of England where Confraternity gatherings are being arranged.

TWO PSYCHIC THRILLERS

Louis Pendleton's novels, *The Invisible Police* and *The Wedding Garment*, have some claim to be regarded as "psychic thrillers." They are issued by the New Church Press, Ltd. (2/6 each) and give pictures of life on the Other Side in accordance with the writings of Swedenborg, who claimed to get his information at first-hand by means which Spiritualists regard as mediumistic, but which Swedenborgians insist on regarding as unique and authoritative.

In these stories—as in Swedenborg's revelations—life on the Other Side is described as so like life on this side that many cannot be persuaded they have "died;" there is plot and counter-plot, love and marriage; but over all a directing power (of which the Invisible Police are agents) which helps those who wish to rise and restrains those who choose evil rather than good.

To those who for any reason are unable to read Swedenborg's *Heaven and Hell*, these two stories provide a pleasant method of acquiring a reasonably good second-hand knowledge of at least a portion of the Seer's teaching.

FRENCH PSYCHIC LITERATURE

Though there may be a ban on psychic literature in certain countries at the present time, the French Press continues to publish a number of books dealing with Spiritualism. The library of the Académie de Médecine has sent us a copy of its *Bulletin de Médecine de Roumanie*. The Librairie Baudinière (Paris) sends a book by Jean Marques-Rivière, a member of the Asiatic Society, entitled *Le Bouddhisme au Thibet*, dealing specifically with the particular form of Buddhism practised by the initiates of that country; and from Lausanne comes a book by a Swiss clergyman, Roger Glardon, entitled *Le Spiritisme*, studied from the point of view of History, of Science, and of Religion.

FACT OF SURVIVAL

HAS COMPLETE PROOF BEEN OBTAINED?

THE great importance of establishing proof of Survival as a first step to knowledge of the spiritual world is properly stressed in the editorial in *LIGHT* of 27th February, but the contents of the article give rise to some general questioning of the position at the present time in relation to that all-important matter.

Is the battle won, and, if not, what is the reason for the failure, and is the battle ever likely to be won? Is it that the evidence submitted and examined has, up to the present, been insufficient from which to draw a definite conclusion? That can hardly be said to be the case. On the contrary, the mass of evidence, of varying degrees of quality, which has come under notice since the inception of the movement of modern Spiritualism, has long since reached staggering proportions.

Even so long ago as 1869, Mr. William Howitt, in a letter to the Committee of the London Dialectical Society appointed to investigate Spiritualism, pointed out that there existed at that date an extensive Spiritualist literature, not only in this country, but also in America, France, Switzerland and Germany, comprising many hundred volumes; and Mr. W. M. Wilkinson, in a letter to the same body, stated that there was an extensive array both of written facts and of witnesses of the highest range and value, and that credible testimony had already been given in many thousands of instances. He caustically added: "Your Committee will only add one more to the list. If it report in favour of the phenomena, no one will believe it; and if it report against, the facts will still occur, as they have done throughout recorded history, sacred and profane."

Since then much water has passed under the bridge, and in 1918 the library of the London Spiritualist Alliance contained about 3,000 volumes; the number must at the present date be considerably greater.

MASS OF PUBLISHED EVIDENCE

Obviously, then, there is an enormous mass of published evidence, and it cannot be due to any lack of evidence that proof of Survival has not yet obtained general acceptance. It has been questioned whether it is even possible to establish actual proof. This may seem to be a strange statement to make in a Spiritualist journal, but it may be news to many of its readers to know that the possibility of such proof is denied by a number of the leading members of the Society for Psychical Research—men of considerable eminence in the world of science and letters. In the Proceedings of this Society of January, 1932, a paper appeared by a leading member, Mr. H. F. Saltmarsh, entitled, "Is Proof of Survival Possible?" in which he stated:

"The conclusion, then, to which I arrive from this analysis is that no logical proof of Survival is at present possible from the evidence studied by Psychical Research, though I particularly do not desire to be dogmatic and say that it will never be possible. A fairly strong presumptive case might conceivably be made out, were the evidence to be forthcoming in a sufficiently perfect state; but, owing to the difficulties in estimating the probabilities of the various alternatives, no agreement as to its actual strength is likely to be reached; conviction will be, and seems likely to remain, completely subjective and dependent on individual idiosyncrasy."

In a reply to this paper, Sir Oliver Lodge remarked: "Proof, after all, is a question of probabilities. I do not suppose that a sledge-hammer proof which knocks down all opposing theories and finally exterminates them is ever attainable by us, even in physics. . . . What we have established, I consider, is the existence of a spiritual world. To establish personal identity in connection with such a world is a more difficult problem."

Further, in the Proceedings of the same body of May, 1932, there was published a paper by Professor E. R. Dodds, a member of its Council, entitled "Why I do

not believe in Survival," and several other leading members (Professor C. M. Broad and others) have made similar negative pronouncements.

In the face of these facts, it cannot be said that a full and impartial consideration of the evidence must inevitably lead to a conviction that proof of Survival has been established. Even those leading members of the Society who lean most favourably to a positive conclusion generally express their views with much restraint.

EARL OF BALFOUR'S VIEW

In a long paper (275 pages) on the mediumship of Mrs. Willett, published in the Proceedings of May, 1935, the Earl of Balfour stated:

"Myers considered that he had proved three things—in the first place, that Survival is a reality; in the second place, that between the spiritual and the material worlds an avenue of communication does, in fact, exist; in the third place, that the surviving spirit retains, at least in some measure, the memories and loves of earth. With these conclusions I am in sympathy, though Myers was surely over-sanguine in holding them to be proved. Evidence is slowly accumulating, but even to-day, more than a generation after his death, I cannot say that it amounts to proof."

And in the remarks which Lord Balfour made to the Society in July, 1932, after reading a paper contributed by his sister, Mrs. Henry Sidgwick, in which she reviewed the work of the Society since its foundation in 1882, he stated:

"Conclusive proof of Survival is notoriously difficult to obtain. But the evidence may be such as to produce *belief*, even though it fall short of conclusive *proof*. I have Mrs. Sidgwick's assurance—an assurance which I am permitted to convey to the meeting—that, upon the evidence before her, she herself is a firm believer both in Survival and in the reality of communication between the living and the dead."

The conclusion to be drawn, then, from a consideration of the whole position, seems clearly to be that the more highly-developed are the critical and analytical faculties of the human mind, the more difficult it often is to arrive at conviction of proof on such a question as that of human Survival.

Failure to attain this conviction is clearly due not to inadequate evidence. Conviction, and alternatively scepticism, will, and must, remain a matter of individual attitude and cast of mind. As Sir Oliver Lodge remarked, "proof, after all, is a question of probabilities." The evidence for Survival is much stronger and more satisfying than much of the evidence on which man arrives at certitude in other things and orders the affairs of his daily life, or than the evidence on which criminal guilt is often held to be established in courts of law.

Disinclination to accept the evidence will doubtless continue in various quarters indefinitely; but, quietly, gradually, and persistently, conviction of the proof of Survival will gain ground and exercise a continually ever-widening influence, although it is never likely, in the nature of the case, to gain universal, and probably not even generally accepted, recognition. W.H.

CREATION

When God made man, He did not say:
"This Thing will last so short a day
"That I will make it out of clay"—

He chose the clay, that it would be
Soonest to crumble, and to free
Man's spirit for eternity . . .

In pitying love, He chose the clay
That it so soon would pass away.

MABEL GREENWOOD.

ADA M. BESINNET

IT was with great regret that I heard of the death of Miss Besinnet, concerning whom you printed a note in the issue of *LIGHT* for April 9th, although, through an error, her name was wrongly spelt.

I knew Miss Besinnet well, and, knowing my rather doubtful nature, she was able to talk to me quite openly about her phenomena. It was after the scene at the British College for Psychic Science when one of her sittings was broken up with a torch, that Miss Besinnet determined never to visit England again. I am not sure whether she kept her resolution; but at any rate she never forgave the outrage, since she could not understand that there were people who could be so ignorant of her history and her sittings.

Miss Besinnet was never a materialising Medium in the ordinarily accepted sense. Her "phenomena" were produced by herself in an amazingly skilful manner: the faces of the "materialised" forms were Miss Besinnet's face; it was the sitter who built up in imagination the face of the departed.

I well remember after one of the sittings which I had with her in Toledo, Ohio, that we had a long, intimate talk until far into the night. "Were all the faces my face to-night?" she asked me. "Yes," I replied, "every one." Did I do it all as usual?" she continued. "I suppose so," I said; "why do you ask that?" "Well," she said, "because my position is so difficult." "How do you mean?" I asked. "You see," she went on, "of course you know the facts, and so did Professor Hyslop and so does Dr. Pyle, but the public won't understand, and wouldn't come if they did. I'm in trance. I think that the faces are mine and that I'm leaning right over the table, but my sitters see their own relations and friends—every line of their faces. What am I to do? I have my living to make."

It was indeed a problem, and I hope I helped her to solve it. Certain of her phenomena seemed to imply prior preparation of materials. It was these which puzzled her friends most, for she had what always seemed to me to be an honest and open nature. Perhaps she combined her extraordinary faculties with something else. However that may be, she was one of the most remarkable Mediums of whom we have any record. I am glad to pay my tribute to her memory.

E. J. DINGWALL.

SUBCONSCIOUS MIND

XI.—THE SUBCONSCIOUS IN ACTION

H. ERNEST HUNT

THE beneficial effect of the subconscious in real life is frequently overlooked by those who fail to understand its basic nature. We agree that it is a storehouse of past impressions in which everything has duly left its impress, and we further agree that it contains neither errors, mistakes, nor omissions. It is the traditional bag which the traveller carries, into which he continually places pebbles, black or white, according as he gathers them.

Into this subconscious store passes the stream of impression that flows through consciousness. If, therefore, the new impressions are different from the average of the past, they necessarily begin to modify the latter, slowly at first, but with a speed increasing as time goes on. If, for example, the colour of the subconscious were blue, and henceforth only red impressions were to be incorporated, then gradually the bulk would commence to take on a purple tinge preparatory to verging more towards the red. But seeing that in effect there is a vast bulk of subconscious accumulation and only a trickle of single impressions from consciousness, the change in the nature of things must, in any case, be slow and gradual, though by concentration on a better "trickle" the process can be accelerated.

Thus we can see that the subconscious by its nature is adapted to prevent rapid and radical change; it acts as ballast that prevents the vessel of character capsizing in any sudden gust or gale. It is a steadying influence, capable indeed of modification, but not on the impulse of the moment nor in any violent and sudden enthusiasm; it proceeds by the natural stages of growth, line upon line, precept upon precept. We might even regard it as the tail of the kite which trails behind with the object of keeping it on its normal course, and assisting its stability.

Hence our minor midsummer madness eventually passes and leaves but a slight modification in the more sober subconscious record; we recover our sanity and balance, and are left mildly wondering and perhaps only half regretful. It was part of our experience. Hence also the political exuberances of the hustings do not seriously affect national policy, the subconscious steadies things down, and afterwards they are not so very different from what they were before. The enthusiast regrets this, but the psychologist is rather glad. He is suspicious of sudden conversions, whether religious or political, and also has his rightful doubts about new alignments of anything that occurs overnight.

The heavy flywheel of the gyroscope is only a mechanical imitation of the part played in real life by the subconscious, for this flywheel tends to keep its revolutions steady in a plane, and resists change. We may call this tendency in mind habit, tradition, character, or anything else we like, but we are, in fact, resistant to sudden change. Where such sudden change actually appears to have taken place, we look carefully to see if the change is permanent; we do not expect this, and we rarely find it.

There is also a collective subconscious as well as an individual, and people in their multiple capacity also have this ballast or collective stability. Schools have their tradition which gradually soaks into the skin of the newcomer, as have also our more ancient universities; business firms have "The Spirit of the House," which is intended to form a background of the employees' mind. Churches have their orthodoxy, which is only the orthodoxy of the subconscious, at once a heritage and an accretion; political parties have their traditional policies and outlook. And into all of these the trickle of new ideas filters slowly, yet surely, producing a measure of progress and yet preventing revolution on the spur of the moment.

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Mrs. LIVINGSTONE. Demonstration of Clairvoyance.

TO-NIGHT, Thursday, April 23rd, at 8.15 p.m.—
LECTURE. Mme. LAURA FINCH (Editress of "Annals of Psychic Science") "On Truth"

Chairman: Mr. H. F. PREVOST BATTERSBY.

Friday, April 24th, at 7 p.m.—
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ETHERIC AND PHYSICAL

From a talk with F. W. H. Myers through Mrs. Osborne Leonard, March 17th.

THE etheric body has three methods of sustaining itself, with air, water, and scent.

Some kinds of scent are like poison gas to us, a spirituous scent is not good for us. A scent that has its origin in flowers, wood, or leaves is good. Also scent such as incense made from ground wood, or aromatic foliage, is good. Spirituous scent is poisonous; paint, varnish, ale, brandy are not acceptable, we cannot assimilate them. Water we usually take in from natural water in the atmosphere; the same applies to air.

At present we differentiate between air and ether; they are related but not quite the same thing. Sound can travel through the air and through the ether, but it travels differently.

We make use of the ether because our bodies are etheric. You make use of the air because the air is more essentially physical, but what we are trying to help you to do is to learn to make more use of the etheric, for the simple reason that while you are on earth you are in possession of the two bodies. Yet, so far, you have almost entirely neglected the etheric body, but we must now teach you to use it and be conscious of it.

The use of water and correct breathing are most important, but especially you must remember the right kind of breathing. Both the upper part and lower part of the lungs should be used alternately. The upper part of the lungs is most used in the day and night, the lower in exercises, so concentrate on the lower. We must teach you about the importance of the etheric body. It is more important than the physical because it is the permanent body, the indestructible body, that existed before life on the earth, during it, and after it. To consider the physical first is like considering one's suit of clothes before the body.

You know in the Scriptures it tells us to offer up our

bodies a living sacrifice to God. By some ignorant people and races those words have been interpreted as meaning that one must offer up the body and kill it on the altar—that thought is at the back of blood-sacrifices. And what was really meant was, that one's life on earth should be a living sacrifice of the lusts of the flesh, that one should live the life of the spirit while still functioning in the physical body. Emphasis should be put on the word "living"; in fact, I should like to transpose the sentence and alter it somewhat, so that it should read, "that one should sacrifice by living in such a way that one would be acceptable to God."

The words "living sacrifice" have caused a great deal of trouble; they have excused the blood-sacrifices on the one hand, or have given rise to a false sense of self-abnegation; both ideas are wrong. We should present ourselves a living sacrifice, living eternally now and always in the things of the spirit.

As you become more conscious of this etheric body, you can use it more, and of course the next step is to become conscious in it. You will find that the process of becoming conscious in the etheric body, and the consequent astral travelling will be accelerated by what we shall call "dreams," and you may get more dreams than you have ever had before, you will remember them and be able to control them. Most dreams seem to have the dreamer at their mercy, but the person who is able to travel in the etheric body learns to control dreams, to pick and choose them, and end them or extend them at will.

Dreams do not occur in the middle of sleep at all, dreams only occur at the edge of sleep. A dream occurs just as we are going to sleep or just as we are waking up. But the genuine etheric experience occurs more in the middle of sleep, because the ordinary dream relies more on the physical brain for its presentation, whereas the astral experience relies on the etheric brain—there is the difference. But the dream stage is often a bridge leading to the etheric or astral experience, and sometimes it is a bridge leading back again from the astral to the physical, and this is the true explanation of the curious and perplexing mixture of improbable, or even impossible, with the true and the real: because the true experience has been adulterated with the imaginary experience that we call a dream.

Some people dream too much, and it prevents them bringing back the astral memory, it crowds it out; but a certain amount of dreaming oils the wheels, so to speak, the dream is sometimes the push to the real astral experience. The brain is used to working in a series of pictures; in dreams, the symbolic prediction of something likely to happen is more easily conveyed as a scene than by any other means.

There is a very curious fact with regard to warnings about passing over; even the thought working makes them linger. While you are living in the physical body, and the etheric body is attached to the physical, what fastens it to the physical? There must be a certain ballast that holds it like a rivet would; that ballast or rivet is the subconscious mind, the under-mind, or the under-consciousness, and that is full of the lower instincts which are inherited not only from our immediate forebears, but from prehistoric man and from animal life behind him; and the keynote of that inherited instinct is self-preservation, the preservation of physical life, which is only possible as long as the etheric is connected with the physical body. Now, that subconscious sense of self-preservation is very sensitive to any thought from anybody which may tend to suggest separation, and therefore death, and at once it rises up and resists it, fights for its life in a literal sense. We are always trying to teach this. The strongest physical thing in man is this self-preservation sense; it almost resents any consciousness of, or consideration of, the etheric body, and that is why so many people prefer to live in the flesh and ignore the etheric. N.L.M.

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6.30 p.m. Mr. H. Ernest Hunt.

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Subject: "The Threelfold Aura." Admission by Ticket.

TUESDAY, APRIL 28th, at 8 p.m.—

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Clairvoyante: Mrs. Grace Cooke.

6.30 p.m.—Mr. HANNEN SWAFFER

Clairvoyant: Mr. R. E. Cockersell.

Sunday, May 3rd, at 11 a.m.

Miss PETRONELLA NELL

Clairvoyant: Mr. Thomas Wyatt.

Sunday, May 3rd, at 6.30 p.m.

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Clairvoyant: Mr. George Daisley

Wednesday, April 29th.—Speaker: Captain Herbert Bland

Clairvoyante: Miss Lily Thomas.

Monday.

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2.30—Mrs. Bird's Ladies' Healing Circle. For appointments write to
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2.30—4 p.m.—Mrs. St. Clair Stobart welcomes enquirers.

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

Tuesday. Mrs. Livingstone, by appointment.

Mrs. Helen Spiers, by appointment.

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6 p.m.—Mrs. Bird's Ladies' Healing Circle. For appointments write
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Thursday. Miss Lily Thomas, by appointment.

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WHAT OF THE FUTURE?

By C. M. BEACH

WE live in an epoch of the world's history and evolution when it is well to pause and review the position and realise what is taking place. All those with insight and understanding may then stand firm to steady and reassure the rest.

If fear is allowed to run riot in human minds, the forces of evil now at work will gain immeasurably, since they depend upon us chiefly for their power. When spiritual understanding returns to earth, these forces will no longer find instruments for their destructive work, so it is on this plane that the battle must be fought and won before true peace and prosperity can dawn at last. We stand at one of those vital stages which occur once in each great Cosmic cycle and which was prophesied of old for the "latter days" of this planet, when there would be wars and rumours of wars, earthquakes in divers places, famines and pestilences.

To this prophecy was added the comforting assurance that "when these begin to pass, then look up, lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh."

So let us rally our forces and have faith and confidence in the unseen powers of good which are working unceasingly for God on these lower planes, bringing redemption, inspiration and guidance to all those prepared to receive it.

Three mystical friends have described the same vision to me lately. They have seen this world surrounded by Divine Light, but with a grey mist completely surrounding its surface.

Because of disharmony on earth, we are out of tune with Divine Law: the many efforts now being made to improve the general conditions are the preparations to enable the higher beings, who have the evolution of this world in their care, to penetrate the thick etheric veil which envelopes us, which is the long built-up race Karma of an ignorant and disobedient people.

On every hand one can see this John the Baptist ministry at work preparing the way for the Light of a new age to penetrate, but too long have we ignored the warnings that we have received and the lessons that we had to learn from world events, and now the hour of reckoning is at hand.

Great ones are approaching, much power will be brought to bear, and evil is bound to react. Surrounding us is a psychic world filled with discarnate beings, good and bad, including the unevolved souls of the underworld.

Steeped in bitterness and hate, they seek what satisfaction they can through human channels, inciting men to greed, power and destruction. Suicides, murders and wars are the many tragic manifestations of these unseen influences and foes.

Good must triumph in the end, but evil in its last great effort to fight for its own will cause considerable disturbance. The structure of the earth's surface may undergo a change, causing a possible reconstruction of the nations, but that is looking still further ahead.

There are plague spots to be cleared up first, dens of infamy and vice to be wiped out, gross inequalities to be levelled up, and Karmic debts to be met. Nothing will escape this cataclysmic upheaval of thought, but the duration of it and the extent of its destruction lie mainly with ourselves.

The responsibility of the individual is intense to help or hinder the conditions which might produce another

(Continued on page 271)

I NEARLY LOST FAITH

Eighteen months ago life was playing tricks with me. I was faced with a terrific personal problem. I seemed to be in a maze and frantically couldn't find the way out. Things became desperate. Something had to be done to keep the balance. I knew nothing about Spiritualism, but in desperation I went to a good Medium. It was definitely said that within six weeks I should be starting something fresh which would be successful and would open the door to better things. I was ready to grasp at any ray of light, be it real or unreal. And so I waited in hope. My friends were politely sarcastic. But within six weeks things HAD happened. The way had unexpectedly opened up for me to take a small guest house (of a special sort) at Margate. I called it "Holmdakopin." It was a perilous venture and about the only backing I had was my own faith in myself and my new faith in spirit guidance and help. But success did come as the Medium had predicted. Spiritualism became a very precious thing to me, a new anchor.

At Margate I met many charming Spiritualists and I believe I was able to help some of them with their health—I am a Nature Cure Practitioner—and perhaps too I was able to help them solve some of their own personal problems.

But at Margate there was no real inner satisfaction for me—I couldn't settle down. I felt it was not the real place for me. I was conscious of an impelling urge to go to the Isle of Wight to open a much larger and more beautiful place. And I couldn't get rid of the idea.

I went to my Medium again. "In the spring," he said, "you will be opening a much more ideal place," and he spoke of an island with the name "Wight"—"you will be very successful there and will be able to help Spiritualists and develop powers yourself." I was overjoyed. New impetus came, new hope, something to hang on to. I began to build castles in the air. That was last September.

I went searching for a suitable place on the Island and thought I had found one; I interviewed prospective members of my staff and worked out things in detail, but I hadn't enough money to start. I made efforts to raise capital, without success. I strove again, and again, but no money resulted. I began to wonder whether my doubting friends were right after all. I went to other Mediums. They all said the same thing—"go to the Isle of Wight—you will."

January, February and then March went by. I got very anxious. I had everything but the financial backing—the place, the staff, the inspiration. But the way would not open up. Then a bitter blow came—I saw the place I wanted sold to someone else. I began to lose faith. Perhaps I HAD been basing my hopes on shifting sand, perhaps after all there was nothing in guidance and prophecy from the other side—in any case, how COULD they tell the future?

April dawned. If nothing happened almost immediately it would be too late. It looked as if my matter-of-fact friends were going to have the best of it. They agreed that if anything happened *now*, it would be an absolute miracle. There was just one faint hope of money.

Then on April 14th in the morning the miracle happened—the faint hope had turned into a definite offer of help. Still more wonderful, in the afternoon a lady came and offered still further support. It was staggering—it couldn't be true! But it was. The tiny spark of hope burst into a flame. I left post-haste for the Island. Immediately I was led to the right place—I knew at once it was the very place I was looking for, and I took it on the spot—almost. How jubilant I now feel—that my ship is now set for the open sea, that my faith in the spirit personages and their power of prediction has been justified—but what a test it has been! The things of Spiritualism are founded on the rock after all! My doubting friends don't seem to know quite what to say—do I not see a rather bewildered look in their eyes?

Almost immediately I shall be telling you about this fine place that has been loaned to me by the gods for their purposes. And I shall be inviting you to come and spend your holidays there (at a price!). It is a fine large house set in two acres of delightful grounds. I hope it will become a place of beauty, of tranquility, of fun, of sunshine, a link between heaven and earth. I shall be continuing my Margate place and I hope some of you will want to go there. It will be presided over by a high soul I know, and my sister.

DUDLEY CROFT GOODE

(of HOLMDAKOPIN).

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In the Chair: Mrs. K. M. GOLDNEY.

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WHAT OF THE FUTURE?

(Continued from page 270)

world war. Every thought and act will add its quota of strength to the forces of light or darkness.

The highest service man can give to-day is so to control and purify his mental life that contact with the higher spheres may be kept continually open for inspiration, guidance and love. Had there not always been some self-sacrificing souls who, having renounced the pleasures of this world, to work in silence and seclusion for this end, the Angelic Hosts and their benign influence would have lost all contact with this plane, which would have reverted long ago to primitive savagery and the complete ignorance and darkness of the nether world.

So let us stand by the angels, and not only keep our contact with them, but seek to serve them also.

First of all to find peace in our souls, with God and our fellow beings. To forgive and forget old feuds and racial and personal animosities is the next step. Old traditions, dogmas and creeds must be cast aside for ever before real progress can be made. Demonstrations, in public, of the power of the spirit, will soon commence and become more and more frequent as times go on.

Every little group that meets for prayer or meditation will become a power centre; every rescue circle held will count, if one more soul is brought out of the darkness nearer to the light. Every victory fought and won over the personality of fear, anger or apprehension will weigh in the balance and lighten the veil for the rest. And those who will sacrifice some of their day, or early hours, for study and meditation, to them will be unfolded the spiritual realisation and faith which will not only be a protection to themselves but to all those around them, and enable them to stand fearless and unharmed in the face of seeming calamity.

• For man has not found himself or Truth while he is subject to any plane, influence or powers: he must be master of them all through an awakened consciousness of his Divine higher self. For in that moment of illumination he will know himself a spiritual being, immortal and indestructible on any plane of manifestation on which he happens to be functioning.

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