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THE UNIFYING INFLUENCE OF SPIRITUALISM

VALUE OF COMMON EXPERIENCE

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

IT is a very ancient belief that "East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet." A study of the difference between the manners, customs and beliefs of these two sections of the human race tends to support this notion. In colour, speech and dress, we have what may be regarded as an epitome of the difference in mental outlook and psychology of the Eastern and Western mind.

India, for example, holds religious beliefs so unlike those held by Englishmen that only the super-optimist would appear to be justified in maintaining that these two races ever could believe and practise alike. Notwithstanding this, it has been shown that a Hindu, when converted to Christianity young enough, will become quite Christian in his outlook; whilst one occasionally meets Europeans who are definitely Hindu in their religious reactions. Yet this has not succeeded in destroying the opinion so well expressed by Rudyard Kipling.

There are, nevertheless, not wanting men and women who aim at establishing a universal faith which shall break down all existing barriers and weld East and West into a coherent whole. Their belief is that such a unity would go far towards establishing the Kingdom of Heaven upon earth, and fulfil all the aims so well expressed by such writers as Plato, Thomas More and Francis Bacon. True, these three writers concentrated on the political, social and philosophical relations of mankind, regarding religion as a secondary factor, but their aim was so to arrange society that all its members should enjoy the maximum of happiness and prosperity.

All institutional religions, not excepting Hinduism, have striven more or less earnestly to convert all mankind to their respective doctrines, in the belief that in this way only can a Utopian state be established. They have all failed, and there seems to be not the slightest chance of their ever succeeding. It is unnecessary to enumerate the many reasons for this. The chief difficulty they face is undoubtedly the fact that they are unable to influence the children of the "heathen," owing to the educational systems of all countries being

in the hands of adults. Adults are too biased, too much under the influence of religious inertia, ever to be able to appreciate the vastly different doctrines of the propagandists.

There is one outstanding feature common to all established religious systems. They are old. The youngest of them, Islam, is fifteen hundred years old, whilst Hinduism, the eldest, is thousands of years older. Age can be a terrible tyrant. It has the utmost confidence in its withering limbs and mind, attaching far more importance, as it were, to the whiteness of its hair than to the strong brain of the young.

Youth is not everything, but it has many things that age has lost. Among these is the desire to conquer new lands, new thoughts, new knowledge, and time has justified to some extent its enthusiastic confidence in itself. Out of that confidence have grown new aspects of science, of art, of literature, and to a lesser degree, new religious ideas and interpretations. But it has done this only by contending against the restraining hand of age.

There is one point about established religions which is at once their strength and their weakness. They are based on speculation. They, of course, claim that they are based upon revelation, but that is only another word for a certain type of theorising. This accounts for their grave differences, and lays them open to the criticism that has been so effectively levelled at "revealed" religions, namely, that they can produce no present facts in their support.

The custom is for any of these religions to appeal to what is termed "religious experience," a very real thing; but since this is common to all religions, it cannot be patent to any one. There have been just as remarkable conversions at the feet of an African idol as at the penitent rail of any Christian church, and in principle this applies to all of the great religions.

There has never been any really effective unification of the human race by any kind of religious speculation, because, in the presence of a mystery, one guess is as good as another. Whatever unity has been attained has been through sheer Materialism. There is much

more unity in a modern factory in India than there can ever be in an Indian temple, for instance. The introduction of modern business methods in China, India and Japan, or any other eastern country, has brought people of the East nearer the West than the preaching of a thousand sermons. Indeed, sermons tend to separate rather than to unite members of various religions.

Does not this indicate the way religion must travel if it is to attain the unity of mankind? What is wanted is not religious doctrine, or ritual, or authority, but a common experience. Not "religious experience." That is reserved for a few souls that have succeeded in penetrating to "reality," irrespective of institutional religion. But real experience of the sentient kind.

When a Japanese sees an experiment in chemistry he sees exactly what a German or a Frenchman or an Italian sees when he watches it. A common experience has common reactions, and unity is established. The observers may differ as to theory, but they must agree as to fact. The event did happen; this none who saw it can deny, and therefore they have common ground for belief.

This form of reasoning is that upon which the claims of Spiritualism as a basis for world belief is founded. We believe that, given a common experience, we shall have a common ground for establishing our belief in a hereafter. Experience has justified this point of view. I have met Spiritualists in all parts of the world and of different degrees of culture. They have at some time or other been members of almost all the "world religions": Hindus, Moslems, Christians, Australian aborigines, Maories who still believed in their native religion Tohungaism, and North American Indians. When conversing with them on Spiritualism, to which all of them had been converted, I found that each of them reacted to it in precisely the same manner as the others.

AN EDUCATED HINDU'S TESTIMONY

As an example of this, take the following extract from a letter sent me recently from India by Mr. G. C. Sajnani, B.A., a highly educated young Hindu who has derived great consolation from Spiritualism.

"About ten months ago I had the misfortune to lose my fiancée to whom I was betrothed for full five years. She, along with her sister and baby brother, only eight months old, passed to the higher life in the terrible Quetta earthquake. We were very devoted to each

other and, needless to say, this painful separation was a death blow to me. Until then, I knew nothing of Spiritualism. We Hindus do believe that the immortal soul within, after shaking off the physical body at death, goes to 'Parloka' (the other world) where it stays, its duration and the nature of the life lived there being determined by the life that it lived when on earth in the flesh. At the close of that period, it may be hundreds or thousands of years, according to a man's 'Karmas,' the soul reincarnates again and works for its improvement and uplift.

"Anyway, my religious inborn instinct assured me that my fiancée was alive and happy in a better world, yet with this belief I felt very miserable and desperately unhappy. Something within me was thirsting to converse with her; but I never dreamt that there was any possibility of entering into conversation with her.

"You would be surprised that in this country, in spite of the religious beliefs in the existence of spirits, the people are entirely ignorant as to the nature of the next world. They have such vague and hazy ideas on the subject that the majority of people would affirm that the soul migrates immediately after death into another physical body by taking birth. The peculiar point is, however, that they would continue performing ceremonies after the death of a person which are based on the supposition that the spirit exists in another world.

"There are others who believe in spirit existence, but would refrain from attempting to communicate with them, deeming it to be harmful to themselves and to the spirits. There are only a few able to imagine the possibility of communicating with their departed ones.

"My earnest desire to communicate with my fiancée led me to discover that there exists only one Spiritualist society in India. I corresponded with Mr. Rishi, the main pillar of the society, and that gentleman helped me greatly. We held 'sittings' and I received very convincing and consoling messages from her."

No one would have guessed that this letter was from the pen of a Hindu. It might have been written by an Englishman or an Irishman or a Scotsman, or any other Westerner who had been bereaved and found consolation in spirit communication. In other words, the reactions of the Hindu mind, even after it has been trained in the doctrine and practices of Hinduism, are just the same as those of any white man who has had similar Spiritualistic experiences. Here is evidence that Spiritualism has a world-wide appeal, and it proves that East is East and West is West and yet the twain shall meet.

MODERN "MIRACLES"

The following communication, from "a correspondent," is printed by the *Essex County Telegraph* of June 13th, under the heading "Miracles in our Midst":

"To most people the days when miracles happened occurred only when Jesus of Nazareth walked this earth in the flesh. Many forget the real meaning of that verse in the Bible (14th chapter of St. John, 12th verse): 'He that believeth in Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto My Father.'" These words were spoken by Jesus to His disciples. Now it is very interesting to know that right in the centre of our ancient town of Colchester, at the Allkin Spiritualist Church in Maldon Road, miracles are taking place in Spiritualist healing of the sick. Spiritualist healers believe in co-operating with doctors, and eventually physicians and surgeons will work hand in hand with spirit healers. Now in Colchester is a well-known man under treatment for rheumatoid arthritis who was sent back from London hospitals. He was so-called incurable, and last October (1935) could not move a limb. This gentleman is progressing considerably, and can now walk on level ground and is still improving with each treatment."

London Spiritualist Alliance and The Quest Club.

16 Queensberry Place, London, S.W.7

DEMONSTRATION OF CLAIRVOYANCE

by
Mr. GEORGE DAISLEY

on
Thursday, July 2nd, at 8.15 p.m.

Members, free. Member's Guests, 1/-,
Non-Members, 2/-.

Tickets must be purchased before day of Meeting.

NOTE.—A verbatim report will be made of the work of Mr. Daisley, and recipients of messages, etc., will be asked to comment on the statements made by the Mediums, a typed report of which will be published for the purpose.

Telephone - - - Kensington 3292/3

WHAT ACTUALLY OCCURS AT DEATH

REV. WM. R. WOODS, Canada

VIEWED from the standpoint of the physical, the hour of the change from earthly conditions is attended with suffering and darkness and mystery. It is imperative that we come to recognise that there is another aspect. We need, if we can, to put ourselves in the position of those who leave behind the physical and step into conscious appreciation of that which is to us the unseen.

Testimony is offered us to-day as to their actual experiences. We may, of course, choose to be wholly sceptical as to its genuineness. I, for one, see no good ground for taking that attitude. Many of those through whom it is offered are men and women of known integrity and of genuinely Christian faith and life. Without making any further plea at the moment I suggest two things: 1st.—There is an impressive unanimity among all the testimonies offered as to the nature of the process which we call death. 2nd.—If these testimonies be taken as being what they purport to be, the effect should be (a) definitely confirmatory of our basic Christian faith as to the hereafter, (b) supremely comforting to those whose hearts are filled with loneliness and sorrow for the departed.

Here is the testimony of Emanuel Swedenborg written as far back as 1758: "The man is said to die when the respiration of the lungs and the beatings of the heart cease. But the man does not die; he is merely separated from the bodily part that was of use to him in the world, while the man himself continues to live. The spirit of man continues in the body for a short time, but only until the heart's action has ceased. As soon as this motion ceases the man is resuscitated; but this is done by the Lord alone. Resuscitation means the drawing forth of the spirit from the body, and its introduction into the spiritual world. How this resuscitation is effected has both been told to me and shown to me in living experience. The actual experience was granted to me that I might have a complete knowledge of the process. The celestial angels who are with the one that is resuscitated do not withdraw from him, for they love everyone. The spiritual angels render to the new spirit every service he can possibly desire in that state and teach him about the things of the other life so far as he can comprehend them. I have talked with some on the third day after their decease. They wondered greatly that they had not believed in such a life while they lived in the body, and especially that scarcely any within the church so believed."

We follow this with a communication received from the unseen by T. W. Stanhope of Australia and first published in 1918: "In my weakness I became unconscious of all around; but soon I became conscious of several things. I realised that something that had held me down and fatally gripped me was gone. I was free, and in the place of weakness and pain and sickness, I had a virility and a vigour which I had never known upon the earth plane. I was also aware that I was in new surroundings, most beautiful. Then I became conscious that I was in the midst of a company of fellow souls whose voices were filled with happiness, all welcoming me, and others whom I had temporarily lost while upon the earth plane. And let me impress upon you that of all the pleasure I have received on the spirit side of life, the most came from those to whom I had previously done some act of kindness. If I had my earth-life again I would spend every hour in doing good. I would spend my life in doing acts of kindness."

And now let us read the testimony of a woman given just a few years ago to Edward C. Randall of the United States: "My passing out of the body was so delightful, so different from what I had expected, and the plane in which I now live is so wonderful, that I have long been anxious to give to your world a description of my going and of what awaited me. As the hour of dissolution approached I felt no fear. It seemed to me

that I was about to make a natural change, and that in some place I should live on in the companionship of those who had preceded me. I seemed to sleep. With great effort I aroused my faculties and plainly saw the members of my household, some kneeling about the bed sobbing. Looking again, I was for a moment startled, for I saw many faces of spirit people smiling. Looking once more I saw beside my bed my dear husband, whose face was full of tenderness and who took my hand, speaking words of welcome. Others, whom I now know help on such occasions, gathered about me, their hands under my poor physical body, encouraging me and telling me all was well. Soon, without an effort on my part, for I was far too weak to make an effort, I seemed to be lifted above and out of my old body, and stood among the others referred to, startled at the reality. I was informed that the wisest course would be for me to go with my husband to a rest house for a little time till I should become accustomed to the change. I will not undertake to describe the joy of meeting with those who had preceded me, or of the coming and going of friends and acquaintances. Their good cheer and happiness were a great comfort. What impressed me most after a period of rest, and my faculties had become alert, was the reality of all things. I looked at my body, which seemed as tangible as before the change, although it had perhaps a more ethereal appearance. I stood upon my feet and moved my legs and arms and head; my senses of touch, smell and sight were more acute; I spoke to those about me and they answered; I looked over a valley and saw running brooks, and lakes, trees, grass and flowers of many kinds. I took long deep breaths of wonderfully vitalising air. Turning my head I saw the smiling face of my husband beckoning, and I went with him with confidence as in the days of youth."

Having read these, do you not think I am right in the view that they bear the impress of truth. And do they not bear out and illustrate the Apostle's statement that "if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved we have a building of God, an house not made with hands."

BLINDFOLD TRANCE READER

THE following story of a boy of twelve who talks Persian in a trance and reads when he is blindfolded is related by the Hollywood (California) correspondent of the *New York Herald-Tribune* of May 25th:

"An apparently normal twelve-year-old boy who goes into a trance and talks Persian, who lets eye specialists blindfold him carefully and then reads what is placed before him, baffled medical men to-day.

"The boy, Pat Marquis, outside of his trances, is a normal boy attending a Los Angeles junior high school. He discovered his apparent occult powers by accident ten months ago while he, his sister and his brother were playing with an ouija board.

"Dr. Cecil Reynolds, brain surgeon friend of the family, experimented with Pat. Blindfolded, the boy went into an apparent trance and spelled on the ouija: 'My name is Nareji. I lived in the Himalayas in Tibet in the year 1048. I am a Parsee and emigrated from Persia.'

"The surgeon brought out some Tibetan art pieces and said the boy, still in a trance, seemed familiar with them. Pat wrote the word 'referga,' which Dr. Reynolds translated as meaning 'friendship.' Pat's mother said he has never known a Persian.

"Dr. Reynolds demonstrated the boy's power before 150 medical men at the Hollywood Hospital. Three eye specialists adjusted the bandage to their own satisfaction. Pat circled the word 'Ohio' in a pamphlet in print, imitated the motions of various doctors in the audience, and outlined in pencil the shoes in a picture in a magazine."

THE FRIENDSHIPS OF ANNIE BESANT

Review by H. F. PREVOST BATTERSBY

THERE is a double interest in these old memories and letters,* they give us an intimate picture of one of the great personalities of her time, and recall a world which it seems almost impossible could have existed so few years ago.

As a daughter of Jacob and a niece of John Bright, the author moved in that Liberal circle which has now almost completely vanished, and the personalities who move across her pages, names famous in art, in music, in literature, as well as in politics, bring back the lost aroma of a forgotten world.

"I was amused," writes Miss Bright, "at Mrs. Gladstone's horror when she saw young girls riding bicycles in knickers. She threw up her hands and said, 'Horrible, horrible!'"

And there is an interesting remark recorded about the same time, 1895, by John Morley: "Gladstone is a grand old fellow, but he has done some abominable things!"

The G.O.M., then over eighty-five, and his wife were staying with the Brights at Cannes, and the author describes an affecting scene, when Mr. Gladstone, returning from a formal visit to the President of the French Republic, "mounted the stairs with the agility of a young man. At that moment Mrs. Gladstone came out of her bedroom, and seeing him, her whole face lit up. These two old people, who had only been parted for an hour, held out their hands to each other, both smiling and joyous, and talking in an animated way, they retired into their bedroom."

A PEACEFUL HOUSEHOLD

Music was even more welcome than politics in that peaceful household. Joachim, Patti, Fanny Davies, Gabriele Wietrowetz, Hugo Becker, masters in that quiet realm of music, which seems now, like lost Atlantis, submerged by the blatantries of mechanical production, were its intimates, very conscious of its charm, as was also Rudolf Steiner, who wrote of his association with Annie Besant: "Marie von Sievers and I came closer to Mrs. Besant by reason of the fact that she lived with Mrs. Bright, of London, and we were invited for our second London visit to this lovable home. I look back with inner joy to the time I was privileged to spend in this home. The Brights were loyal friends to Mrs. Besant. Their endeavour was to knit a closer tie between us and the latter."

But that was not to be. Steiner had been Secretary General of the German section of the Theosophical Society, but his development towards Anthroposophy was ever widening the gap between his scientific exactitude and Theosophical theory, and the apotheosis of Krishnamurti wrought his final severance from the Society.

Miss Bright, who acted as interpreter, was most anxious that the two should understand each other and work together, but she admits, "it became impossible; the terrible forces of hate which ravaged our two nations were already at work before 1914."

No doubt they were; but it is difficult to believe that popular stupidity of that kind could have wrought mischief between souls so aloof from the influence of national rancour; but, alike as were their highest aspiration, the Anthroposophical lion could never have lain down comfortably beside the Theosophical lamb.

Despite the breach, Mrs. Bright retained her admiration for Dr. Steiner's qualities. "He was a remarkable individual in many ways," she says. "He had a wonderful power over his body. He ate hardly anything. He stayed with us for some time, and I

tried to make him explain to me how he managed to live. For he lived on salad and a little bread and coffee—hardly anything else—and he only slept two or three hours a night . . . He could nourish his body in ways not known to the rest of us."

In 1891 the author mentions having supped with the Theosophists at 19 Avenue Road. "They are a peculiar lot, but interesting," was her comment "Their teaching is very elevating and has a high moral tone."

She would have joined the Society forthwith, but for her father's objection; but she did join it in the autumn of that year, in spite of realising that "the world, of course, thinks Theosophists more or less mad."

That queer intolerance had by no means abated two years later when she reports that a friend of hers, "Miss C.H. has had a terrible struggle with her family for freedom: they can't stand Theosophy and look on A.B. as the devil. 'Surely,' they think, 'a girl should be perfectly happy driving in Hyde Park, doing fancy needlework at home, reading light literature, and, of course, going to Church twice on Sunday.'" A Bishop was called in to reason with her, but without avail; so the poor girl was packed off to Switzerland with an old lady.

MRS. BESANT'S STRUGGLE

That was the world with whose engulfing prejudice Annie Besant had to struggle, and this charming little book shows how ceaseless and exhausting was the strife.

It was toil of unending travel, journeys across every sea, and lecture upon lecture strung round the globe.

And what an orator she was! I remember, as a Westminster school-boy, hearing her speak, in, I think, the Royal Aquarium theatre. Of what she spoke I have not the least recollection; but the memory of her eloquence and her ardour has never faded, and has never been surpassed.

Never would she admit how near she came to exhaustion; never, at least, till the work was done.

"I have been wanting to lay down my head and cry all day," she once said after a meeting, and during a tour through Sweden, Norway and Germany, Miss Bright notes: "The journey was a revelation to me, showing how A.B. can go on when others are stopping."

She had fought all her life for causes which were dear to her, and Theosophy brought no slackening of the struggle. She had to fight the malevolence and stupidity of the world, and foes that were of her own household; but she fought without bitterness and without resentment, only grieved that those should fail on whom she had relied.

Even during those dark days in India, when she never knew whom she could trust not to misunderstand her, her courage and kindness were unfailing.

"I had a nice little chat with the Viceroy at one of the entertainments," she wrote home; "he came across the room and talked with me, so even the Lord Bishop of Madras was polite!"

Her work for the education of India swept her by political channels into conflict with the Local Government, and the restraint and sanity she preached to the restless elements bred distrust of her among them.

Lord Minto stood valiantly by her, and though she was interned, her election as President of the National Congress re-established her position; and the story closes with the presentation to her by Lord Willingdon, on behalf of Lord Baden-Powell, of the "Silver Wolf," in recognition of her great services to the Boy Scout movement in India.

* OLD MEMORIES AND LETTERS OF ANNIE BESANT, by Esther Bright. London. The Theosophical Publishing House. 1936. 3/6.

Our dead are never dead to us until we have forgotten them; they can be injured by us, they can be wounded.—GEORGE ELIOT.

IN OLD JAPAN

HOW BELIEF IN THE AFTER-LIFE WAS EXPRESSED

MADAME Etsu Inagaki Sugimoto, who is now Instructor in Japanese History and Language at Columbia University, was persuaded, three years ago, to write her autobiography; and an exceedingly charming book has been the result—*A Daughter of the Samurai* (Hurst and Blackett). The American journalist, Mr. Christopher Morley, for whom she first wrote some of her memories, says of it: "What a lovely book it is! I have a secret notion that it will go on for years and years, making friends for itself and for the brave woman who wrote it."

The Samurai constituted the noble governing class in ancient feudal Japan, before the rush of innovation from the West, when, in the old castle town of Nagaoka, in far-northern Japan, the little Etsu-bo Sama was brought up with all the rigour of ancestral ceremony, discipline, and reverence for custom and tradition, for learning, for one's elders, and above all, for one's ancestors.

The respect for learning was so great, that before the little six-year-old girl went to her fireless school-room (since discomfort of body was considered to increase alertness of the mind), she carefully polished each article in her ink-box with a square of silk, for "reverence for learning was so strong in Japan at that time that even the tools we used were considered almost sacred."

But perhaps the highest reverence was for the departed: no Japanese had any doubts as to continuance of existence after death. The little Etsu-bo missed her father sadly when he left them; but she writes: "The first forty-nine days when 'the soul hovers near the eaves' were not sad to me, for the constantly-burning candles and curling incense of the shrine made me feel that Father was near. And, too, everyone was lovingly busy doing things in the name of the dear one; for, to Buddhists, death is a journey, and during those seven weeks, Mother hastened to fulfil neglected duties and arrange family affairs, so that the soul, freed from world shackles, could go happily on its way."

Later came the festival of Ura Bon (Welcome to Souls Returned), "a festival to celebrate the annual visit of O Shorai Sama, a term used to represent the combined annual visit of all our ancestors." It was the most dearly loved of all our festivals, for we believed that our ancestors never lost their loving interest in us, and this yearly visit kept fresh in all our hearts a cheerful and affectionate nearness to the dear ones gone."

The whole house was swept and garnished and decorated with the choicest flowers, as for the reception of honoured visitors. The family shrine was emptied and cleaned, "for it was there that the spirit-guest lived during the days of the visit." In front of every house hung lanterns; everyone wore holiday garments; there was an atmosphere of expectation, of pleasant thoughts and happy laughter; and then, when the evening came, the shrine lantern was lighted, the entrance-door ceremoniously opened, and the entire household, all in new clothes, stood waiting for the arrival of O Shorai Sama—the impersonal figure symbolising the return of the loved ones. Dominated by the figure of the "So Honourable Grandmother," they drew up in two lines beside the open door; then bowing low, they "walked with bowed heads back, on the outside edges of the path, leaving the sacred space of the walk between. When we reached the shrine, Mother struck the gong, and we all bowed with the dignified cheerfulness of our usual greeting to a welcome guest . . . How cordially our hearts welcomed the presence which we knew would bring into our home the old cheerful companionship."

At sunrise on the fourth day, all went to the river, each person bearing a little canoe with its burden of food and tiny swinging lantern, in which the beloved spirit would depart once more. At the first ray of sunlight, hundreds of figures stooped and launched the

(Continued at foot of next column).

AFRICAN RAIN-MAKER

KILLED BY LIGHTNING AFTER BRINGING A LOCAL DOWNPOUR

THE following strange story of an African rain-maker and his tragic fate appeared in the *Cape Times*, as from Reuter's correspondent at Harrismith:

A weird and sinister story, which appears to have a fairly substantial basis, has been revealed in the Harrismith district. Had it not been for the fact that it is vouched for in its entirety by two of the leading farmers in the district, Messrs. W. D. Mylrea and M. J. Bronn, it would have been hard to believe.

It appears that the natives on the farms of these two men collected money between them with the object of paying an old witch doctor, who resides on Mr. Bronn's farm, for making rain.

On arrival there with the money, they found that he was away on a visit, but his son, whom the father was initiating into the mysteries of the trade, was willing to take on the job, and, what is more, guaranteed results.

The money was handed over, and, taking up his position near the door of his hut with a wife on either side of him, he proceeded to make incantations and throw the bones, with the result that within half an hour rain fell from a cloudless sky, this rain being confined only to the farms of Messrs. Bronn and Mylrea.

The natives were, however, not satisfied that enough had fallen, and this time collected £1, telling the young witch doctor that he would be paid only after he had supplied sufficient rain.

Again the ceremony, which is most elaborate, was repeated, and within two hours 1.50 inches of rain had fallen, which not only filled the dams on both farms, but also washed away several fences.

Again the rain was confined to the two farms, but as the storm was abating a black cloud was seen to form directly above the "doctor's" hut. There was a flash of lightning and he was killed outright. The native women beside him were uninjured.

The old father arrived shortly afterwards and ascribed the fatality to the fact that the young man was not yet fully qualified, had mixed bad muti (medicine) with the rain muti and had thus incurred the displeasure of the gods.

In the meantime he, as the natural heir of his son, according to native law is claiming the fee of £1.

A VISION AND A MESSAGE

The following story is told by Mrs. M. Mackey, of Sunderland, in the *Sunday Sun* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) of June 14th:

"On a day about 24 years ago I was sitting knitting at my front door facing the garden, waiting for the boys coming from the pit night shift, when about 11.30 I saw the form of a woman gliding up the garden path. I was rather startled, but when I looked again I saw it was the form of my mother, who had been dead 14 years.

"The next night she appeared again at the bay window and I distinctly heard her say 'Father.' I thought it strange as my father was well and hearty, but he took a stroke three days after and died in half-an-hour.

"Then again she came and said to me 'Friday.' We had arranged to bury him on Saturday, but told the undertaker to alter it to Friday. That same night my baby was born—a fine girl."

(Continued from previous column).

little vessels. " 'Farewell, O Shorai Sama,' we gently called. 'Come again next year. We shall be waiting to welcome you,' " and the crowd returned to their homes. "But," adds Etsu-bo happily, "Mother's face had lost the anxious look it had before, and I felt that Father had really been with us, bringing comfort and help to us all; and now he had gone, leaving behind him, not loneliness, but peace."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

SPIRITUALISM AND THE CHURCHES

Sir,—All Spiritualists should give their warmest approval to the campaign of Mrs. St. Clair Stobart, who is making such efforts to bring into the Churches the health-giving breath of the knowledge of the truths of Spiritualism. These efforts can do the movement no harm, and can do nothing but good to the Churches. The suggestion that the Churches may swallow up Spiritualism, leaving none for outsiders, is surely out of date, though a few centuries ago there would have been good reason to fear such an event.

Whatever else can be said about the Christian Churches, they have not only upheld belief in survival, but have been compelled, in taking the New Testament as their text-book, to keep in the forefront a very high ideal of human conduct. The Spiritualists can claim no higher ideals; nor can they claim that they act more nearly up to their own than do the Church-goers. Though the standard of honesty in Mediums is much higher than that revealed by a study of the records of forty or more years ago, there is room for an admission on the part of those who do not call themselves Christian-Spiritualists, that Mrs. Stobart is not far wrong in saying that Spiritualism without religion is dangerous. The subject should, under no circumstances, be approached without reverence.

Also, while Christians are warned, in definite terms, against "envy, malice and all uncharitableness," Spiritualists have even less excuse for transgressing, owing to their very positive knowledge that every unkind thought sets up vibrations that act unwholesomely on both the receiver and the giver. On the contrary, as Christians are told—"Forgive your enemies, bless them that curse you," etc, so Spiritualists know, in an even more real sense, that those who have injured them have all the more need to be helped by kind thoughts, and that no one is "past praying for."

C. FERGUSON.

SPIRITUALISM AND CHURCH DOCTRINE

Sir,—I am sure I have no wish to misrepresent Mr. Prevost Battersby, or any other man. I am prejudiced in his favour, because he must be a sensible man, as he is a convinced Survivalist. He now says he did not deny that persons before A.D. 200 believed in the Divinity of Christ. I am sorry I misunderstood him. As the early Church, like the modern Church, is composed of men and women and many of these were willing, before 200 A.D., to die for their faith in Christ's Divinity, I am not troubled by local Councils, which for various motives would not speak their mind—just like some politicians in the present day! There can be no reasonable doubt that Constantine, who desired to please the majority, found that most Christians held the view which he championed at Nicæa.

What I really desire to stress is exactly what the Editor says in "As We See It," in last week's *LIGHT*. The common enemy is Materialistic belief, and Spiritualism provides the preamble to all religions. Yet I have had private letters telling me that if I am a true Spiritualist, I must condemn orthodoxy!

Spiritualism helps everybody to believe in, not disbelieve in, the Bible—e.g., if I know that ectoplasm can build up the body of a man, capable of being seen, touched, and conversed with, is it not easier for me to understand that God could take the substance of a virgin, and cause His Son to be materialised therefrom? If not, why not? If a pebble can grow into a big stone, and then vanish or become small before the eyes, in the presence of a Medium, why could not Christ cause

five loaves of bread and two small fishes to increase in volume sufficient to feed 5,000 persons?

If the touch of a Medium's hands can produce extras or skotographs on a photographic plate, why cannot other operations of the spirit be caused by the "laying on of hands?"

I do not want to impose my Church views on others who honestly differ from me, but I do not want to see the phenomena and evidences of Spiritualism used as a tool to pull down every established teaching of Church and Bible. I think the evidences of Spiritualism teach that in the next state (although all know survival to be true) persons still have different views on Theological subjects. Rescue circles can teach ignorant spirits, and "unto the Principalities and Powers in the heavenlies, may be made known, through the Church, the manifold wisdom of God." Let us not be among the number of those who allow even an angel from Heaven to teach us another Gospel!

ROBERT A. WHITMORE.

REV. DR. McKEEN REID'S BOOK

Sir,—I appreciate very much the review in your journal, in recent issues (April 16th, 30th and May 21st) of the MSS. of my intended book, *The Programme of Jesus or His Return*.

In order that the nature of my contribution be fully understood, may I add a few explanations? I feel that the presentation will help to bridge the gulf between various schools of religious thought. There is something in the writing that will appeal to Fundamentalists, if they will only deign to read it without prejudice, as the author has had their problems deeply in view. The Modernist ought to be satisfied, since the position maintained is based upon generally-accepted formulisms of Christian scholarship, and Spiritualists and Scientists as well, as the conclusions are drawn from data irrefutably established as occurring under specified conditions. Since I have staked my whole reputation and future on this, I most earnestly ask your readers to give the matter a serious study.

Permit me to comment on two statements in your review that may cause confusion. The well-remembered deceased teacher and author, Prof. Rev. T. B. Kilpatrick, D.D., of Knox College, Toronto, had not actually read this MSS. when he wrote as you quote, "You have a message which the Church ought to hear." He encouraged me by such statements from time to time, and it was by such encouragement from him and others that, eventually, I came to understand more fully the principles behind Spiritualism and their relation to Christian truth.

This also I wish to correct in reference to the inception of my interest in the subject—it was not after the death of our daughter, which was but recent (four years ago); but this is the issue of a life's questing, the interest in it is a study of the psychical commenced when I learned of the presentation made by Sir A. Conan Doyle in a little book of his which fell into my hands fifteen years ago. I had been making an exhaustive study of the healing phenomena (from my thesis on which I later obtained my degree), and as your readers will understand, it was inevitable that sooner or later I should be immersed in the psychical. It is since our daughter's death, however, that I have gained all my wonderful personal experience of communication.

(Rev. Dr.) D. McKEEN REID.

1206 16th Avenue, N.W., Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

WORLD FELLOWSHIP OF FAITHS

Sir,—In your issue of June 18th, in the account of a meeting held by the newly-formed Inter-Religious Fellowship, the statement is made that the London Branch of the World Fellowship of Faiths (of which Sir Francis Younghusband is President) "has ceased to function publicly." May I state emphatically that this statement is without foundation, and will cause surprise and distress to our members.

M. A. ST. CLAIR STOBART,

Chairman of London Branch of W.F. of Faiths.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

REALISTIC DREAMS

Sir,—I thought the following might be of some interest to you, as in both cases there seems to be some evidence; whether they are to be classed as just dreams, I do not know.

I had written to a brother living a good distance away, and, seated in a comfortable chair, was thinking rather intently of him. So thinking, I fell asleep. This is a most unusual thing for me to do, as I was certainly not tired.

When I awoke, I was puzzled at the curious feeling of having come out of some vast dark space, and in awakening, seemed to get into possession or control of myself gradually, and still wondering, decided to retire for the night. As I left the room I turned to look at the time, it was 11.10.

The following night I received a letter from my brother in which he said: "I am not writing this as an answer to your letter, as this is in my pocket unopened; but to ask if you can explain the following. Last night (the night of my nap) I was lying awake talking to 'Ethel' and was wondering what could be the cause of a patch of light in a corner, the room was in darkness and reflection from outside was impossible; there was no moon. Still watching, I was startled to see your face appear in the midst of the cloud, and I exclaimed, 'There's Chris.' The time was 11.5. I was wide awake, please explain."

The other case was: I saw in a "dream" my wife's brother, the room seemed very dim, but I know the place quite well. His whole being seemed radiant with light and his face gloriously happy. No word was spoken, and I remember he seemed very much taller than I knew him to be. Three days later we had a telegram to say he had passed over in hospital; we did not know he was ill, and from enquiries later found he was unconscious at the time of the dream.

I had no knowledge whatever of the first case, at least I do not remember anything of it, but surely one must know of one's movements, if it was an out of the body experience.

Malden Road,

C. PRESSLER.

London, N.W.5.

THE PYRAMID PROPHECIES

Sir,—The reference by Mr. H. Ernest Hunt (LIGHT, June 11th, page 379) to the Pyramid of Cheops prompts me to remind readers that August 4th, 1914, was not the commencing date of the Great War. War had been declared and much slaughter ensued between other nations before the British decided to enter on August 4th, and, for those who purport to think internationally, that date can hardly be accepted as the beginning.

Is it seriously contended that the Pyramid dates, in this instance, at least, peculiarly apply to the British nation only, irrespective even of that other great branch of the Anglo-Saxon race which pondered over entry for so long?

Hucknall,

E. H. DAMPIER (Capt.).

Nottingham.

"PITY THE POOR CRABS"

Sir,—In your issue of last week, "An Animal Lover" gives a case of gross cruelty to crabs. If this practice is universal, I think he should be asked to report it to the R.S.P.C.A., but it is to be hoped it is only an isolated case. Even so the police ought to know of it.

Bournemouth.

W. SHAKERLEY (Col. Sir).

Sir,—I was interested to note in your last issue "An Animal Lover's" reference to the boiling of crabs, and have remarked the same phenomenon with horror in this method of slow boiling. Is it not possible that these high-pitched and most distressing cries are really caused by the air and water contained in the shell

escaping as steam long after the unfortunate animal has passed into merciful oblivion as the water gathers warmth? Actually, I believe, the more normal method is to plunge the crab into *boiling water*, which must cause an excruciatingly painful death. I may be wrong in this surmise, being a mere man, but would like to have "An Animal Lover's" remarks on the subject.

"A CRAB LOVER."

SOUNDS AND COLOURS

Sir,—Having always connected sounds with colours, I was puzzled by the correspondence in your late issue, where particular attention was paid to the days of the week as forming an exception to the other words of the language. Until this morning, when amusing myself to translate the days of the week in three languages (Greek, French and English), I was even more puzzled to find that although the sounds differed utterly, one language from the other, the colour association remained unchanged to me: Monday, white; Tuesday, grey-blue; Wednesday, rust; Thursday, yellow with red streaks; Friday, purple; Saturday, pure gold; Sunday, rainbow.

Is there, to explain the colour association of the days of the week, more than the usual light vibration, an association more emotional, spiritual?

HYPATIA CARIDIA.

MORE ABOUT MAHMOUD

Sir,—I was interested to see a letter in LIGHT of June 11th in connection with a psychic experience about "Mahmoud," the winner of the Derby, and I thought my own experience might be of interest in view of that letter.

I had my first sitting with a Medium in Worthing about four years ago, and at the time knew very little about psychic matters. For several days prior to the sitting I had constantly found myself deliberately straightening my back and shoulders and had been slightly puzzled by it, as my family always declared I stooped, and ever since a small child had constantly corrected me and urged me to sit up and to put my shoulders back when I walked, and they had made me do exercises also to help. I was, therefore, very surprised when, a few days after these impressions, I had my sitting, and the Medium described an Arab guide and said he possessed a beautiful straight figure, and had been trying to make me straighten up and put my shoulders back. She described him very fully to me and said he wished to help me in many ways and wanted me to be physically fitter. She mentioned also that he had been a wonderful horseman when on the earth plane and that he wished me to remember his name, because he would make himself known to me again later on. She then gave me his name as Mahmoud, and spelt it for me, as I had never heard it before and was puzzled how to spell it. I still possess the diary, four years old, in which I wrote it.

Apart from that, I never heard the name until I picked up the paper a few days before the Derby and saw that a horse of that name was running and that there was Arab breeding in it. Of course, I decided to back it. Another inmate of the house, also interested in psychic matters, drew it in a sweep, which struck us both as rather a coincidence; and then, the night before the race, she dreamt she saw it winning, so backed it herself in the morning; so, between us, we had a good win.

The Old Kennels, Staplefield,

D. GALLOWAY.

Nr. Haywards Heath, Sussex.

[NOTE.—We do not commend the use of psychic knowledge for gambling—indeed, we think it very undesirable; we give the above as a description of what many people will regard as an interesting psychic experience.—EDITOR.]

Light

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EDITOR GEORGE H. LETHAM

As We See It

SPIRITUALISM, 400 B.C.

IN last week's issue we commented upon the play *Socrates*, produced by the B.B.C., the closing scenes of which argued pure Spiritualism, and we pointed out the value of such a broadcast as Spiritualist propaganda among non-Spiritualist listeners, especially as it was under the auspices of a body which cannot be accused of any undue leaning towards Spiritualism.

Reflection will show that there is another lesson to which this play gives emphasis. Socrates lived 469-399 B.C. and left no writings. What we know of him we learn through his pupils, Xenophon and Plato, and his views upon the immortality of the soul are found in Plato's *Phaedo*. Whether they are actually the beliefs of Socrates or of Plato hardly matters. Emerson said: "Out of Plato come all things that are written and debated among men of thought. Great havoc he makes of our originalities. Calvinism is in his *Phaedo*; Christianity is in it. Mysticism finds in Plato all its texts."

If this be true, and there is evidence to support it, how does Spiritualism stand in relation to the ancients? If Socrates, as related by Plato, propounded Spiritualist beliefs over 2,000 years ago, is our work merely repetition? By no means. The difference lies in proof. The truth that Spiritualism seeks to prove to all is not new. Like all other truths, it has always existed. Socrates may have known this truth with the vision of a seer, but *seeing* in this sense is not believing to those who are not seers.

What we call orthodox science has been very busy proving some things, and incidentally disproving others, that were *known* hundreds of years ago. Psychic Science has for a much shorter period been proving the truth of the survival of the soul, a truth of which Socrates apparently had no doubt over three hundred years B.C. There is surely comfort here for the impatient, who complain that little real progress has been made by modern Experimental Spiritualism, and a lesson for those who assert that it has revealed all it can, and that is sufficient. Its truth has been known for centuries, but to-day we find unsupported faith becoming less and less sufficient to those who have it not. Evidential proof is comparatively still in its infancy. It is much too early a stage in our work either to rest on our laurels, or to abandon the unenlightened to their self-complacent darkness.

PROSPECTS OF PSYCHIC SCIENCE

The new book "Psychics and Mediums" (Riders, 5/-), by Miss Gertrude Ogden Tubby, former Secretary of the American S.P.R. (reviewed in "Light" of May 21st by Mr. Arthur Ford), contains valuable hints and suggestions for psychic students and also a very useful bibliography. Miss Tubby summarises her conclusions as to the position and prospects of psychic science as follows:

"A CAREFUL survey of the wide field of psychic phenomena and their relation to the physical sciences serves to strengthen the conclusion that the greatest advance of the immediate future in the application of science to human problems lies in this direction. We have reached a material *impasse* in which the machine has been found to dominate the human inventor. The harvest of plays and essays concerning this lamentable fact are a depressing sum, taken alone. Quite as depressing as the spiritual meanderings and maunderings of sentimental religious philosophisers, taken alone.

"The material and the ethereal ranges of existence occur together, not alone. Artificially to divorce them brings about unbalance and unease and dissatisfaction. The order of nature cannot be violated; the penalties are as sure as the order, which is fortunate for the cosmos wherein the human race finds itself.

"Neither arrant conjurers, skilled in the arts of sleight of hand and psychologic misleading, nor deceiving Mediums who press bell-boxes with stockinged feet or chair rungs or otherwise, in dark séances, and palm off prepared psychological puzzles as 'messages' in the séance room, can retard or change the order of nature. They may impede general recognition of nature's order for a few weary months or years, to their own eternal discredit, but that is the utmost they can do. The patience of science can afford to ignore them. It is no nine days' wonder that the Kluski wax moulds were made supernormally or that D. D. Home's accordion was played, keyboard end hanging loosely downward in an open-mesh wire basket away from any human hand. Nor is it by any prepared psychological trick that a forewarning of the world-war was given months in advance in the quiet séance room of the Boston psychic, Mrs. M. M. Soule (Chenoweth) with detailed descriptions of the costumes of those concerned and the setting of the scene of the murder at Serajevo that started it all.

"Neither chance nor subterfuge accounts for a volume of world-war prophecies received in automatic writing through the hand of John Alleyne for his friend, Frederick Bligh Bond. Beginning October 15th, 1909, five years before the conflict opened, and running through June, 1918, the great war was predicted and its progress and the conclusion of peace were foreseen and described.

"No fake mediumship relieves the hard beset sufferer in a padded cell and brings that life out, not only into normality, into psychic wholeness, but into ability to serve others in like difficulty. Those who are sure of their psychic gifts show no reluctance to put them to the test in the laboratories of the scientists under conditions imposed by science. It is only the false and self-aggrandizing Mediums who insist on placing conditions according to the 'instructions' of their so-called 'guides.' The student must beware of such. Do not lend the support of curiosity to the misdoings of those whose psychology is plainly to be read in their actions. Science can afford to ignore them and let them fall by their own weight. One honest evidential piece of work by the humblest-minded private psychic discountenances the whole raft of blatant self-

(Continued at foot of next column).

LOOKING ROUND THE WORLD

A SHEFFIELD SURPRISE

SHEFFIELD Society for Psychical Research probably gets more publicity than any other research society in the country—thanks very largely, as we have before pointed out, to the skill of Mr. O. J. Wendlandt, its publicity representative, in providing the Press with interesting news about the Society and its doings. Almost invariably, such news is favourable; and many readers of the Sheffield Press must have been astonished when, under the heading "Survival Not Proved," they found extracts from a report by one of the Society's research committees.

In subsequent issues of the *Sheffield Telegraph* and *Daily Independent* (June 15th) Mr. Wendlandt explained that undue prominence had been given to the Committee's findings. "They were," he wrote, "drawn up by one individual, the leader of the group giving his own conclusions and opinions, coloured naturally by the personal equation and experience, and therefore should not have been broadcast as if they were definite findings of the S.S.P.R. as a whole. As a matter of fact, the responsible Council of the Society had no prior knowledge of these reports or their nature."

It should, however, be stated that (as shown by the extracts from the report published in *LIGHT* last week, page 398) all that was affirmed by the Committee was that the evidence they had received "could not be said to be of such evidential character as to prove Survival." This did not justify the heading "Survival Not Proved," more particularly as the leader of the group stated that he was "not saying that other people have not proved Survival."

The surprise was in the heading, and the heading was not justified, although doubtless it will be quoted by opponents of Spiritualism as if it represented the considered opinion of the Society. Hence the need for Mr. Wendlandt's disclaimer.

B.B.C. AND SPIRITUALISM

Firmly and finally the B.B.C. have refused the request of the Spiritualists' National Union to be permitted to broadcast a Spiritualist service. The ground given for the refusal is interesting. Before a request for an evening service can be granted, it is stated, the Central Religious Advisory Committee of the B.B.C. must be satisfied "that the teaching of the applying body is such as can be said to be in the main stream of the Christian tradition;" and as a perusal of the S.N.U. hymn-book had shown that the name of Christ had been deliberately excised (where it occurred in the originals) the Committee decided that the services of the Union do not come within the terms of this condition.

Obviously, it should, on this ground, be easy for a Christian-Spiritualist body to pass the test—unless, as is probable, some other test were applied by which they could be ruled out. The full text of the correspondence will be published in *LIGHT* next week.

(Continued from previous column).

advertisers, who seek a place not under the sun but in the limelight.

"Newton's apple did fall to the ground; Galileo's earth did revolve about the sun; Crookes's Katie King did materialise before seven cameras; William James and James H. Hyslop did posthumously choose their signs, the Greek letter omega and the Greek letter chi, and transmit them through a number of Mediums, independently of any possible concerted action, to prove their survival; and hundreds of patients freed of obsessive influences and restored to physical and mental and spiritual health and sanity walk the earth to-day, living witnesses to the actuality of psychic diagnosis and cure."

"LIGHT" IN WESTERN CANADA

MR. FRANCIS K. REIMER, missionary-at-large for the National Spiritualist Association of Canada, writes thanking readers of *LIGHT* who, in response to his appeal, have sent him copies of *LIGHT* and other Spiritualist literature for distribution. "Since last October," he says, "I have received 1715 copies of *LIGHT*, and each one of these messengers of Truth I have sent into the interior of British Columbia and the Yukon—they have played a tremendous part in my missionary work."

Mr. Reimer writes from 1236 Hornby Street, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, and he renews his appeal for copies of *LIGHT*, and other Spiritualist literature, for distribution. A parcel is being sent from the office of *LIGHT*, but copies from readers will no doubt be welcomed.

A "MISSIONARY AT LARGE"

Mr. Reimer describes some of his experiences as "missionary-at-large." On May 20th he returned to Vancouver after a journey of 800 miles in the "immediate interior," during which his reception everywhere was very friendly. At one place, Kamloops, his first meeting was followed by one called by the "Pentecostal People" at which Spiritualism was denounced, but only five people attended, whereas the hall "could hardly hold the people" who came to hear his next address.

Mr. Reimer says that although Spiritualism has been known in far Western Canada for over forty years, it is "still in its infancy," owing to the difficulties which hinder progress. No doubt many of our readers will wish to give such help as they can.

"POWER" SUNDAY SERVICES AGAIN

A communication from the "Power Group" headquarters at Hampstead Towers, London, contains the information that the "Power" Sunday evening services are to be resumed in the West End of London; and that, for this purpose, Wigmore Hall, Wigmore Street, has been secured for a long term from September next. "Power" will thus (for the Sunday services) become a near neighbour of the Spiritualist Community, whose headquarters and meeting-place are at the Grottrian Hall, Wigmore Street.

Our informant states that these services are being arranged in response to an insistent demand from the people who have supported the Meurig Morris meetings since their first inception at the Fortune Theatre some six years ago; also that this development will not interfere with the lectures to students of the "school of Mezzantni" now carried on at Hampstead Towers.

As at the Fortune Theatre and Aeolian Hall services in the past, "Power's" addresses through the trance mediumship of Mrs. Meurig Morris will be the main feature.

OTHER CENTRAL LONDON SERVICES

It is also announced that, beginning October 4th, Sunday evening services are to be held by the "Red Cloud" group at the Aeolian Hall, Bond Street, London, W.—the main attraction, of course, being Mrs. Estelle Roberts' clairvoyance. During two recent winter sessions, these meetings—always largely attended—were held in the Victoria Hall, Bloomsbury Square.

A mile or so further West—but still well within the London central area—Sunday evening services are being held at Pembroke Hall, Earl's Court, by the "White Eagle Lodge," the chief attraction being trance addresses through the mediumship of Mrs. Grace Cooke.

With these, in addition to the regular services at the Grottrian Hall (Spiritualist Community), the Queen's Hall (Marylebone Spiritualist Association), and Pembroke Place Temple (London Spiritual Mission), Central London looks like being well catered for during the coming season—perhaps too well, if means of meeting expenses be taken into account.

A DUCK "ORDAINED"

HOW SPIRITUALISM IS BROUGHT INTO DISREPUTE IN CALIFORNIA

By A. E. S. HAYWARD, O.B.E.

Off the Azores, M/S Canada.

I AM writing to tell you of some terrible disclosures which appeared in the issues of the *Los Angeles Times* of 9th and 10th April, showing the scandalous "racket" which has been worked for some time in that city. The following extracts speak for themselves:—

"Disclosure that a degree of Doctor of Divinity may be obtained in Los Angeles in exchange for \$15, with no theological study, was made last night by the Los Angeles Ministerial Association through Dr. V. L. di Ghilini, appointed as official investigator. In a sensational exposé, it was shown that a woman, used as an investigator, was ordained Minister of a Spiritual Church, and that even the Duck 'Googoo' (the mascot of Joe Penner, a well-known Cinema, Radio and Vaudeville artist), had been ordained a preacher empowered to administer communion, perform marriage rites, and read a final tribute over the bier of the dead.

"This racket is of tremendous magnitude. During the last 12 months, 918 persons have been ordained Ministers, Doctors of Divinity and even Bishops by one organisation alone.

"Joe Penner, on 18th January, permitted the name of his pet duck to be used on an application, in order to establish proof that ordination to a certain ministry in Los Angeles is a racket and not a faithful theological service. The duck, now entitled to be styled 'Rev. Drake Googoo,' stated in his application (prepared by the investigator) that he had some stage and screen experience, and was a clairvoyant. His ordination certificate was issued 20th January and two motion picture stars were given as references. His sponsor, Dr. di Ghilini, in endorsing Googoo, declared he was capable of meeting the highest requirements of the particular Church.

"Edward Sains, personal representative of Mrs. Harry Houdini, in making his application, was sponsored by Eric Weiss, known to the world as 'The Great Houdini,' and dead for many years.

"Dr. di Ghilini said that Fulton Oursler, editor and playwright, without ever appearing in the Office of the Mother Church, received three degrees in an hour in exchange for \$40. He was first ordained a Minister, the charge being \$10. Next came a degree of D.D. at a fee of \$5, and the third degree made him a full-fledged Bishop with power to preside over whatever section of the world he might choose. For the last authority he paid \$15.

"Nellie Poorkluck, a Swedish hired girl, claiming to be from Kno-cemded (Knock-'em-dead), Minnesota, had no money to pay for her certificate of ordination. She went to the City Pound, bought a mongrel pup, put a fancy collar on him, painted his toe-nails with red nail polish, and traded him in payment of her certificate.

"Most of the 918 ordained Ministers who have bought their certificates and degrees during the past year are clairvoyants, palmists, card-readers and the like. Banned by ordinance to practise their professions in Los Angeles as such, they have seized the opportunity to become Ministers and D.D.'s, lifted by their ordination certificates to a legal-proof spiritual plane.

"According to instructions issued to them by mail-order houses of so-called Spiritual Authority, those who hold degrees are empowered to perform weddings, conduct funerals, hear confessions, administer communion, and ride on all railroads and 'bus lines at half fare rates. The last perquisite has appealed to so many that they have become ordained ministers at \$10 each, in order to save money on a round-trip transcontinental journey.

"Ordained ministers in one of the so-called Churches

are assured of 50 per cent. of the fees collected from any applicants they may bring into the group. Thus the racket becomes almost an endless chain with each ordained Minister, D.D. or Bishop out working to get applicants no more qualified as spiritual ministers than Penner's duck.

"Dr. di Ghilini contends that in one of the rackets alone the Archbishop of the 'Mother Church' has netted more than \$25,000 in less than a year. Sale of literature, donation envelopes, magazines, etc., make up an endless source of income to the Mother Church and all co-operating Ministers."

It was subsequently brought out that the ordinations referred to were made by Archbishop Charles E. Kelso, founder of the Spiritual Psychic Science Church. He also holds the Office of Secretary-Treasurer.

The Ministerial Association stated that "it feels that the laws of a State which makes it possible for a duck to be ordained a minister of the Gospel are not serving society in the way they were intended. It is the intention of the Association to seek a change in these laws rather than to prosecute Church organisations which may be operating outside the true spirit of the law."

Apart from this racket, it is possible for anyone to apply to the Federal Government at the State Capital at Sacramento, and, in payment of \$25, obtain a licence entitling one to the title of "Reverend" and to start a Spiritualist Church in any city of the State.

Another method is to take a correspondence course in Spiritualist teachings from various organisations throughout the States in payment of \$35, and at the end of the course receive a licence to start a Church. The result is that one frequently sees shops in the poorer quarters of the larger cities opened as Churches, with signs up advertising "Spiritual Readings," and houses with bright neon lights at night indicating that the Rev. So and So is a clairvoyant or a psychologist.

It is no wonder, therefore, that Spiritualism is generally looked upon with contumely in California.

There are a limited number of genuine and well-organised Churches in Los Angeles district.

EDINBURGH PSYCHIC COLLEGE

Mrs. Hewat McKenzie has just concluded a visit to the Psychic College and Library at 30 Heriot Row, Edinburgh. She is one of the College Trustees, and has always taken a deep interest in its welfare.

A sustained interest in the work through a membership which extends far beyond Edinburgh is reported, and the fine lending library is in constant use by town and country members. A good programme of Friday evening lectures and regular At Homes are well attended, the enlarged lecture room being full to capacity when Mrs. McKenzie lectured. *The Scotsman* never fails to give an adequate report of the lectures in its news columns.

Mrs. Helen Spiers is at present paying a first visit, and her public clairvoyance to an audience of complete strangers was noteworthy by its wealth of names, incidents, and comforting messages, and deserved to be fully recorded. Her private sittings were also highly satisfactory, and week-end visits to Penth, a newly established Society, and to Holland Street, Glasgow, enabled other centres to share in the privilege of her visit.

Mrs. Miller, the Hon. Principal, to whose generosity this work is owing and who has made provision for its continuance, is unfortunately, through illness, seldom able to be in residence, but her interest continues unabated, and all her friends wish her renewed strength. In her absence the Council, with Miss Mowat, the able Secretary, and her staff, carry on the work with efficiency. Such an open door for serious inquirers in Scotland as the College offers is to be highly valued by the whole movement.

A LOVELY VISION

By SHIRLEY ESHELBY

ON Sunday, 7th June, I went into the Great Silence. Immediately I closed my eyes, beautiful opalescent colours played like slow lightning. They were chiefly in violet and blue shades. As the colours gradually faded away I heard baby voices laughing and talking in a very excited way as though full of joy. They were asking questions, which were being answered by a man's voice. It was my "dead" son's voice. After a few seconds he said to them: "There she is, go and fetch her."

When I opened my eyes, I was surrounded by a crowd of lovely babies. They were all little girls about four or five years old. Some of them had golden curls and blue eyes, others were dark, but all were extremely beautiful and lovable. Some of them hugged me with their soft little dimpled arms, and covered my face and neck with kisses. They spoke in baby language, which I will not attempt to repeat. A few of them said: "Come along, you must come with us, Billy wants you, he's there," pointing to another room.

With all their baby strength they pulled me by my hands and arms right out of my body and into the room where Billy was waiting with an amused smile. The room was like a shadow picture, but my son and the babies looked very real, just like human beings in the flesh, but more beautiful. I was being "towed" along by the babies, some were pulling my dress, which seemed to be of some gauzy material rather like chiffon, others were gently holding my hands and laughing up at me with playful eyes just bubbling over with joy and filled with the spirit of adventure. They had "captured" me and I was their willing "prisoner." They led me up to my son and said, "Here she is, we've brought her!"

After the usual greeting he said: "I brought the babies with me because I knew you would love to see them, I often take them out for a joy ride. They are going to dance for you."

I was commanded to "sit there" by two of the children who led me to a seat at the end of the room.

My son sat down at the piano and played some enchanting music which inspired the babies. They danced all together, but each one in her own way with grace and charm. Not a thought was given to the steps, they were simply expressing themselves with their pretty feet and hands, shaking their golden curls, running as though in a breeze, catching one another in a playful embrace which was a kind of hearty babyish greeting, with a kiss thrown anywhere about the head or face. Some waved "goodbye" and disappeared, but reappeared again in another part of the room.

"CONFRATERNITY" CARAVAN CAMPAIGN

The "Confraternity" caravan campaign in the Western Counties has been continued with marked success, judging by the long reports in the local Press and by reports which have reached us from other sources. At Taunton, a largely-attended meeting was presided over by the Rev. John W. Lee, minister of the Unitarian Church; and addresses were delivered by Mrs. St. Clair Stobart and the Rev. Maurice Elliot (Vicar of St. Peter's, Cricklewood).

Writing from Devonshire, Mrs. Stobart says that one afternoon, in a Rectory drawing-room, she and Mr. Elliott addressed 15 clergy on the need of co-operation between the Church and Spiritualism, "and came away unharmed."

As advertised on another page, an "open meeting" in connection with the "Confraternity" is to be held at the Grottrian Hall on Monday, July 6th. It is expected that a considerable number of clergymen will be present.

SUBCONSCIOUS MIND

By H. ERNEST HUNT

XX.—THE EFFECTS OF SUGGESTION

SUGGESTION is a potent force at work in our lives, both consciously and unconsciously, in a wide variety of ways; we pick up all unconsciously from our surroundings, from the circumstances of our lives, and from the individuals we meet. By no means should we overlook its influence in Spiritualism.

Suggestion consists on the one hand of a heightened sensitiveness or receptivity, and on the other of the impact of an idea. The idea may be that of communication with the Beyond, and many things may combine to heighten the sensitiveness. Expectation is a potent influence, and the prospect of receiving a message may colour our judgment and impair its validity. The reputation of a Medium may confer upon her a prestige which so increases the suggestibility of the sitter, that he may stretch many points to make a description fit or a message tally on the strength of it.

A joss-stick burning is not without an effect upon the mind, for scents are known to be stimulating; while the general environment will have a suggestive value predisposing us in favour of, or against, what follows. Ceremonial also increases suggestion, and the aegis of religion always heightens the emotional appeal. Where several people are involved, as in a séance, mass emotion cannot be disregarded, for people will accept things in the mass which, as individuals, they might rightly criticise or even reject. We laugh in a theatre-crowd at things which would not be in the least funny if we were alone. At a séance, the idea might be phrased thus: "If the others believe this, it is not for me to stand out," Suggestion is elusively at work in facilitating belief.

Perhaps the greatest aid to increased suggestibility is darkness, which puts an end to the active sense of sight and, in compensation, bids us to greater expectation and acuteness of hearing and touch. There is also the subtle suggestion of the unknown arousing the subconscious emotional element; this is already active enough under the influence of desire, predisposing us to see and hear what we wish. These then are obviously not the best conditions for that calm judgment upon events which is so supremely essential.

One has but to listen to the way in which three or four people will claim to recognise a clairvoyant description which obviously can only belong to one of them; and do we not all know many people who will transform a smudge on a photographic print into the exact likeness of some dear departed? Others will read into a message a meaning that may have been there, but probably was not. Once I actually heard a so-called clairvoyant give a "recognised" description by saying, "your father is here," and nothing else.

Conscious and subconscious minds have a see-saw action—when one comes up the other goes down; and consequently the heightening of subconscious action, through suggestion and stimulation of the emotions, correspondingly reduces the critical faculty and the judgment. Hence, it is abundantly necessary for us to be on guard against the unrealised effects of suggestion. It is because of the introduction of this element that not a few Spiritualists have been accused of undue credulity.

The sceptical attitude is fatal to all spiritual or psychical research; criticism is good so long as it results in calm decision; but unrealised suggestion is quite capable of invalidating judgment.

Whoever it was who searched the heavens with his telescope and found no God would not have found the human mind if he had searched the brain with a microscope.—GEORGE SANTAYANA.

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Mr. GEORGE DAISLEY.

(See special announcement, page 402).

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(Limited to six sitters. 2/6, non-members 3/6.)

Friday, June 26th, at 7 p.m. Mrs. N. Mackenzie.

Tuesday, June 30th, at 7 p.m. Mr. T. E. Austin.

Friday, July 3rd, at 7 p.m. Mrs. Brittain.

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NIGHT WATCHMAN'S VISION

AT the period when I was apprenticed to the engineering profession, the public did not have the easy hours that prevail to-day. The firm to which I was articled insisted that the pupils should be in the works when they opened at 6 a.m., and no excuse was accepted on failure. This meant that those living at any distance had to take lodgings near the works, as transport facilities at that time were not so plentiful as they now are.

As I had to lodge near the works, for this reason, I could only get home at week-ends, but had to get back on the Sunday night, as there was no means of arriving at the works at 6 a.m. on the Monday. No one resided in the works, but a night-watchman was on duty, as the works were very extensive, and the watchman had also to keep an eye on the boilers during the night so that the stokers arriving at 5 a.m. would find all in order for raising steam for the day.

One Sunday night, on passing the main entrance gate of the works, I noticed that the wicket was open, and the watchman was standing just inside. The usual night-watchman had a night off on Sundays, his place being taken by an ex-naval man, a pensioner. This man was of rather striking appearance, as he had an immense red beard, turning grey, and a mop of red hair and long red moustache.

I stopped to speak to the watchman, who did not at first realise that I was attached to the works. I noticed that his manner was very strange, and at first thought that he had had a drop too much, but after a time I realised that I was talking to a badly frightened man. I went just inside the gateway which opened into the great fitting shop, and found that he had lighted the gas burners all round one of the benches, the poor light given by the fishtail burners just making a spot in the gloom of the vast shop. He asked if I would mind walking round the works with him, and I did so; there were no watchman's clocks in those days and I

expect that was the only visit the works got that night. I left him at the gate.

The next Sunday the same thing happened, but the gift of some tobacco and the feeling that I was a friend and would not give him away, made him more communicative, and he told me what his trouble was.

He said that in and about the fitting shop he could see hundreds of people, men, women and children, all evidently suffering, and while most of them were naked, some were clothed or partially so, while piles of dead bodies were all over the place. I had no psychic feelings or knowledge at that time and put the old chap down as "scatty," and while I told my particular chum about it the next day, I did not think it wise to let it go further in case the old chap lost his job.

I still called and cheered him up each Sunday evening on my way to my "diggings," but when the light summer evenings came on, the fear seemed to have left him, and soon after he was taken ill and did not return to the job. I believe from memory, that he died. I never saw the new Sunday night-watchman at the gate, so never knew if he saw anything.

Some years after this, the firm obtained the contract to build some very large pumping engines, and to allow these to be assembled in the fitting shop, it was decided to sink a pit—the usual erecting pits were in another erecting shop, and were occupied by another set of engines in course of construction. When the excavations started, at a depth of about ten feet, hundreds of human skulls and bones of all sorts were discovered, and it became obvious that hundreds, perhaps thousands of bodies had been shot into a pit on the site.

On one corner of the works, near this pit, stood at that time, a public house called the "Pit's Head." It was thought, by anyone who did think about it, that this was called after the statesman, but a little research showed that the house had stood there long before Pitt was on this earth.

It was, therefore, practically certain that one of the lesser plague pits of the great plague of London was situated here, but there was no record to tell anything about it. The map of Fairthorne and Newcourt, 1658, seven years before the Plague, shows gardens and a windmill on the site, with open country all round, but the map of John Roque, 1741, shows the spot built over, no doubt during the rush to put up houses after the Great Fire of 1666. The remains might, of course, have been from some earlier plague.

While there is nothing strange in finding large quantities of human bones near large cities, the experience of the watchman in this case was certainly remarkable. He was a stranger to the district, and as there was no legend regarding the existence of a plague pit on the spot, the discovery was a complete surprise to everyone. It was not a case of leg-pulling on the watchman's part, the man was in a pitiable state of fright, and his statements never varied.

I was still at the works when the pit was discovered, and recalled my experience with the watchman, which then took on quite another aspect.

DAVID J. SMITH (Lt.-Col.)

NOT SEEN, BUT FELT

Southfield Rectory, once a friary, parts of which date back to the 11th century, is said to be haunted by the ghost of a woman whose body is believed to have been walled up in the cellars. In 1874, her ghost was exorcised by the Bishop of Rochester, whose visit is commemorated by a stained glass window in the Monks' Room, the oldest part of the building. Despite this, however it is stated that the ghost still lurks within the old grey walls of the rectory.

The Rector (Rev. W. M. Falloon) told a *Kent Messenger* representative, when conducting him round the building, that though neither he nor any member of his family had actually seen an apparition, sometimes a strange presence was felt, particularly in certain parts of the house.

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Secretary: Miss F. V. GREGORY, M.B.E. Telephone: 6814 WELBECK**SUNDAY, JUNE 28th, 1936**

11 a.m.—Mr. ERNEST HUNT

Clairvoyante: Miss Lily Thomas

6.30 p.m.—Mrs. ST. CLAIR STOBART

Clairvoyante: Mrs. Helen Spiers

Sunday, June 28th, at 11 a.m.

Mr. FRANK H. WALL

Clairvoyant: Mr. George Daisley

Sunday, June 28th, at 6.30 p.m.

Clairvoyant: Mr. K. E. Cockersell

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OPEN MEETINGS

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Wednesdays, 12.30 p.m.

Organ Recital, Address, Questions Answered and Clairvoyance. Admission Free

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Clairvoyante: Miss Lily Thomas

Wednesday, July 1st.—Speaker: Mrs. St. Clair Stobart

Clairvoyante: Mrs. Helen Spiers

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.

Tuesday. Mrs. Livingstone, by appointment.

Mrs. Helen Spiers, by appointment.

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

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

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

to Miss Robertson, Hon. Sec.

Thursday. Miss Lily Thomas, by appointment.

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

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6.30 Mrs. Gradon Thomas.

July 8th 2.30 Mrs. Livingstone

6.30 Mrs. Fillmore

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Tuesday, June 30th, at 2.30 p.m. Mrs. Helen Spiers.

Tuesday, July 7th, at 2.30 p.m. Mrs. Helen Spiers.

Private Sittings arranged daily with the following Mediums:—Mr. Glover Botham, Miss Frances Campbell, Mrs. Esta Cassel, Mrs. Fillmore, Mrs. Hirst, Miss Jacqueline, Mr. Horace Leaf, Mrs. Rose Livingstone, Mrs. Helen Spiers, Mrs. Gradon Thomas, Miss Lily Thomas and Mr. Frank Leah (Psychic Portraiture).

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Clairvoyant: Mr. Thomas WyattFor particulars of weekday activities at Headquarters,
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Friendship is to be purchased only by friendship. A man may have authority over others, but he can never have their heart but by giving his own.—BISHOP WILSON.

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Westover Road, Bournemouth, Sunday, July 5th at 2.15 p.m.

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Chairman—Mr. J. B. McIndoe

Speaker—Mr. Shaw Desmond. Clairvoyante—Mrs. Helen Hughes.

Doors open 5.45 p.m. Organ Recital, 6 p.m. by Mr. Kenneth Bygott
(by kind permission of the Gaumont British Picture Corporation)

Monday, July 6th—

60 mile Motor Tour through New Forest. Leaving Bournemouth
at 2.15 p.m. Fare 4/6. Those joining the party will be the guests of
the Bath Road Church at tea at Castle Malwood.

"A BIRD PUZZLE"

REFERRING to Phyllis M. Groom's letter in LIGHT of 9th April, just to hand—I can offer, if not a "reasonable explanation," at least two similar cases from my own experience, each with such an explanation.

Many years ago a blackbird persisted in tapping most of the day on the window of a front room overlooking the garden. When the window was open he would not come—obviously then he did not want to get inside. I watched him on several occasions surreptitiously, and once walked up to him, when he flew away. The cause then became obvious, so I believe: the window fronted the garden flooded in sunlight; colour and trees were all reflected brilliantly in the shut window glass, a garden of enchantment into which I am sure his longing heart desired to enter.

The other instance is years later and a different house. A starling for weeks persisted in tapping most of the day on the small window of my small photographic dark room, some 10 x 8 inches of glass, which he quite obscured by muddy streaks in his persistence. The reason seemed obvious to me—behind the glass was darkness, it seemed an entrance to a suitable nesting place. A few feet above his head a crack in a door had led to such nest building by a pair for many years.

Wellington,
New Zealand.

M. CROMPTON-SMITH.

DÜRER'S "PRAYING HANDS"

The Praying Hands are raised to God,
Appealing for His Gift,
The Gift denied, the hands droop not,
But still in prayer up-lift.

And blessed by prayer, the hands resign
Themselves to God's Own Will,
To work in humble, unknown ways,
His Purpose to fulfil.

For Praying Hands are soothing hands,
They carry God's sunlight
Into the black pits of despair,
Into misery's night.

Then taught by prayer, the hands outstretch,
To strengthen and to heal,
They gently ope men's curtained eyes,
And simple truths reveal.

At nightfall when the hands are tired,
Christ Jesus will bend down,
And gently separating them,
Will clasp then in His own. MAY CARTER.

Albrecht Dürer and Franz Knigstein were fellow-students in Nuremburg; while Albrecht had genius, Franz had no artistic skill to match his aspiration. Sadly realising this one day, he said, "You, Albrecht, are a great artist, while nothing I do holds any beauty." He added, wistfully, clasping his hands, "Oh, had I but a part of your gift . . ." Don't move, Franz," cried Dürer, "if your hands cannot paint a picture, they will certainly make one!" He rapidly sketched his friend's hands, as they were raised in supplication, and his famous etching now stands as a universal symbol of prayer and resignation.

FOR THINKING PEOPLE ONLY

One of the most helpful aspects of the Nature Cure philosophy of health and disease (which makes it possible now for disease to be abolished) is that it makes everything so simple. The dullest of us can easily understand now, if we are interested, why we get ill, how to cure ourselves without relying on the professional doctor, how, if we are willing to adjust certain habits of living, to avoid getting ill.

Take that bane of existence—the common cold. Nature Cure shows, for the first time in history for the general public, how we can wipe it right off the map. It is very, very simple. A cold is just an indication that your body is trying to throw off impurities which you have allowed (mainly through ignorance) to accumulate there. If, when you have a cold, you understand this simple truth (which has escaped our medical friends) and assist nature in its work of purification, you soon feel fitter as a certain consequence.

But most sensible people, acting on expert medical advice, say—rather unkindly—to the voice of nature within, "No. I will NOT let the poisons come out," and you take something from a bottle to see that the healing effort of nature is duly suppressed. But nature usually has the last laugh. After a time, following repeated suppression of these eliminative efforts, we become severely clogged up with impurities, and nature, ever seeking to give us health, tries again to purify our system, this time in a more imperative and urgent tone. We call these conditions by such names as influenza, pneumonia, diphtheria, etc. (according to which part of the body is most encumbered with poison—with an "itis" at the end).

Things now become a little more tense—nature is making rather a special effort on our behalf. If we understand this and apply the simple treatments of Nature Cure—cold water packs for the whole body, no food, etc., there is practically no danger at all. The danger comes when you apply orthodox medical methods—stimulants, medicines, forced feeding, ice packs, etc., Whip the tired horse with the big load going up the hill and what happens? It responds heroically to the whip—and may then fall down dead. In a general sort of way, that is the effect of stimulants in feverish conditions. Every year at least 100,000 people die because this simple truth is not realised by the doctors (50,000 or so from pneumonia alone).

If we want to avoid accumulating poisons in our bodies, with a consequent freedom from disease, we have, among other things, to live on simple natural unspiced foods mainly, and if we have sufficient courage, we ought to wash our bodies over with a cold wet cloth (or use a sponge) every morning, exercise it, and try not to prevent all fresh air and sun from coming in contact with it. A hardy skin is an essential requisite for real health. We also need to have an active brain.

By the way, if you are thinking of coming to my place at Ryde, I would advise you not to delay writing longer than you can help—we are getting very busy with visitors now and it looks as if, later on, we may have to disappoint some people.

DUDLEY CROFT GOODE, M.N.C.A.

HOLMDAKOPIN

A large holiday guest house for Spiritualists and others on the beautiful Isle of Wight, at Ryde, conducted by Dudley Croft Goode, M.N.C.A., Nature Cure Practitioner, etc., and keen Spiritualist. Delightful food-reform meals; three acres beautiful grounds.

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