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PRICE TWOPENCE

MAN AND MAGIC

A STUDY OF THE BLACK ART THROUGHOUT THE AGES

Review by H. F. PREVOST BATTERSBY

THIS comprehensive *volume is a counterblast to those who assert that interest in Magic is abated. When a popular publisher goes out of his way to commission a book on any subject, it is reliable evidence that the subject is to the public taste

Mr. Dennis Wheatley, whose familiarity with the problem is well-known, contributes a preface to introduce the author, Mr. Rollo Ahmed, who, he tells us, as a member of that ancient race, the Egyptian, has an inherited inclination towards the occult; and in the West Indies, Yucatan, Guiana and Brazil, where he spent his youth, had exceptional opportunities for acquiring knowledge of Voodoo and Obeah, and of the primitive magic of the native forest Indians, whose development in certain directions is amazing, and but little known.

In sorcery-ridden Burma, and other parts of Asia, Mr. Ahmed studied occult practices; and later, before returning to Europe, sat at the feet of "white" magicians, and became a practitioner of Raja Yoga, the highest or royal kind of Yoga, by means of which the *yogin* attains to a knowledge of Reality.

He is thus well equipped to shepherd us through a study of the Art which was not always, of intention, as black as it was portrayed to be, and, as he is careful to point out, often only abandoned its whiteness, not from any affection for the Devil, but to gratify that lust for power at which men grasp by other arts to-day.

As he truly says, the history of man is the history of magic, and, since magic was man's first effort to establish contact with the unknown, it is difficult to select any particular era as the one in which it made its appearance in a definite form.

Some may think him scarcely justified in accepting occult evidence to saddle the Atlanteans with a blackness of magic which brought about, not only their own ruin, but the painful experience of a flood to other parts of

the world; but, as far as sheer antiquity goes, there seems, from drawings and remains which link them with some primitive African tribes, evidence which points to magical practices being employed by cave dwellers of the Palaeolithic age.

The author begins his more intimate study with the ancient magic of the East, in Babylon, Assyria, and Chaldea; and, in those earliest days, one finds stress laid on the office of the exorcist and recognition of obsessing entities, which is so dolorously accepted by savage tribes to-day, and which the dull psychic wits of the West are beginning to visualise.

SORCERY CREPT IN

But though magic was a living part of the Asian East, it was the very atmosphere of Egypt.

"Enchantments, exorcism, divination and all magic arts were so universally practised that sorcery crept in almost everywhere, and was in turn connected with the worship of the gods."

It was from the Egyptians that the Jews learnt most of what they knew of magic, though they claimed to have derived it from the Book of Razel, which had been given to Adam before he was turned out of Eden. But the Jews were unique in an appetite for every religion but their own, and spent much of their history in adopting other people's gods and practices; thoroughly nasty ones, most of them, which well deserved the denunciations of witchcraft which have been so plentifully misunderstood.

In Greece and Rome magic wore a more established vesture, mostly derivative, in Rome's case, from the older people, and largely occupied in obtaining worldly advice and information about the future; and, for all its lapses into the gross and ghoulish, leaving the impression of a certain sombre magnificence.

In the dark ages Europe was swept by a flood of Satanic practices, by which its foundered Christianity was submerged. Even the religious houses were often the haunts of Demonism.

The Crusades wrought some change in popular beliefs, prisoners of the Saracens bringing back theories

*The Black Art, by Rollo Ahmed. London. John Long, Ltd. 1936. 16/-.

and usages on which much of the current witchcraft came to be based.

Sorcery obtained then the greatest sway that it ever possessed over European peoples.

"People of every grade of society flocked to the gatherings of the witches' Sabbaths . . . and were swept into an incredible vortex of bestial deeds and cruelty in their pursuit of the black art. They dedicated their children to the Devil, and from an early age inaugurated them into the abominable ceremonies of sorcery."

The *Clavicule de Solomon* and the *Sword of Moses* survived the bonfires of the Inquisition to acquaint us with the rubric of their day; but that "Holy" institution surpassed with its saintly atrocities the worst practices it condemned. The Devil was clever enough to switch over to a new class of worshippers; and, for all the Church's ardours and protestations, she was able to make ample use within her walls of what the Black Art had taught her; even so famous a figure as Thomas Aquinas appears to have been the "Instructor" of at least one sorcerer, Albertus Magnus.

The author takes us through the ramifications of magic in the Middle Ages, the Alchemists and Sorcerers of the 13th to the 18th centuries, Witchcraft, Vampirism and Werewolves in Europe, and so, by the habits and beliefs of Primitive Races, to Sorcery in North and South America.

MODERN BLACK MAGIC

There is a chapter on Modern Black Magic, and one on the Black Mass which adds nothing to our knowledge, unless it be the suggestion that the officiating priests, or sorcerers, undoubtedly used the degraded release of man's highest potency with deliberate intent, since by inciting lust, and devising every imaginable means for its expression, they turned the great force and power of creation towards the energising of foul shapes.

Of elementals, says Mr. Ahmed, there are three categories. "First there are the strange quasi-intelligent thought-creations, usually of an evil or malevolent character, that dwell upon the lower regions of the astral plane. Secondly, there are the so-called Nature Spirits. Thirdly, there are the 'Shells,' or astral simulacra of those whose actual spirits have become sunk in evil to the extinction of the ego."

Thought-forms created by the evil-minded are a continual menace to ill-guarded minds; and many who are outwardly admirable entertain the vilest guests in the house of the mind, guests which one day may become the master and inspire some debauchery or crime.

"There is," says the author, "no such thing as a completely unpremeditated act, since the whole accustomed trend of thought leads in some particular direction which is bound to culminate in action sooner or later . . . When his passion is passed a man may be astounded at his own act; but it is only the outcome of a long period of a similar trend of thought, even if not actually directed at the ultimate victim."

"The drunkard, the profligate, the murderer, the sadist . . . are surrounded by their own abominable elementals."

"There is a gigantic elemental of war, formed by the thoughts of individual men and nations . . . and it is accompanied by a host of other thought creations as foul as itself."

"The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse are no picturesque figment of the imagination, but an elemental reality." For not only are wars caused by the influence of these elementals, but battle-fields are, far and away, their most prolific breeding ground; for just as blood is an essential auxiliary to the magic of the Mass, the reek of blood on a field of battle has a creative potency not to be found elsewhere.

And just as these beings are dependent on thought

forces for their existence, when the thoughts are forgotten they begin to fade away. They may become endowed with a semi-intelligence of their own, and are drawn to persons whose auras and emanations are similar.

A LIFE-LIKE THOUGHT-FORM

Mme. David-Neel describes vividly how once she created the thought-form of a monk, "short and fat, of an innocent and jolly type."

After a few months of the necessary rites and thought-concentration, the phantom monk was formed; he grew gradually fixed and life-like, and became a guest, living in the apartment.

When she went on tour, the monk included himself in the party; and, though she was riding for miles on horseback every day, the illusion persisted, and it was not necessary for her to think of him to make him appear.

"The phantom," she relates, "performed various actions of the kind that are natural to travellers, and that I had not commanded."

It gradually underwent a change, grew leaner, its face assumed a vaguely mocking, sly, malignant look. It became troublesome and bold, and escaped her control. Others who saw it mistook it for a live lama; it began to prey on her nerves, and to dissolve it required six months of hard struggle.

The Tibetan occultists say that once such a phantom is endowed with enough vitality to play the part of a real being, it can free itself from the maker's control; an operation as mechanical as the birth of a child. It may even, though rarely, survive the death of its creator.

"When men were intensely evil," explains Mr. Ahmed, "and given up to wickedness and cruelty, as during the Dark Ages, elementals received so powerful an impetus that their appearance was comparatively common. They were called demons, and it is doubtful if even occultists knew the difference between them and actual evil spirits."

He had once, with his wife, seen a malevolent elemental form built up, to the intense terror of two Airedale dogs, in the garden of a bungalow they were inhabiting in a district once the scene for years of the activities of French smugglers, noted for their revolting cruelty.

Such forms are frequently only semi-human, or merely grotesque, like huge slugs; for they can be deliberately built up to an aspect, and sent out to do our bidding.

"LIVING CORPSES"

In addition to these and Nature Spirits, there are two other varieties of elementals, the "Group-soul," to which the spirits of animals belong, and what some occultists term "Psychic Embryos," the forms of humans yet to be; though these latter never manifest objectively, save sometimes to women expecting the birth of a child.

"There are also," adds Mr. Ahmed, "people walking this earth now, whose spiritual self is already dead, or has detached itself from being sunk in matter. Some souls cast themselves so wilfully into the pleasures of the material world . . . that they lose even the smallest link with the Divine Spark within. Starved and ignored, this gradually detaches itself and returns to the Divine Source, leaving a living and intelligent corpse behind it."

It is from these and other "living corpses" that, a shell or simulacrum of the living person—known to Indian philosophy as "Brothers of the Shadows"—is discharged at death, to gravitate to the lower astral regions, and become the instrument of actively evil spirits.

Though it has been impossible to cover adequately a work so closely packed with information, that very disability should commend it to those anxious to have an expert's views on an often mis-handled subject.

CASTING OUT DEVILS

STRANGE STORY TOLD TO U.S.A. ROMAN CATHOLICS

ACCORDING to the Magazine *Time*, sent to us by a reader, the following story of the casting out of devils by a German-born Roman Catholic Monk, Rev. Theophilus Riesinger, has been widely circulated amongst the Roman Catholics of the United States:

"In 1928, a certain 40-year-old woman was taken first to a church, then to a Franciscan convent in Earlring, Iowa. Apparently an energumen, she had exhibited symptoms of diabolical possession for a dozen years: she could not pray, take communion or even pronounce the name of Christ. Doctors had examined her, found her neither mentally nor physically abnormal. With the approval of the Bishop of Des Moines, the woman was made ready for exorcism by learned Father Theophilus, who upon 19 prior occasions had successfully made use of the Church's ancient rite, canonically available to all priests, for casting out devils.

"Strong-armed nuns bound her, and placed her upon a bed. But as soon as Father Theophilus began the long series of prayers and commands to the devils to depart, 'with lightning speed the possessed dislodged herself from the bed and the hands of protectors, and her body, carried through the air, landed high above the door of the room and clung to the wall with catlike grips.' It was necessary to pull her down by force.

"The demons in the energumen readily identified themselves. One was Judas. Another was the woman's dead father, named Jacob, who said he was damned for attempting unsuccessfully to induce her to commit incest with him. A third was Mina, the dead man's concubine, who said she had 'murdered four little ones.' Finally there were Beelzebub and hordes of imps who seemed to leave and re-enter the energumen's body. The voices of all the demons issued from her mouth, with varying intonation, in English, German and Latin.

"With the convent room full of noise and confusion, nuns and the local priests were obliged at times to leave it to rest. But the bespectacled old German-born Capuchin never stopped exorcising. For protection, Father Theophilus, by special permission, wore a pyx containing the Blessed Sacrament. When the priest approached with a relic of the True Cross concealed under his cassock, there were howls: 'I cannot bear that! Oh, it is tormenting! It is unbearable!' The possessed recoiled at the mention of St. Michael the Archangel, protested at a relic of the Little Flower, cried 'That burns, that scorches!' when holy water was sprinkled. A prayer to Mary the Immaculate Conception 'caused a bloating of the woman's body.' The woman appeared emaciated at times, her face fiery red at others, her lips swollen to the size of hands, her abdomen so hard at one time that it bent the iron bedstead to the floor. Wise old Father Theophilus, who said he knew the energumen would recover, had to dissuade the others from having last rites administered to her.

"In his surplice and violet stole, Father Theophilus repeated the prayers of the Church and loosed all the forces of the Lord at the devils day after day for twenty days. Finally, the Iowa woman smiled and for the first time in twelve years said: 'My Jesus, mercy! Praised be Jesus Christ!'"

"LIGHT" SUSTENTATION FUND

Donations to LIGHT Sustentation 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.

MAGICIAN'S PROMISE

A FEW weeks ago Howard Thurston passed on. While not an avowed believer in Spiritualism Mr. Thurston believed in continuity of life, that the so-called dead returned and communicated, not through Mediums, but directly with their friends.

Had Mr. Thurston known more about Spiritualism he would have understood that although spirits do communicate through Mediums, they also communicate directly when they can, and he might have modified the promise that he made to his friend, Mr. Dunninger, in support of his contention.

This promise was that if he (Thurston) passed on before Mr. Dunninger did, and there was life after death, he would return, smash a glass case containing an Egyptian idol belonging to Mr. Dunninger and throw the idol at him. A rash promise, made as these promises so often are, with good intentions, but with no knowledge whatsoever of the conditions he would find in the world to which he was going. It evidently had not occurred to Mr. Thurston that when he was out of his body he would lose his usual means of contacting material objects, and as a spirit might find it impossible to create the force necessary to smash the glass and throw the idol. Whether the glass is broken or not means nothing, one way or the other.

That the world at large is beginning to see the improbability of keeping promises such as these is evident from the following editorial comment from the *Beaumont, Texas, Journal*:

"There may be some useful publicity value in plans made by a New York magician to await the return of Howard Thurston, the magician who died recently, but what happens or fails to happen to the little idol in the glass case to which Thurston promised to return after death and shatter, will be of scant value in telling his survivors anything about Mr. Thurston.

"If the ethereal remains of the gentleman were to fail to ram an astral fist through the glass case, the failure would prove nothing except that the shade of Mr. Thurston could not keep an extremely rash promise. And if the case should be broken, who can say with certainty but that a sudden change in temperature had split the glass, or one of those vagrant electrical rays which seem to permeate the atmosphere, or an involuntary jerk of the arm of the gentleman who dozed while watching for the miracle, was responsible for the crash?" (From *The Nationalist Spiritualist*, Chicago).

London Spiritualist Alliance and The Quest Club.

16 Queensberry Place, London, S.W.7

DEMONSTRATION OF CLAIRVOYANCE

by

Mr. GEORGE DAISLEY

TO-NIGHT

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 furnished for the purpose.

Telephone - - Kensington 3292/3

RECORDS OF EVIDENTIAL PROXY SITTINGS

HELEN ALEX: DALLAS

AS the valuable work of Miss Nea Walker has brought the importance of proxy sittings into further prominence, it may perhaps be of interest to readers of LIGHT if I place on record one of my own experiences of this nature. They were led up to by an incident which occurred about thirty years ago. I had attended a circle in which the Medium was Mr. Otto von Bourg, at which the following experiment was carried out.

Each person present was asked to write a question on a scrap of paper, and Mr. von Bourg said he would try to answer it without looking at it. In order to preclude telepathy, I wrote a question of which I did not know the correct answer. It was appropriately answered, and eventually proved to be correct.

Then the Medium continued: "There will be an appointment for you in about a month, you will be going out of town, but you must put it off for a day or two; it is important." This announcement was literally fulfilled, but it had nothing to do with my question.

The appointment was with a stranger who eventually introduced me to a friend of his in Canada who had suffered a severe bereavement by the death of his little daughter, Alice. I was able to help him by introducing to him the subject of Psychical Research and the evidence it affords of Survival. We continued to correspond at intervals and he became a valued friend.

AN APPEAL FOR HELP

In 1930, he wrote appealing to me for help for his step-daughter, whose husband had died suddenly during her enforced absence from her home to attend her dying mother. I had never heard anything about her or her husband, and it did not seem to me very probable that I should be able to help her, but I felt I must make the effort to do so. She was in great distress. I asked her step-father to tell her to write a few words to me giving her husband's name. I did not ask for any further information. She complied with my request; her note covered just over two sides of a small sheet of note paper. I then knew her own Christian name and surname and also her husband's name. She gave me no further details.

I knew *previously* that her mother had died and also her half-sister, Alice.

I wrote to Mrs. Brittain and asked her to come to see me. I told her, when she came, that I was wishing to get help for a widow, a lady who lived across the waters (I did not say what water); that I should not be able to tell her whether she was right or wrong in anything she might say, as I knew practically nothing about her.

Mrs. Brittain did not seem at all dismayed; she said she had succeeded before in like circumstances, and I gathered that she thought she would succeed because she was conscious that "the lady's father" was helping.

I made careful notes of what was said and sent them to Canada. I will here transcribe the most important items with the comments of the widow, Mrs. Curtis (pseudonym). I omit several personal remarks too intimate to quote in print; also a few unverified or incorrect statements:—

MRS. BRITTAİN (controlled by Belle): We shall be able to help the lady, because her father in spirit-world has met her husband. Perhaps she would not remember him.

COMMENT BY MRS. CURTIS: I was only a few months old when my father died so I do *not* remember him.

MRS. B.: Nona or Nonie.

COMMENT: Not quite right, but very nearly my husband's pet name for me.

MRS. B.: John or James, Herbert.

COMMENT: James was my father's name. The other means nothing to me.

MRS. B.: Another man over there who loves her, rather tall, thin, white face, dark hair, beard and side-whiskers, rather young, he is helping.

COMMENT: Might be my father, the description is correct.

Mrs. Brittain then gradually spelt Mrs. C's Christian name, a word of five letters (known to me of course).

MRS. B.: Before death he was rushed and worried and also preparing for Christmas.

COMMENT: This is absolutely correct.

MRS. B.: He speaks of a car accident.

COMMENT: He had a new car, bought just two weeks before he passed over. No accident, but strangely enough just before he died he spoke of the car.

MRS. B.: Henry sends his love.

COMMENT: Often during the summer when my husband wrote to me he said, "Henry sends his love," meaning by Henry, my little canary.

MRS. B.: He spoke like a professor.

(I did not know what that meant and I said so in my note).

COMMENT: I think I know—a joke between us.

MRS. B.: He was in another country when he passed.

COMMENT: Yes, if that means he and I were not in the same country at the time.

MRS. B.: He says she felt his nearness before she knew he had gone.

COMMENT: Yes, I did.

MRS. B.: He thought of her and tried to be near her. She had a premonition.

COMMENT: I felt very strongly that he did. I thought I saw him even just before they told me he had gone. I had a premonition all that summer that I would not see him again.

MRS. B.: Water—there was water in his vision.

COMMENT: I understand this, another proof he was near me when he passed.

MRS. B.: Her mother has met him. Her mother's death was expected. She had been ill a long time. He was full of life.

COMMENT: Quite true.

Mrs. C. and her step-father were so greatly impressed by the result of this experiment that she asked me to have another proxy sitting for her; and she wrote down three or four questions which she would like to have answered before giving the result of this second attempt. I will say at once that most of the questions were not answered.

March 10th, 1931.

MRS. BRITTAİN: At the outset she said she saw a big brown dog with thick hair.

MRS. CURTIS first said that the description was correct, except that the dog had white hair. She had never seen this dog, but had seen a picture of it and thought it was white; she learned later, however, that it was brown.

MRS. B.: He has some persons with him that he can take care of—and she has some with her.

COMMENT: He would be happier taking care of people, he did that all his life. I have my father and sister.

MRS. B.: He has met a sister-in-law or a sister, called Alice, and Sarah—He is taking care of them.

COMMENT: My sister Alice, who passed on 27 years ago. Sarah, his mother, who died 8 years ago. He was very fond of her.

(I then remarked that I knew Mrs. C. wanted to ask about Alice).

MRS. B.: He was glad to meet her. Is his name Fred? Alice said Freddie to him.

COMMENT: We called him Fred generally, sometimes Freddie. Alice always called him Freddie.

(Continued on next page).

MRS. B. : He is a very happy spirit because his wife talks to him.

COMMENT : I do talk to him in my heart every day.

MRS. B. : Someone belonging to her called William.

COMMENT : My Uncle William, such a dear old gentleman.

MRS. B. : He is a very nice looking man ; but he did not look well. He was healthy but delicate.

COMMENT : Perfectly true.

(I here omit a few loving personal remarks. The comment of Mrs. C. was : "He used to say those very words when he was here," and again "*He has told me that in exactly those words hundreds of times.*")

MRS. B. : Did she tell you in her letter that it is her birthday?

COMMENT : I had asked for the sitting to be on March 11th, but did not say it was my birthday.

(I remarked "No," but I guessed that it might be an anniversary.)

MRS. B. : He has brought her beautiful roses for her birthday.

COMMENT : He always gave me red roses on my birthday.

MRS. B. : There is a day in February too.

COMMENT : He always remembered Feb. 14th, and sent me a valentine—generally flowers.

MRS. B. : His mission is to heal people. He would like to be a doctor, I think. Anyhow he was a man whom everyone felt the better for meeting.

COMMENT : Not a doctor, but was sorry he had not been one, loved to take care of people, and when he came into any room he seemed to bring a feeling of cheer and well-being.

MRS. B. : There is a nice elderly man who is very good to her. (This was known to me).

COMMENT : My beloved step-father.

MRS. B. : Henry—Dot or Dollie or Doris.

COMMENT : The little canary we both made so much of, little Henry. He used to call dear little Alice "Mother Dollie."

MRS. B. : He has shown me strange flowers like asters.

COMMENT : When we were married, the Church was decorated with pink and white asters, and every anniversary of the day, if possible, he bought me asters.

MRS. B. : Please ask her to be careful to lock up something, a drawer under a desk, when she goes out ; not be careless about private things—a drawer under the desk.

COMMENT : This is very remarkable. I have such a desk and there are private and important things in a drawer under the desk ! We used to keep the drawer locked.

MRS. B. : He speaks of a picture she has had framed. He is glad : he knows she has had it done ; he feels proud, he says.

COMMENT : This is so true. I had his photograph framed and hung over his desk in his office. He was greatly loved by the firm that employed him and by those he employed, and I thought his picture there would be a memorial.

MRS. B. : He sends his love to step-father. He has not been well lately.

COMMENT : We did not know at the time that father was not well ; soon after these notes, he developed the illness which caused his death in Feb., 1932.

This brought the sitting to a close, except one word repeated twice, "Orange—oranges." This seemed to me so irrelevant that for a moment I hesitated to record it. Happily I did record it.

Mrs. C's comment was as follows : These two words seem the most evidential in either of the two sittings. They seemed unimportant to Miss D. and they seemed the same to me at first, until it came to me in a flash. I met my husband at a place called "Orange." He was born in East Orange, or at least lived there from early childhood, therefore the "oranges." Later, my

(Continued at foot of next column).

THE "CONFRATERNITY" CARAVAN CAMPAIGN

MRS. ST. CLAIR STOBART, speaking at the Spiritualist Community Service at the Grottrian Hall, London, on Sunday evening, gave some particulars regarding the recent "Confraternity" caravan campaign in the Western Counties, which had, she said, been very successful.

Meetings had been held at Clifton, Bristol, Fairy Cross (near Bideford), Bridgwater, Exeter, Exmouth (two), Teignmouth, Dawlish, Newton Abbott, Paignton and Devonport. The meetings were held in halls and churches, the caravan serving as her home. Parking-places had been interesting in their variety—including the yard of a hotel, an open field, a private garden behind a garage, and finally in a temporarily disused fair-ground, and the fair-vans arrived on the night before she left, so that they were all mixed up.

Mrs. Stobart said she was not going to discuss the work of the "Confraternity," but she wished to reassure those Spiritualists who might be doubtful as to the desirability of spending time persuading the Churches to absorb (not monopolise) Spiritualism, and those who were dogma-shy that, provided the Clergy would teach Survival as a fact which can be proved rather than as an article of faith, a fact which it is legitimate and desirable to demonstrate, they need not fear anything else the Clergy might teach. Spiritualists had no monopoly of the reasoning faculty, and any beliefs incompatible with the truths of Spiritualism would gradually find their way into the lumber-room of discarded doctrines. Spiritualism cleared the mind of incompatibilities. Therefore, she said, concentrate on Survival, and its implications would follow as day followed night.

Mrs. Stobart said she would give a fuller account of the caravan campaign at the "Confraternity" meeting to be held at the Grottrian Hall on Monday next, July 6th (see page 430).

(Continued from previous column).

dear husband was not well and we went to Florida for his health one winter and had a house in a place called "Orange City."

It may be profitable to consider what alternative theory might be suggested instead of the conclusion that the above record embodies communications from those in the Unseen Sphere. Provided my own honesty is accepted, presumably the only other hypothesis would be as follows :—

My sub-conscious mind was able to tap the contents of Mrs. C's subconscious mind and to select from it memories which would evidentially represent the personality of her husband. Mrs. Brittain could then read my subconscious mind and make the statements which I have noted down. In noting them, I had not the slightest impression that they had really been conveyed to her by myself. This intricate proceeding had apparently a subconscious motive *which was deceitful*. My subconscious mind seems to have sought to deceive Mrs. C. and to deceive my conscious mind so as to induce both to believe that Mrs. C's husband was communicating with her. One or two points selected from Mrs. C's subconscious mind were unknown to her conscious mind, e.g., the colour of the dog and her step-father's ill-health. We shall have to assume that she had derived these points subconsciously from someone who had seen the dog, or who had perceived that her father did not seem well.

This theory seems so absurd as to be hardly worth putting into words, but it is not entirely without adherents amongst those who refuse the obvious explanation.

(A continuation of this article will appear in next week's issue).

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

THE FELLOWSHIP OF FAITHS

Sir,—In the *Free Press* (London) for June is the definite statement that at the First Congress of the above held in Chicago in 1933 "the most popular and commended speaker was ex-Bishop Montgomery Brown, a professed Atheist, unfrocked for heresy by the Episcopal Church of America in 1924, and author of violently anti-Christian literature." A quotation is given from his speech published under the title of "Communism, the new Faith for a New World," as follows: "... In Russia, science has replaced supernaturalism, and religion is gradually being stamped out ... The new generation is being reared free from the old shackles of religious belief in God in the skies ... When the Gods have been banished from the skies and the Capitalists from the earth, then, and then only, will there be a real Fellowship of Faiths."

I would like to ask if all this is true? Obviously the answer must have much bearing upon our attitude towards the Fellowship.

H. ERNEST HUNT.

IS INCARNATION ESSENTIAL TO INDIVIDUALISE ?

Sir,—I was interested in the remark of Mr. Murton in his article in your issue of June 4th: "The theory given often in messages is that incarnation on earth is necessary for the individualising of the spirit; but here we are presented with the idea of an already existing individual spirit life, merely interrupted by a sojourn in mortal flesh." I have often wondered if the idea can be correct that incarnation is a necessity for individualising of the spirit, since in *More Spirit Teachings* (pages 24 and 25) a good deal is said of spirits who have never been incarnated, but who are certainly individuals. "In the case of the Christ, a high form of hitherto unincarnated spirit temporarily entered a body for the good of humanity ... Some of the largest views of Truth which have been poured into this Medium's mind have come from a spirit, 'the Revealer of Truth,' who has never been incarnated." Must we believe that the hierarchies of exalted spirit beings have all passed through incarnations on some planet?

Plymouth.

CORDELIA GRYLLE.

A REINCARNATION PROBLEM

Sir,—In reply to Mr. Evans' letter in your issue of June 18th, I suggest that the souls who came into incarnation at the beginning of man's life on earth have long ago finished their terrestrial experience and gone on to other spheres of life and knowledge. Those now in physical bodies show so many grades of development that it is easily conceivable that they did not all come into earth-life at the same time, but originated in subsequent outpourings of the spirit.

HILDA R. SHERMAN.

"PITY THE POOR CRABS"

Sir,—I have read with sympathy the letter addressed to you by "An Animal Lover," and published in your issue of June 18th. I would suggest that your correspondent writes to the R.S.P.C.A., in Jermyn Street, to whom I have telephoned, and received the information that they would at once post, on request, a copy of Professor Sinel's report on the cooking of shell-fish.

In the meantime I should like to assure your reader that, whilst my activity is restricted to the particular branch to which I have referred in my announcements, my interest covers the whole ethics of animal welfare (including *homo sapiens*!), but I think it is better to

direct an energy whole-heartedly and efficiently in one direction than to disperse it in small quanta in many directions.

One further assurance to your reader—I am a complete vegetarian.

MARJA.

Sir,—The merciful and correct way to prepare living crabs or lobsters for table use is to plunge them head first into a deep pan of fast-boiling salted water. Death is then instantaneous, and there is no pain and consequent screaming. I feel sure that the modern fishmonger and cook use this merciful method.

M.F.R.

Sir,—In answer to Sir W. Shakerley, I would like to assure him that boiling alive is the recognised method of cooking crabs, not an isolated case. To "A Crab Lover" I would say that the cries are not caused by either the air or water, but come from the poor creatures as they crawl about seeking some escape from the hellish torture to which they are subjected. As to being a mere man, I think his sarcasm is somewhat misplaced.

AN ANIMAL LOVER.

PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

Sir,—As the name implies, it means "to examine anew;" and, before any report and conclusions are published, it should be subjected to careful analysis, deduction and scientific inference, with a corporate expression of opinion. If the research superintendent of the Sheffield Society for Psychical Research thinks that other districts are looking to Sheffield as the leaders (page 398 of *LIGHT*), I venture to think that the procedure recently adopted there requires alteration. On page 409 of *LIGHT*, Mr. O. J. Wendlandt pens a disclaimer on the negative results of nine months' research with six Mediums, pointing out that the report was drawn up by one individual giving his own conclusions and opinions, coloured naturally by the personal equation, etc.

What a commentary on Psychical Research and its methods! It is most regrettable that reports followed by disclaimers are so often published regarding séances and individual Mediums. Surely, the time is ripe for a considered judgment to be passed and published by the responsible and accredited Council of a Society, and signed by its Secretary, and not by one subsidiary Committee's findings, no matter whether the results be positive or negative.

H. E. YERBURY, M.Inst.C.E., M.I.E.E.
Sandygate, Maidenhead.

A CHEMIST'S EXPERIMENTS

Sir,—I was much interested in the letter of Quentin C. A. Craufurd on the Reincarnation of animals. I did not know it was possible for wild birds, etc., to prove conclusively they can come back again and reanimate another body. I would certainly like to know more about this fascinating possibility. Also how one could observe this for oneself. I am intensely interested in the subject of animal survival and reincarnation.

Another line of investigation which has come to my attention recently regarding the incarnation of animals has been that of a Harrow Chemist, Mr. W. Morley Martin. In the laboratory he has made some amazing biological discoveries. By the isolation of protoplasm from inert mineral he claims he has provided the conditions for plants and animals to incarnate other than through the usual method of ovulation. He has thousands of photographs taken, showing the development of each incarnating life form. It is, of course, denied by official science that there is life in inert mineral. Mr. Martin, however, claims he can demonstrate the contrary.

Many scientists in America and on the Continent have examined his discoveries and have admitted the facts, though unwilling to make a pronouncement.

JAMES M. McLINTOCK.

TRANSITION OF A HEALER

MR. WILLIAM S. HENDRY

WE regret to announce to our readers the death of Mr. William S. Hendry, the well-known healer, who passed on Sunday, 28th June, at the age of seventy after a short illness. He was a brother of Mrs. Hewat McKenzie.

Mr. Hendry was the Director of a Nature Cure Sanatorium in Streatham, where many Spiritualists and others, broken in body and nerves, were restored to physical strength and comforted and encouraged to renew the battle of life; there, under Mr. Hendry's devoted care, associated with that of his sister-in-law, Mrs. Duncan, a natural clairvoyant-diagnoser and experienced nurse, souls as well as bodies were healed and ministered to. Mrs. Duncan passed on the day following Mr. Hendry, to the grief of many friends. The staff they gathered round them was often recruited from those who had been healed, and the spirit of "Lilyhurst" operated through their service.

Mr. Hendry's first contact with these matters was through Theosophy, in the days when Mrs. Besant returned to Glasgow to testify as to her change of view before her Rationalistic friends. He remained a devoted student of Eastern Mysticism, retranslating it for Western students and giving the fruit of his study to many classes and on Spiritualist, New Thought and Theosophical platforms. The need of proof of survival, on the passing of his young wife, led him to a study of Spiritualism, and he was for many years the Secretary of the Gourrock Spiritualist Society, extending the work and entertaining the visiting Mediums in his own home. Here he made contact with the healer, James MacBeth Bain, who encouraged him to develop healing powers, and later he was instrumental with Mr. MacBeth Bain in forming the "Brotherhood of Healers," which did excellent work in uniting and calling together in conference those engaged in this ministry. Later he removed to London, and for many years his fine magnetic healing powers, reinforced by impressional intuition as to the causes of sickness in his patients, made him a valued worker. When the British College of Psychic Science was established in 1920, Mr. Hewat McKenzie invited him to be the College healer, which position he held, combined with healing classes, for several years. Whomsoever he touched he left with a higher view of themselves, for the keynote of his healing was the Power within which heals, while he recognised and used the efficacy of that power on every plane, psychic, mental and spiritual.

Mr. Hendry was a peculiarly humble man as to his gifts, selfless and unambitious except to do all the good he could, and many to-day will mourn the loss of a very true friend. Of recent years he devoted himself to the instruction of Healing Groups; at the Spiritualist Community at the Grottrian Hall, he held such for many sessions, and at the British College he was conducting a group up to the time of his illness.

His classes on Meditation were remarkable for the spirit and power which lay behind them, and at the Llanberis Conference only a year ago his early morning group was always full. All humanitarian and human interests claimed his allegiance; he was at one time Secretary of an Anti-Vaccination Society in Scotland, and, in later life, found in the Adult School Movement an outlet for many aspects of his wide ranging thought, and in the New Thought movement he delighted to share in the work of the Rev. J. Bruce Wallace, Mr. Dimsdale-Stocker, Mr. Ernest Hunt and others.

To him all the movements which made for human enlightenment were moving towards the one goal, the realisation by the human spirit of its Divine origin and mission. A great lover of the poets, he had a most retentive memory, and often delighted his students with the beauty and aptness of his quotations. But it was his own proof of the Unseen Powers and his confidence

(Continued at foot of next column).

SUBCONSCIOUS MIND

By H. ERNEST HUNT

XXI.—TRANCE STATES

WE do not know as much as we ought about trance conditions in psychic work, but our best line of approach is through hypnotic experiment. Here, trance is induced by artificial means and a sleep state follows, bearing many analogies to natural sleep, but differing from it in that a rapport is established between operator and subject. We observe that the development of this subconscious condition is accompanied by a corresponding receding of consciousness.

In the lighter stages of this sleep—and it hardly matters whether we call it sleep or trance—consciousness is present, and it does not cease at any given moment, but rather seems to sink into an unconsciousness by easy stages. In the preliminary phases there is a dual consciousness. One of Dr. Hack Tuke's subjects thus describes his feelings:—"I was not unconscious, but I seemed to exist in duplicate. My inner self appeared to be thoroughly alive to all that was going on, but made up its mind not to control or interfere with the acts of the outer self; and the unwillingness or inability of the inner self to control the outer seemed to increase the longer the condition was maintained." At a deeper stage he says:—"I should not like to say whether I was conscious of what I did, or no. I think I was somewhat." And at a stage still deeper:—"Here I appear to have been absolutely unconscious for some moments."

I have noted the record of an American flying man whose control wires got entangled when he was at a considerable height. The machine began to fall out of control. He tells us that he was at once fully conscious, trying hard to "right his ship," while at the same time his subconscious was serving him up a slow panorama of all his life's experiences—a very interesting example of dual consciousness. Mr. Sylvan Muldoon, in his *Projection of the Astral Body*, refers also to this double consciousness.

This trance state may also involve the seeming contradiction of a catalepsy, rigidity, insensibility, and a complete painlessness, combined with a high degree of supersensitiveness or hyperaesthesia. The explanation lies probably in the duality of mental action. So far as physical sensation is concerned the avenues are being closed down, but the supersensitiveness of the subconscious or the soul is being opened up to a corresponding degree.

In the trance state of mediumship, we find similar phenomena, and there are all degrees of somnolence from the slightest to the deepest; but practically always an element of consciousness is present, and the completely unconscious state is rare. There is this seeming duality of functioning, so that the one self hears what the other self is saying, perhaps as at a distance, or with a kindred sensation to that of seeing through the wrong end of a telescope. There is also the same inability or unwillingness to interfere with or to control the actions of the second self. This again is the dissociation between the two minds, and those who are most capable of this separation of the element of self provide the best Mediums for this type of work.

Some Mediums have questioned their own genuineness from the fact that, in degree, they know what is going on, and from their inability to determine how far they are responsible for what they say. This introspection, while very praiseworthy from the standpoint of integrity, is clearly likely to interfere with the process of their mediumship. The essence of the process is non-interference by the consciousness, and this element of self-consciousness must be kept in abeyance to allow the subconscious capacities to do their best work.

(Continued from previous column).

in their co-operation, which always nerved his healing hand and the healing word he spoke to thousands, and we are all the poorer for his passing.

Light

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EDITOR GEORGE H. LETHAM

As We See It

B.B.C. AND SPIRITUALISM

WE are not surprised that—acting on the advice of its Religious Advisory Committee—the B.B.C. refused to add the Spiritualists' National Union to the list of bodies authorised to broadcast religious services on Sunday evenings. Constituted as it is, the Religious Advisory Committee could not be expected to do other than it has done. Having ruled that the services of Unitarians (who claim to be Christians) could not be included, it was hopeless to expect the Committee to sanction the broadcasting of Spiritualist services.

Yet the S.N.U. have performed a public service in making their application, and in drawing from the Committee a considered statement of the reasons why the application could not be granted—these reasons being set out in the correspondence published in LIGHT this week.

As this correspondence shows, the application was based on the claim that the S.N.U. is a religious body, and that the religion accepted and practised by its members and Churches is so distinctive as to entitle the Union to a place on the broadcasting list.

The reason given for refusal was that: "Before a request for an evening service is granted, the Committee shall have satisfied itself that the teaching of the applying body is such as can be said to be in the main stream of Christian tradition." To this, the Committee added—"Inasmuch as discrimination of some kind is absolutely necessary, this would seem an obvious condition to lay down in a country with many centuries of Christianity behind it and still largely Christian in sentiment and belief."

As we see it, this is quite a reasonable line for the Committee to take. Its function is to arrange for Christian services; the S.N.U. does not claim to be a Christian body (much less to be a body in "the main stream" of Christianity), but only that its Seven Principles are not contrary to "Christian tradition." Therefore, refusal was certain—although it should be noted, refusal in this instance applies only to Sunday evening services.

In the circumstances, we do not think the members and Churches of the S.N.U. need feel any particular sense of grievance or ill-will against the Committee, which did only what it was expected to do. If and when the range from which Sunday evening services are selected is widened, so as to include bodies not claiming

(Continued at foot of next column).

THERE IS NO DEATH

Rev. Wm. R. WOODS, Canada

"OH, how I hate him." It was of Death a young father thus spoke. His little son, his first-born, after weeks of illness had gone out from the home circle and they were left desolate. The father's heart was filled with bitterness. Death, a dark and terrible entity (as human thought had come to personify it) had come in and trampled upon their love and carried off into the dread unknown the very light of their lives. And this was the father's word.

Could he have seen that their little darling, for whom they could do nothing more, had been received by the kindly hands of wise and gentle ministrants into another love circle, safe from all the rough winds of the earth-sphere, protected as even their home-love could not protect him, and was being lovingly cared for and given fuller opportunity than earth could afford for effective training and self-development, the word might not have been spoken. Could he have known that after but a few years of separation his son would be his again, fully grown, nobly developed, trained for service, a worthy servant of that higher plane to which he had been advanced, it may be that he would have been enabled to say, "It is well."

"Oh, how I fear Him," might well be the words in which many even to-day would express their attitude toward the imagined "entity" of death. For it is true that the apprehension of his coming, the fear of that "last bitter hour" and all its concomitants, and all the unlighted mystery of that which lies beyond still keeps many "all their life-time subject to bondage."

Slow indeed have we been to accept the teaching of the Christ who came to bring life and immortality to light. Confronted Himself under circumstances of unparalleled awfulness with the "hour and article" of death, He gave calm assurance to another, who was going the same dark way, that ere the day was ended they would meet in another realm of being. Death was for both simply a passing out of the physical body and a taking up of life beyond the body—a transition.

Our personification of death as "the grim reaper," the "king of terrors," the "last enemy," is utterly out of relationship to truth, and has helped to fasten on the human mind the fetters of a wholly baseless fear, a dread that is essentially superstitious as well as foolish and harmful, and that does deep discredit to the faith of the Christian. Death has never been what the common thought of mankind has made it. It is the natural and necessary transition from the first stage of being to the next advancing stage. It is not nothingness, nor unconsciousness, nor sleep. It is the passing through a doorway into a new state of life.

Jesus taught the continuance of conscious existence. For Him the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob was not the God of the dead (that is, they were not "dead" in the sense of being unconscious or non-existent) but of the living; and on the Mount two from that realm of the living came and held converse with Him. For the Apostle, to depart was a thing to be desired, and "far better" than to remain. Surely the time is long overdue when believers in Jesus Christ should cast aside the foolish fear of the hour of change and stand strong, confident and expectant in the vital faith of a spiritual being created to endure.

(Continued from previous column).

to be "in the main stream of Christian tradition," the position will be different, and the S.N.U. could apply again.

Meanwhile, it should be remembered that there are many Spiritualists who do not regard Spiritualism as their religion, and who could not, therefore, give their unconditional support to the S.N.U. claim.

LOOKING ROUND THE WORLD

WORLD CONGRESS OF FAITHS

ALTHOUGH no special place has been allotted to them, Spiritualists will be deeply interested in the proceedings of the World Congress of Faiths, which begins in London to-morrow (Friday, July 3rd) and continues for a fortnight. The Congress Sessions are to be held daily (July 6th to July 17th) in the Great Hall of University College, Gower Street, W.C.1; and a series of public meetings are to be held in the Queen's Hall (July 3rd, 6th, 9th and 17th) at which "The Supreme Spiritual Ideal" will be discussed by Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist and Muslim speakers.

Anglican and Free Church leaders are to take a prominent part in the gatherings; but, so far as can be gathered from the official programme, the Roman Catholics are not giving the Congress either help or blessing.

The object of the Congress is to find and emphasise the common essentials of religion; and as this is the constant aim of Spiritualism, we can extend to it our heartiest good wishes.

A "TALKING DOG"

It has often been said by visitors from other countries that England is the paradise of animals; and perhaps there is no country that makes such real friends of its pets. Nevertheless, it is in Germany and France that such persistent attention is paid, and so much time and research devoted to the study of so-called "Talking Animals"—generally dogs.

Psychica (Paris) has a long account of a visit paid by Professor H. Weitz to "Bessy," a "Talking" Airedale, in Bavaria. By means of a code of either barks or pats, this dog has been trained by her mistress to give answers to simple sums, to give the correct number of visitors present, to indicate how many of them wear glasses, to tell the time on a clockface with movable hands, to read colours, etc., etc.

One is glad to read that, in all these cases, the animal performers appear to enjoy exhibiting their prowess.

MAGNETIC HEALING

In *Psychica*, M. Pierre Borderieux stresses the growing fame of M. Théo Matthys, a well-known Healer at Gand, who has just published a text-book on the art of Magnetic Healing. He deals with telluric, intrastral and human radiation, and writes that for over 200 years the knowledge of them "has been hammering at the gate of science, which steadily refuses to open." "Human magnetic power," he says, "is a force with which we are all of us endowed; some of us with an excess, and this we should learn to pass on to those who suffer from a lack of it."

Another Healer, M. Georges Lakhovsky, writes: "A Magnetic Healer emits radiations of varying wavelengths, corresponding to those of the various human tissues. These radiations from the Healer cause cells which have ceased to oscillate, or where the oscillation has become feeble, to recover their normal and healthy rate of vibration."

MRS. ANNIE BRITAIN'S BOOK

In a book entitled *'Twixt Earth and Heaven* (Riders, 5/- net), published to-day, Mrs. Annie Brittain, the well-known Medium, describes her psychic experiences.

In a brief Foreword, Sir Oliver Lodge says: "I commend this effort of Mrs. Brittain to give a simple, unbiased account of her early experiences and the training that she had to go through on the way to becoming a trustworthy Medium. I have had sufficient experience of Mrs. Brittain's powers to know that, although she is not always at her best, she has a genuine faculty of perception, and has been able to give some remarkable evidence."

A hasty look through the book shows that it contains much that is interesting.

TESTING CLAIRVOYANCE

MR. GEORGE DAISLEY, who is to take the principal part in an interesting experiment at L.S.A. headquarters to-night (at 8.15), is one of the younger generation of clairvoyant Mediums, and one of the most successful in the important work of obtaining convincing evidence of Survival. He is not yet so well known as he will be, either in London or in what the Londoner calls "the Provinces," but he has already established for himself a reputation for good platform work, free from any form of sensationalism.

At the L.S.A. to-night, a verbatim short-hand note will be taken of all that Mr. Daisley says in the process of giving clairvoyant descriptions and messages, and also of all that is said by those to whom the messages are directed. Then recipients of the messages will be provided with typed transcripts and be given the opportunity of commenting (favourably or otherwise).

When a similar experiment was carried through recently with Mrs. Helen Hughes as Medium, the comments (as published in *LIGHT* of June 11th) indicated a high level of evidence; and there is every reason to expect a like result with Mr. Daisley.

A PREDICTION VERIFIED

Capt. F. McDermott, F.R.G.S., who delighted his audience at the British College of Psychic Science (Wednesday, June 24th) with his lantern lecture on Burmah, "The Land of a Million Buddhas," began by telling a story which can quite justifiably be put forward as still another demonstration of the fact that future events can sometimes be accurately foretold.

He attended a meeting at the College on June 3rd, he said, when Mr. George Swift gave a demonstration of "aura reading." Mr. Swift asked him if he had any expectation of returning to India, and Capt. McDermott said he had not. "Nevertheless," said Mr. Swift, "there are clear indications that you will return before long."

Capt. McDermott said that when he received this prediction he had no expectation whatever of going to India; but the opportunity had since been given to him of going there by air, and he was going very soon.

AMERICAN "CAMP" SEASON OPENS

"Camp" meetings are fairly common amongst religious bodies in this country, but, so far, Spiritualists have not adopted the idea to any considerable extent. In America it is different. There, the "camp" assemblies are amongst the most important events of the year, and that held at Lily Dale, New York State, claims to be the largest and most important.

The Lily Dale assembly opens to-morrow (Friday, July 3rd), and it is expected that over 2,000 people will spend the whole or part of their holidays there, listening to addresses, taking part in "message-services," and sharing in various social activities. Amongst the lecturers announced is Dr. A. J. McIvor Tyndall, whose visit to this country (which included addresses at Queen's Hall, London, and elsewhere) last year, is still remembered. Mr. Horace S. Hambling ("Moon Trail") is also given a prominent place in the list. The "camp" goes on for two months.

THE FUNCTIONS OF LIFE

Next week we will publish the first of a series of six articles on "The Functions of Life," specially written for *LIGHT* by Mr. Stanley De Brath. In these articles, Mr. De Brath traces the relationship existing between science, religion and the facts and ideals of modern Spiritualism, and emphasises the conclusions arising from the study. Phenomena by themselves, he argues, cannot give conclusive proofs of Survival—consistency with all branches of knowledge is the final test. And he shows that this can be obtained. Don't miss these articles, and tell your friends about them.

THE B.B.C. AND SPIRITUALISM

REASONS FOR REFUSING TO PERMIT SUNDAY SERVICE BROADCAST

WE announced briefly last week that the B.B.C. had finally refused the request of the Spiritualists' National Union to broadcast a Sunday evening service. The correspondence between the S.N.U. and the B.B.C. was in the following terms:—

From the S.N.U. to the Chairman of the Central Religious Advisory Committee, B.B.C., 3rd March, 1936.

Dear Sir,—In support of our frequent appeals to your Committee to arrange for the broadcast of a Religious Service by our denomination, we ask you to give consideration to the following points.

The National Council has affiliated to it, over 500 Churches in Great Britain in each of which a purely religious service is held at least once every Sunday, while in the majority, two and sometimes three services are held every Sunday.

In addition to these services, there are at least twice as many more meeting places in which such services are regularly held each Sunday, but which are not affiliated to this Union. For your information, we attach specimens of typical religious services, these being the programmes actually used in the Churches named on recent Sundays. The normal length of these services is usually about 1½ to 1¾ hours, but there would be no difficulty whatever in arranging a service to suit time available on a Sunday evening.

In support of our claims to be treated as other Non-conformist denominations, may we draw your attention to the following facts:—

(1). The basis of membership of our Churches is the signed avowal of belief in the Seven Principles of Spiritualism as follows:—The Fatherhood of God; the Brotherhood of Man; the Communion of Spirits and the Ministry of Angels; Survival of Man beyond physical death; Personal Responsibility; Compensation and Retribution here or hereafter for all the good and evil deeds done on earth; Eternal Progress open to every Human Soul.

(2). Over 300 of the Churches affiliated to the Union are registered as places of Public Worship, and over 80 of them are registered for the Solemnisation of Marriages, such being conducted by recognised workers in the Spiritualist Movement.

(3). The Passport Office annually accepts from us a list of Spiritualist pastors qualified to sign declarations of applicants for passports.

(4). Our Churches are exempt from both local rates and taxes, while their incomes from invested funds are exempt from Income Tax.

(5). We issue our own Hymn Book, a copy of which we enclose herewith.

(6). We enclose a copy of our Model Rules and copies of our Church Application Form and Subscribing Members' Application Form.

(7). Several of our Churches have full-time pastors attached performing all the work usually implied in such term, but where such full-time pastors are not employed, this work is fully covered by a corps of itinerant workers, supplemented by the Church officials, visiting the sick in their homes and hospitals. Our Church officials are accorded similar facilities to those given to other religious bodies by hospital administrations, and in many towns are represented on the hospital committees. Many of our Churches have their own benevolent funds, and among them maintain a National Fund for the Assistance of our aged workers.

We are well aware that, to a limited number of people, Spiritualism merely represents the study of psychic phenomena from a purely scientific point of view. To an even more limited and uninformed section of the public, Spiritualism is regarded as more or less synonymous with fortune-telling activities. There are

also a considerable number of religious people who regard Spiritualism as a valuable adjunct to their religious beliefs. We speak for a large and ever-growing body of sincere people who accept Spiritualism as their religion.

As citizens of a Country in which religious equality is rightly regarded as the birthright of every citizen, we ask that you acknowledge and give effect to this position. May we draw your attention in this connection to the remarks of Lord Hewart, the Lord Chief Justice, in his summing-up in a case in July, 1935, in which this Union was awarded £1500 damages for libel.

" How far Spiritualism should, or should not, adopt the tenets of the Christian Religion, and those topics, whatever they are, are better discussed in the bracing air at a conference in Blackpool. You and I are not concerned with them; nor is it right to look with something like scorn upon the whole theory or practice of Spiritualism. We are told that it is a religion. There is no credit in being tolerant about one's own religion. Toleration only begins when you have a Company for the purpose of advocating and protecting the doctrines of this religion. They are entitled, are they not; to fair play? They ask for no more, they ought to have no less."

We need not assure you that in making arrangements which may arise from this letter for broadcasting one of our services, we shall be most happy to co-operate.—Yours faithfully,

(Signed) J. B. McINDOE, *President.*

FRANK T. HARRIS, *General Secretary.*

64a, Bridge Street,
Deansgate, Manchester 3.

From the B.B.C. Religious Advisory Committee to Mr. F. T. Harris, Secretary of the S.N.U., 6th March, 1936.

Dear Sir,—Your letter of March 3rd was read by the Chairman of our Central Religious Advisory Committee to the members of that Committee at their half-yearly meeting yesterday. I am asked to state that, after full consideration, the Committee felt unable to advise the Corporation that a Spiritualist service should be included among the religious services broadcast on Sunday evenings.

You will, we are sure, understand that the number of requests to broadcast services and meetings which we receive from various movements and societies is very large; and that the Committee has had to lay down certain principles by which it is guided in granting or refusing these requests. The most important of these principles is that, before a request for an evening service is granted, the Committee shall have satisfied itself that the teaching of the applying body is such as can be said to be in the main stream of the Christian tradition. Inasmuch as discrimination of some kind is absolutely necessary, this would seem an obvious condition to lay down in a country with many centuries of Christianity behind it, and still largely Christian in sentiment and belief.

I am asked to point out that a perusal of your hymn book suggests that it would not be possible to bring the services of your Union within the terms of this condition. It surely may be assumed that—however elastic an interpretation be given to the principle—the name of Christ would come somehow and somewhere into a Christian message; whereas it appears not only that His name hardly (if ever) occurs in your hymn book, but that it has been deliberately excised (where it occurs in the originals) from those hymns in your book which are obviously founded upon hymns in well-known collections, something else being substituted for it. It may, of course, be that this is an irrelevant issue, as perhaps your Union would make no such claim as that to which I have referred. In either case I fear that the

decision of the Committee must be the same.—Yours faithfully, (Signed) F. A. IREMONGER (Rev.), *Director of Religion*.

From the S.N.U. to the Director of Religion, B.B.C., 20th April, 1936.

Dear Sir,—Your letter of March 6th, refusing to accede to our request for a broadcast Spiritualist Service, was received by my National Council with considerable regret and surprise.

We note your comments on the large number of requests received for broadcast religious services, but we suggest that the first principle that should be kept in view by an impartially administered Public Corporation should be the granting of these requests with some regard for the number of listeners who would thereby feel that their religious views were having fair consideration.

It cannot be denied that there are an enormous number of people who would welcome the broadcast of a Spiritualist Service, and in view of the preponderating number of the services which are allocated to Church of England and Roman Catholic denominations, we regret that we cannot regard this as an impartial or fair allocation, in view of your refusal to allow even an occasional Spiritualist Service to be broadcast.

We suggest that the only result of such a restrictive policy will be the very rapid increase of the already considerable opinion that religious broadcasts should be discontinued.

We note that the ostensible reason for this latest refusal is that, in your opinion, our teaching is "not in the main stream of Christian tradition." Hitherto we have not encountered this somewhat cryptic phrase, and would much appreciate a precise definition of it.

Our teachings are based, as you have already been informed, on the following Principles:—The Fatherhood of God; the Brotherhood of Man; the Communion of Spirits and the Ministry of Angels; Survival of Man beyond physical death; personal Responsibility; compensation and Retribution here or hereafter for all the good and evil deeds done on earth; Eternal Progress open to every Human Soul.

We should be interested to learn which, if any, contravenes the "Christian Tradition" referred to, as we were under the impression that most of them were taught by the various denominations claiming to be Christian.

We feel that we cannot accept your reply as concluding this matter, and we must continue to press, either through your Committee, or otherwise, for a more satisfactory outcome to our request.—Yours faithfully, (Signed) FRANK T. HARRIS.

From the Director of Religion, B.B.C. to Mr. F.T. Harris, Secretary of S.N.U., 24th April, 1936.

Dear Sir,—Thank you for your letter of April 20th. We do not think there is anything which we can usefully add to our letter of the 6th March, except to suggest that the last paragraph of our letter of March 6th is relevant to the meaning of the "cryptic phrase" to which you refer.—Believe me, yours faithfully, (Signed) F. A. IREMONGER, *Director of Religion, B.B.C.*

From the S.N.U. to the Governors of the British Broadcasting Corporation, 15th May, 1936.

Dear Sir,—We enclose herewith copies of correspondence between this Union and the Religious Advisory Committee of the British Broadcasting Corporation, dated 3rd March and 20th April and 6th March and 24th April.

This correspondence marks the culmination of a long series of requests made by ourselves, and to our knowledge, also made by a large number of Spiritualist churches and organisations.

We feel that in requesting that Spiritualistic religious services should be broadcast, we are speaking for a very

large body of listeners who would cordially welcome their inclusion in the broadcasting programme.

We must express our profound dissatisfaction with the refusal of the Religious Advisory Committee to arrange for an occasional broadcast of the kind. We are convinced that the restriction of such broadcasts to those whom the Religious Advisory Committee regards as being "in the main stream of Christian tradition" is wholly at variance with enlightened public opinion to-day. Put in plain language, it seems to us that the policy of the Religious Advisory Committee is to restrict religious broadcasts to the denominations to which the members of the Committee themselves belong, or to denominations closely akin to them.

We suggest that this policy means promulgation of sectarianism rather than of religion and is more in keeping with the atmosphere of the '50's and '60's of the last century, than with public opinion of to-day.

Wrangling over theological dogmas, largely regarded as obsolete, seemed to be an important phase of religious activity then. These same dogmas now seem merely to differentiate the various Christian sects.

We submit that there is a large and ever-growing public to-day who are not interested in the conflicting views of Christianity, but who are really interested in the intelligent presentation of these fundamental truths which are common to all religions, from standpoints other than those of sectarian Christianity.

It is as members of this public that we appeal to you to initiate a more liberal policy in regard to religious broadcasts. We submit that these should be truly representative of all phases of religious thought, and that they should be allocated to the different religious bodies with some regard to the numbers of their adherents. We appeal to you to give impartial consideration to the facts we have placed before you with confident anticipation that you will take steps to remedy what we, in common with a large body of listeners, regard as an injustice.

A copy of this correspondence is being sent to Sir John Reith and the other Governors of the British Broadcasting Corporation.—Yours faithfully, (Signed) FRANK T. HARRIS.

From the British Broadcasting Corporation to Mr. Frank T. Harris, General Secretary, S.N.U., 28th May, 1936.

Dear Sir,—I am instructed by the Chairman to inform you that the request contained in your letter of 15th May, to which an acknowledgment was sent on the 19th, was given consideration by the Board of Governors at their meeting yesterday. The Governors regret, however, that they see no reason to alter the decision arrived at on the advice of the Central Religious Advisory Committee, and conveyed to you on the letter of 6th March from the Director of Religion.—Yours faithfully, (Signed) J. STANLEY, *For Clerk to the Board*.

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(See special announcement, page 419).

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THE TALKING OAK

By W. H. EVANS

TENNYSON wrote a poem with this title, but his oak's conversation was just small-talk, the sort of things one may imagine. My talk with the Oak was different. Of course, you may say that I imagined it, or dreamed it, that I fell asleep in my chair in the warm sun and wove into some semblance of order the queer fantasies of my subconscious self. What a blessed refuge the subconscious is for the would-be matter-of-fact people! But I am getting as garrulous as Tennyson's Oak.

Date, June 14th. Time, Sunday morning. Place, my garden, myself seated in a chair, reading. I feel a curious merging with my surroundings, but for a time ignore it. Then I pause and look and, so doing, find I am seeing with "other eyes." The little grass plot dignified as lawn is in a state of movement. Wind perhaps, though at the moment the air was still. Then over it rippled a silvery blue light, very beautiful to behold. It was as if every grass-blade was sheathed in it. This light rose about four inches above the grass and thinned out into a blue haze and was lost in the air. A shiver passed through me and I felt myself merging into my surroundings and in some way becoming a part of the plants about me. Their energy passed into me and filled me with the ecstasy of growth. I never realised before what a joy there was in growing! It gave a wonderful sense of aliveness.

Beneath the ground I felt that root communicated with root. All was held in a common bond, a unity of life and being. Can plants talk with one another? Have they any means of passing on impressions of their conditions and surroundings? I verily *felt* they had, and in some mysterious way I was aware of it, though I could not interpret, not then.

It was the Oak just outside the garden who called. Yes, it did. I *felt* the call. I saw that it was robed in a

sheet of silvery blue that streamed up through and around it so that it was a "pillar of light," glowing with iridescent loveliness. And from it came an impression, not a voice, but a telepathic message and I knew it—or should I say he?—was speaking to me. He said:

"You see a little of my real self. We are spirits too. The life that animates us is from the same source as yours. We live by feeling, yet we have a sense of knowing. Shall I say a dim perception—that is, dim according to your standards? But we do sense things and convey what we sense to one another. We talk through our roots as well as feed through them. Mother Earth is tremulous with numberless thrills of feeling, a network of nerves, electric and pulsing with energy. Earth is not dead and inert as you think when you dig and delve; she knows and feels and registers everything. Our life and the life of all upon her bosom, in the sea and air, all is knit into a unity. It is fundamental, and you are having just a little peep. I wonder if you understand it?"

I said mentally: "Not quite, but I remember once feeling it."

"Oh, did you," he replied, "Tell me."

"Well, it wasn't much, but once I stood by a tree and, being in the mood, I placed my hand on it and felt its life thrill through me. For a few moments I was the tree."

"Then you ought to be able to understand a little. See," and the shimmering light seemed to bend down to earth as indicating its roots. "See how the fire streams through the ground to that comrade the Ash over there? We are not lonely; not we. At night, why we have glorious times when Mother Earth sends out her secret power and vivifies us."

"I thought," said I, "it was the Sun who vivified you."

"Oh, he plays the great part. Kisses Mother Earth and holds her in his everlasting embrace. He never lets go. Warm and bright and glowing with love, he holds his worlds and fertilises them with power. Pours into them their energy from which we and you derive physical sustenance, and even spiritual power."

"That's interesting," I said. "Spiritual power. How?"

There was a pause and I felt as if some being in that silvery blue flame was regarding me. Then he went on: "So much like a man. How? Wishes to know and keeps looking at the outside of things. Get behind, get beneath, get inside them, and *see*. Your sun, what is it but the body of Light? The body of Light. Cannot you grasp—all is Light? What is the world, what are we but condensed Light, coagulated so to speak? Your job and mine is to liberate our Light. Hold that."

I looked at the Oak. What wisdom in a few words. So we are compacted of Light; one with the essence of things; one with the Eternal Light!

The Oak went on. "The Light is imprisoned in The Word. It waits to be freed."

Here I broke in, "How can that be?" Again I had a sense as if the Pillar of Light was looking into me. Then:

"Creation is God's spoken Word. It is divine, but the Word limits and defines, and that imprisons. Make the form as diaphanous as you will, it is still a veil. No one can gaze upon the disrobed Light, though all are of it. You must think about it, and one day we may talk again. Now go back."

There came a feeling of being shut in. The silvery fire faded, the garden resumed its ordinary aspect, and the Oak stood stolid except for the waving of its leaves in the morning breeze.

You will never enjoy the world aright till the sea itself floweth in your veins, till you are clothed with the heavens and crowned with the stars.—THOMAS TRAHERNE.

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Monday.

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Tuesday. Mrs. Livingstone, by appointment.

Mrs. Helen Spiers, by appointment.

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

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ULYSSES AND THE SHADES

THE *Revue Spirite* recently reprinted an article by the young Spiritualist writer Maurice Viaud (who fell during the first year of the war), on the evocation of the dead amongst the Ancients. In it he says: "We may not altogether understand why Ulysses scattered flour, milk and honey on the ground, why he promised gifts and sacrifices to the Shades. To-day, such things may appear ridiculous to Spiritualists; nevertheless, up to a point there was a measure of justification for these practices.

"The spirits to whom these rituals of Ulysses would appeal, were those of grosser nature, such as cling by preference to all that most reminds them of their previous earthly existence. We can therefore understand that the sight and the smell of food, of meal and honey, and of wine, would be pleasing to them. That is why similar libations in ancient days formed the essential feature of the cult of the dead. This explains, too, why to remain unburied was regarded as the greatest misfortune to the dead, for thus the soul would remain in the environment of the corpse, in close attraction to the carnal and the material. Probably the Ancients knew nothing of the effect of post-mortem auto-suggestion on such spirits, but undoubtedly they knew of the persistence of earthly desires.

"Why, again, did Ulysses sacrifice rams? And why had they to be black rams? Here we are

(Continued at foot of next column).

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"The tiny white flowers of an arabis became a sea of human faces. I thought it an illusion created by spaces between the flowers, but no, some were serious, most were smiling, but all were intent on attracting my attention.

"My best point of concentration was a clarkia. In the sunshine the leaves became a soft transparent pink. This presently emitted a faint glow. Fascinated by the glorious colouring, I lost sight of everything else in the garden. Then came an amazing transformation. Moving in and out among the leaves were forms which recalled all I had ever read about gnomes and fairies. But never in any book have I seen such a variety of shapes and dresses. Although so very small, I saw every detail as clearly as though my Kilnascrene had suddenly become a powerful magnifying glass. Each sprite seemed to have specific work to do, and was busy about it as if nothing else in the world mattered.

"Gnomes and dwarfs were more particularly interested in trees, and were larger.

"Roses had an entirely different type of attendant to other flowers.

"One thing sent a pleasurable thrill through me. All were happy. Joy radiated from every one, and induced a corresponding reaction in me. I am now wondering if something of this effect is produced in all flower lovers who are quite unconscious of the fact that their loving interest is a joy to multitudes of intelligences of whose very existence we are ignorant.

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(Continued from previous column).

confronted with a somewhat curious, but by no means inexplicable, religious tradition. To the Greeks of Homer's day, the after-life was an unhappy existence (as indeed it is for very many spirits), the departed, as we know, forever regretting the loss of their games, of their wars, of the glorious sunlight. For them the after-life was represented as a dark and twilight existence; was it not in keeping, therefore, that the animals sacrificed to them should be black too?

L.S.A.

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