

# Light:

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PRICE TWOPENCE

## A BEAUTIFUL CEMETERY DESIGNER'S NEAR APPROXIMATION TO SPIRITUALIST IDEALS

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

READERS of LIGHT would, I think, like to learn about a most beautiful and unique cemetery which we had the pleasure of visiting in California, and which, perhaps unwittingly, seems to approximate more closely to the ideals of Spiritualism than any other we have seen in any part of the world. It is called Forest Lawn, and is situated at Glendale, a town a few miles from Los Angeles.

Before starting to describe it I must preface my remarks by quoting:

### THE BUILDER'S CREED.

"I believe in a Happy Eternal Life.

"I believe that those of us left behind should be glad in the certain belief that those gone before have entered into that Happier Life.

"I believe most of all in a Christ that smiles and loves you and me. I therefore know the cemeteries of to-day are wrong, because they depict an end, not a beginning. They have, therefore, become unsightly stone yards full of inartistic symbols and depressing customs, places that do nothing for humanity save a practical act, and that not well.

"I, therefore, prayerfully resolve on this New Year's Day, 1917, that I shall endeavour to build Forest Lawn so different, as unlike other cemeteries, as sunshine is unlike darkness, as Eternal Life is unlike Death. I shall try to build at Forest Lawn a great park, devoid of mis-shapen monuments and other customary signs of earthly death, but filled with towering trees, sweeping lawns, splashing fountains, singing birds, beautiful statuary, cheerful flowers, noble memorial architecture with interiors full of light and colour, and redolent of the world's best history and romance.

"I believe that these things console and uplift a community.

"Forest Lawn shall become a place where lovers, new and old, shall love to stroll and watch the sunset's glow, planning for the future or reminiscing of the past, a place where artists study and sketch, where school

teachers bring happy children to see things they read of in books; where little churches invite, triumphant in the knowledge that from their pulpits only words of Love can be spoken; where memorialization of loved ones in sculptured marble and pictorial glass shall be encouraged but controlled by acknowledged artists; a place where the sorrowing will be soothed and strengthened because it will be God's garden. A place that shall be protected by an immense perpetual care fund, the principal of which can never be expended, only the income therefrom used to care for and perpetuate the Garden of Memory.

"This is the Builder's Dream; this is the Builder's Creed."

At the time when the builder, Hubert Eaton, had this grand conception, he stood on a hilltop overlooking a small country cemetery of some 55 acres, which had just been placed in his charge. He saw no buildings, only a patch of lawn with a few straggling headstones. Beyond the scant dozen acres of developed ground, the hillside rose serene and brown. In that moment a vision came to him of what this tiny God's acre might become, and standing there he made a promise to the Infinite.

To-day, Forest Lawn stands as an eloquent witness that he kept faith with his Soul.

I will now attempt to describe some of its outstanding features.

The entrance is an achievement of Art, and comprises the largest set of wrought iron gates in the world, being in seven units, each 25 feet high. These gates are twice as wide and 5 feet higher than those of Buckingham Palace. Each gate weighs 5,000 lbs., and is so balanced on roller bearings that it can be opened or closed by a slight pressure of the finger tips.

On entering, at the left is a delightful and placid pool upon whose mirrored surface a great flock of pure white ducks and swans glide gracefully. Close to the end of the pool nearest the gates is a striking fountain throwing a column of water 30 feet into the air. Three large birds forming the fountain raise their



long bills skywards, and streams of water which come from them meet near the peak of the columns. From the mouths of a group of bronze frogs encircling the fountain come other sprays of water which splash upon the fountain's base. All about the Duck Pond, except on the side facing the Main Drive, are small trees and shrubs giving the pool the character of a quiet lake in the woods.

A delightful grouping of three statuary figures of children are at the edge on the right, whilst perched on rock formations jutting out into the water side by side, are Edith Barrett Parsons' loveable Duck Baby and Frog Baby; in front of them, on the shore, secluded in a little clump of bushes, is a figure of Pan, playing merrily on his pipes.

At the foot of a Sycamore tree, 300 years old, and one of the oldest landmarks in the San Fernando Valley, is a copy of the poem:

GOOD TIMBER.

By Douglas Mallock.

The tree that never had to fight  
For sun and sky and air and light,  
That stood out in the open plain,  
And always got its share of rain,  
Never became a forest king,  
But lived and died a scrubby thing.  
The man who never had to toil  
To Heaven from the common soil,  
Who never had to win his share  
Of sun and sky and light and air,  
Never became a manly man,  
But lived and died as he began.  
Good timber does not grow in ease;  
The stronger wind, the tougher trees,  
The farther sky, the greater length,  
The more the storm, the more the strength.  
By sun and cold, by rain and snows,  
In tree and man good timber grows.  
Where thickest stands the forest growth  
We find the patriarchs of both;  
And they hold converse with the stars  
Whose broken branches show the scars  
Of many winds and much of strife,  
This is the common law of life.

Just behind the entrance gates on a large eucalyptus tree hangs a copy of Joyce Kilner's well-known poem, "Trees."

The Tower of Legends, 87 feet high, crowning Mount Forest Lawn, is one of several examples of the Builder's ability to clothe the utilitarian in the robes of beauty and splendour, for its real purpose is that of a huge reservoir holding 165,000 gallons of water for the park, a provision absolutely necessary on account of the dry climate.

The Tower derives its name from the sculptured figures drawn from Norse mythology that adorn the great bands about the base.

There are two Churches in the grounds, both non-sectarian, ministering to all creeds.

The first is the "Wee Kirk of the Heather," a reconstruction of Annie Laurie's at Glencairn in Dumfriesshire. Here little children are christened. Here in this lover's shrine restored for lovers, man and maid are married. Here, when life's span is done, memory is enshrined. Here flowers bloom all the year, and song birds trill their language of love. Near by is a lovely little garden in which, in white marble is the beautiful figure of "The Christ," by Thorwaldsen, and where one can sink into one's soul and meditate, and feel "the peace which passeth all understanding."

The second is the "Little Church of the Flowers," a reconstruction of Stoke Poges Church, the scene of Gray's *Elegy*. The only theology of this ivy-covered church is Love, its congregation all who live in the world.

On the wall behind the stained-glass window is a framed copy of *In Memoriam* expressing the sentiments

of a well-known writer at the time of his beloved wife's death:

"I am the Spirit of Forest Lawn.

"I speak in the language of blooms and blossoms filling the Cloisters of the Little Church of the Flowers where the song of birds is like love in search of a word.

"I speak in the language of sheltering trees, nestling greensward, sparkling fountains, sheltering hills, commanding vista and gentle slope.

"Life, buoyant, joyous, endless life, is my message; beauty my servant, hope my inspiration, to comfort all that mourn my mission."

On the East wall is a copy of

THE BEYOND.

It seemeth such a little way to me,  
Across to that strange country, The Beyond,  
For it has grown to be  
The home of those of whom I am so fond.  
And so for me there is no sting in death;  
It is but crossing with abated breath  
A little strip of sea,  
To find one's loved ones waiting on the shore  
More beautiful, more precious than before.

It is difficult to describe adequately the beauties of the Mausoleum which is built in terraces, each a steel re-inforced concrete unit resting on its own foundations and imbedded in the solid rock of a hill.

It is a building within a building. The walls containing the crypts are entirely separated from the supporting walls and the roof by a space from 1½ feet to 2 feet, so that even if the outer walls were affected by earthquake the inner would not be damaged.

The entrance is through the Cathedral Corridor 46 feet long and 37 feet high. In it is a reproduction of Michael Angelo's "Moses," and the floor is of beautiful coloured marbles. On the right are copies of the lovely figures of "Poetry," "Rhythm" and "Harmony" by Canova, and at the end is Luppi's heroic figure "In Memoria."

Turning left one enters the Memorial Court of Honour, which is 84 feet long, 34 feet wide and 50 feet high. It has a vaulted ceiling and the floor is of rare marbles. At the north end is Moretti's recreation in glass of Leonardo da Vinci's "Last Supper."

Along the sides are reproductions of Michael Angelo's greatest sculptures, "Day and Night," "Twilight" and "Dawn," also the Medici "Madonna" and "La Pieta." There are also busts of Michael Angelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Canova, and Rosa Caselli Moretti.

At intervals on either side are doorways leading to the many Sanctuaries, corridors and columbaria in their myriads of coloured marbles and statuary groups. At the ends of the Sanctuaries are stained glass windows portraying Biblical representations of the various sanctuary names. The principal sub-divisions are the Columbarium of Prayer and the Sanctuaries of Trust, Gratitude, Meditation, Praise, The Vespers, Truth, and Benediction, in which is a coloured marble book with the poem by Robert Freeman.

IN MY FATHER'S HOUSE.

No, not cold beneath the grasses  
All forgotten in the tomb,  
Rather in my Father's mansion  
Living in another room.

Living like the one who loves me,  
Like yon child with cheeks abloom,  
Out of sight, at desk or school book  
Busy in another room.

Nearer than the youth whom fortune  
Beckons where the strange lands loom;  
Just behind the hanging curtain,  
Working in another room.

Shall I doubt my Father's mercy?  
Shall I think of death and doom,  
Or the stepping o'er the threshold  
To a bigger, brighter room?

(Continued at foot of next column).



# THE STORY OF "OUI-OUI"

By CAPTAIN Q. CRAUFURD

SOME boys have brought to me a little piece of mechanism that is almost useless. In an hour or two it will have ceased to work. According to my scientific books I know how and why it ought to work; it is a little thrush and it has practically lost its life.

When its heart has ceased to beat, I can restore it to apparent life by an electric charge, in much the same way as I can make my wireless set "start into life." But there is another way.

For some reason that has not yet been brought within the "laws" of our modern science, I can, by holding it beneath my coat, restore to it a more permanent form of life than that which can be supplied by my electrical machine. I know this, because I feel a faint thrill when the little creature is in my hand, though at present it is quite unconscious. I ask myself: Is it worth while spending a couple of hours or more of valuable time bringing back this little thing to life? The answer, of course, depends upon what one values most.

So, while my time is being wasted by one of the numerous garden pests which steal the fruit, let me reflect upon the results that I have known in times past. There will, eventually, be some stir of life, and gradually some awakening of a will, perhaps a will to escape and sleep or die in peace. Then there will be the slow realisation of discomfort which I, who hold it, will interpret into thirst. With much difficulty I will persuade it that this vague discomfort is thirst and very gently I shall force a drop or two of milk inside its beak. Slowly I will manage to awaken something within it to a realisation of this world of physical want, and it will swallow the bread and milk that is placed within its open beak. "I want" is the first real sign of returning life.

From this time on, there will be born into the world a wholly new example of the genus "thrush." This little creature will shriek with joy when it sees me approaching the greenhouse, where it has its temporary home.

If it is busy about its own business of finding edible insects when I arrive, I may not see it, but I shall hear it if I listen carefully—two quiet little contented notes, and these I will imitate so that they become a bond of affection between us and I shall probably nick-name him "Oui-oui," though that is very far from the sound of these two tiny notes.

Sometimes, almost level with my face, it will sidle

(Continued from previous page).

Shall I blame my Father's wisdom?  
Shall I sit enswathed in gloom,  
When I know my love is happy,  
Waiting in another room?

On the level below the Memorial Terrace is the Dahlia Terrace, whilst the three lower terraces are called Coleus, Begonia and Azalea.

Beneath the graceful arches of three alcoves set along the Cathedral Court Wall are three groups of statuary that form a Shrine of Love, and which portray how powerful a factor in life Love is. They are "Enduring Love," "Family Love" and "Father's Love," by the sculptor Ernesto Gazzeri.

There are many crypts in the Mausoleum, in the recesses of which are received the caskets for cremated remains. In the first section of the crypts is a bronze plaque bearing the word "Cenotaph," exemplifying the use often made of a crypt when the body is buried elsewhere, and yet where the family desires to establish a memorial to the love and affection borne to the departed one.

In the grounds are the dignified Administration buildings and the Crematorium. On the well-kept grass lawns are no tombstones, but, if desired, flat stone plaques are inserted in the ground.

up on the perch and whisper those two notes and open its mouth wide for some tit bit of human food; and, since its life was nearly cut off before its mother had taught it how to break up a snail and what parts are good to eat, I shall have to take in hand the part of teacher, or if I neglect to do this part of the business, are there not other teachers in the invisible world who will delight to use their influence? My books say no! They say that these tendencies are transmitted from a long line of ancestors through material grains; but then our modern science will be no longer modern in a later generation, it will probably be foolish.

For the truth is that men of science are slow to get themselves into line with facts, so long as a worn-out theory can be made to fit.

These then are the facts. Experiment has shown that we can communicate with the dead and that Telepathy is one of the main channels by which such communication can take place. There are other methods, such as are made use of by those who possess a particular type of mediumship, but communication of thought existed long before man invented communication by speech.

Where people think alike, signs are the prelude to speech. Now, since I shall be able to reach the intellect of this little thrush by means of signs, at least I shall know that in certain directions we two beings think alike. There will be games—games of hide and seek, and games of who has touched it last, and who shall have the spectacles when they are wanted and out of reach. There will then be a little elfin spirit that controls this mechanism which lies beneath my coat, if I can succeed in bringing it back to life.

AND THEN — ?

I shall be accepted, even though we two have strangely different traits, as a more or less respectable father thrush. And then — ?

One day, while we are rambling about the garden and have drifted apart, it will meet a brother thrush, and they two will exchange certain thoughts.

That night, when we say good night, there will be a shadow across the path, some faint suspicion of me, and a shyness on the part of little "Oui-oui." Naturalists may speak of it as "the call of the wild," but I will read that chapter in the Book of Genesis, and when I come across the words: "Who told thee thou wast naked?" I shall understand.

"Oui-oui" will gradually desert the former life, the struggle for the spectacles and the taste for bread and milk, and he will become merged among the other garden birds and be a mere thrush.

But there will be times when I am busy in the garden, perhaps repairing a broken fence, when I shall hear, close to me, two scarcely audible notes, "Oui-oui," with a tiny question mark.

Out of the corner of my eye I will detect a bright peeping eye and spotted breast, and I shall answer back in the language that I have been taught—but I shall know that I must not demonstrate, for this is a confidential secret between a human being and a thrush.

It will be little Oui-oui all right, but a little Oui-oui naked and ashamed.

Ashamed of what? Well, there are wise men, even among the thrushes, who will hold that such a thing as human friendship cannot possibly exist. They have their proofs and yet — ?

Well perhaps Oui-oui is, in his tiny way, a Spiritualist. I must keep his secret; and in the meantime I am about to bring into the garden, if the present experiment succeeds, another little Oui-oui of the same timid faith.

Is it waste of time?

[NOTE:—This was written in pencil while holding the little bird in one hand, it is now very happy and full of life.—Q.C.]



# A CHALLENGE FROM THE STATES

Review by H. F. PREVOST BATTERSBY

THE publishers describe Dr. Edwin Bowers' book\* as one of the most convincing that has appeared on the subject, and that opinion will probably be endorsed, save by those who, if not convinced that all men are liars, would except few Spiritualists from such a finding.

Not that you have to rely on the author's experience, or his good faith alone, for his statements are confirmed by such would-be sceptics as John J. O'Neill, science editor of the New York *Herald-Tribune*, who, after witnessing many incredible happenings, declared that "the phenomena observed are worthy of the highest type of scientific research."

Dr. Bowers has been exceptionally fortunate in the Mediums with whom he has worked—Frank Decker, Dr. Robert Moore, Arthur Ford, Ethel Post, Mrs. Vanderbilt Pepper and Mrs. Etta Wriedt, from whom he has obtained that most convincing of all psychic phenomena, complete materialisation on the most generous and impressive scale.

He has had the miscarriages common to all researchers, and gives as his conviction that only about seventy-five per cent. of Mediums are to be trusted; and he asserts that the poorly developed or grossly incompetent Mediums are an even greater menace to the acceptance of Spiritualism than are the crooks or charlatans who batten on the fears and hopes of the deluded.

He offers a warning, illustrated from the fantastic career of Eusapia Palladino, against trusting too implicitly the achievements of even the most gifted and scrupulous sensitives, or condemning work as wholly unreliable on the strength of an occasional lapse from rectitude. "Remember also," he says, "that mediumship is an *organic gift*. It has nothing whatever to do with merit, morals, or character . . . Mediumship proves to us that there are good and bad, ignorant and enlightened, truth-tellers and liars, on the spirit side of life as well as on this side of the brook." He does not add how consoling is such evidence to those of us conscious of like infirmities, which might exclude us from the company of exalted saints.

With Dr. Bower's exceptional experience, one can understand his saying that "it is infinitely more convincing to see, feel, hear, and talk with completely, or even partially materialised entities than it is to listen to an inspirational speaker telling us of the last hours of Socrates as described by Plato," more interesting to see apports arrive, or the Medium floated round the room than "to hear that Aunt Martha is happy and that her progress in her present plane of experience is highly satisfactory;" though, he adds, "I feel that the real importance of spirit communication is to *establish definitely the continuity of life and the persistence of personality*."

Some of Frank Decker's abnormal powers are, according to his guides, due to the use his spirits make of censigol gas, which was discovered on the other side by Wilbur Stoddard, who lived here 200 years ago.

"In the centre of the solar-plexus system," he says, "lies a small sac which contains an essence called by us censigol. In a physical Medium this sac is enlarged and is able to discharge its contents into the air through the pores of the skin."

Apparently a Medium, so equipped, is able to draw from others the censigol gas, which can hold particles in solution longer than any other ectoplasm, and thus lessen the drain upon the Medium's health.

The exceptional supply of this gas is thought to be responsible in Decker's seances for the sudden drop in temperature of from five to ten degrees, the "trembler"

sensation as in an earthquake, and the diffusion of exquisite perfumes.

Dr. Bowers, as a Mason, had an evidential test on meeting Masons who had passed over, in the signs and tokens, the grip and secret words, which only a Mason could communicate; also, once, when three trumpets were used, speech, one in German, came simultaneously from them all.

Mr. M. Taylor, a delegate of the Magician's Society, arrived at a seance with a large, brand-new U.S. mail sack of regulation waterproof fabric in which he enclosed the Medium, fastening it with an iron rod, a couple of Yale locks, carefully sealed, over the Medium's head. But in twenty minutes the bag, with seals and fabric intact, was tossed into the lap of one of the sitters.

On the value of messages received from the other side, the author narrates how Abraham Lincoln, a believer in Spiritualism, wrote the famous Emancipation Proclamation at the behest of a spirit, and was moved from the same source to undertake his visit to the Federal camps which saved the morale of the Northern Army. Of that behest he said: "That it is of God I have no doubt."

He tells too, how Herman Halpern, months before any mortal could have foreseen the calamity, sent repeated messages by telegrams and registered letters to President Roosevelt and Colonel Lewis McH. Howe (reproduced in his volume, *I Predict*), prophesying widespread drought, "a period of dessication," total destruction of crops in the stricken areas, and the death of millions of cattle.

His predictions have continued, and have covered most of the recent troubles from which the States have suffered, drought and famine, hurricanes and flood, and even crashes on the stock market. But there has been on this occasion no Abraham Lincoln to accept them.

In a forcible chapter on "Blundering Bigotry" Dr. Bowers writes: "To the average person—unused to reasoning from cause to effect—it seems utterly fantastic and almost unbelievable that Churches throughout the world—particularly the Christian Church, which *teaches* immortality—should harbour such implacable enmity towards Spiritualism—which *proves immortality*."

It would, he suggests, seem logical if the only people likely to hate Spiritualism should be the materialists and the atheists.

"Yet it is not the materialist, the atheist, the infidel or the agnostic who decries Spiritualism, who anathematizes it, who passes laws which are designed for preventing the spread of what *should* be the most freely given knowledge in all this world—definite *proof of a hereafter*."

It passes his understanding how clerics can so behave who profess acquaintanceship with the works of St. Augustine, St. Clement of Alexandria, Hermas, Origen, Irenaeus, Tertullian, and others, and he quotes a passage from the latter's *De Anima*, which may not be well known.

"We have to-day among us a sister who has received gifts on the nature of revelations which she received in spirit in the church amid the rites of the Lord's Day, falling into ecstasy. She converses with angels (advanced spirits), sees and hears mysteries, and reads the hearts of certain people, and brings healings to those who ask. 'Among other things,' she said, 'a soul was shown to me in bodily form, and it seemed to be a spirit, but not empty nor a thing of vacuity. On the contrary, it seemed as if it might be touched, soft, lucid, of the colour of air, and of the human form in every detail.'"

In the bitterness of their enmity towards Spiritualism the Christian clerics find a somewhat quaint comrade in the conjuror or magician.

It makes a queer picture, Dean Inge and Father Bernard Vaughan arm in arm with Harry Houdini

(Continued at foot of next column).

\**The Phenomena of the Seance Room*, by Dr. Edwin F. Bowers. London, Rider and Co. 1936.



## A BISHOP'S COMPLAINT

### CHURCH HYMNS THAT ARE SAID TO HELP SPIRITUALISM

THE Bishop of Chelmsford (Dr. Henry Wilson) complains that certain Church hymns misrepresent the doctrine of the Church, and so help Spiritualism. Writing in his Diocesan Magazine he says:

"A great many of our hymns may be over-sentimental. This is a comparatively small matter. But some of our hymns are deplorable in their teaching.

"One of the most distressing illustrations is the view which certain of our most popular hymns give regarding death. One of these hymns tells us that after death we shall be 'lying each within our narrow bed,' and another tells us that we shall be 'asleep within the tomb.'

"This conception of churchyards and cemeteries as places where dead people are sleeping may be widely held by ignorant people, but it is not the teaching of the Christian religion, and it is a lamentable thing that we should be making this prevailing ignorance darker still by singing hymns which teach that false view.

"Hymns of this description have given the greatest possible assistance to Spiritualism. Opponents of the Christian religion lay hold of these crude and ignorant expressions and charge the Church with appalling doctrines of the kind taught in these verses, and then come forward with their own point of view as something better than what they maintain the Christian faith teaches."

Dr. Wilson also complains that certain "favourite" hymns are "overworked" and suggests that nine of them should be banned for twelve months. They are: *All people that on earth do dwell; We love the place, O*

(Continued from previous column).

and Mr. James Dunninger, striving with priestly imprecation or malignant chicanery to rob humanity of its supreme incentive to godly living and the certainty of a life to come.

Dr. Bowers marvels why they should want to do it. He might remember the urging of a certain silversmith in Ephesus that, by countenancing the Spiritualism of St. Paul, "this our craft is in danger to be set at naught."

The craft of the Magician is a poor thing beside the realities of psychic power; the craft of the priest would be stripped of all its craftiness.

There are magicians, there are clerics, too honourable to let such a consideration weigh against what they have learnt of the truth; but for the moment they are not many.

In an apology for his faith Lord Alfred Douglas wrote: "The Catholic Church allows that it is perfectly possible to obtain supernatural results at spiritualistic seances. It does not deny the phenomena. But it utterly denies that the 'spirits' which give communications are the souls of departed mortals. The phenomena of Spiritualism are, the Church teaches, produced by devils and evil spirits; their object is to deceive and betray the human race. Continual indulgence in Spiritualism leads to madness, folly, and despair, and the loss of real faith."

There must be many like myself who have never quite appreciated the proclaimed "subtlety of Satan" till learning the Catholic explanation of his polity at seances. But I think he is overdoing it. He is filling churches, instead of madhouses and prisons.

Fully justified is Dr. Bowers' contention that his book "is a challenge—a challenge to ignorance, to bigotry, to the spirit of intolerance that denies and abhors the accumulation of evidence that *absolutely proves* survival of personality after the change we call death. . . . It is *not* a defence of Spiritualism. For Spiritualism needs no defence. It is a challenge."

And as such one can most heartily commend it.

*God; City of God; Ye watchers and ye holy ones; Now thank we all our God; Praise my soul, the King of Heaven; O God, our help in ages past; The Church's one foundation; Lead us, Heavenly Father.*

"I am astonished" the Bishop writes, "at the very narrow choice of hymns to which we now seem to have restricted ourselves. Why, for instance, should such a hymn as 'O God, our help in ages past' be worked to death, as is the case to-day? Whenever there is a service of national or civic importance, when the Mayor comes to church and we want to be a little religious but not too much so, this hymn seems to be regarded as quite essential.

"Or, again, if we are expressing our thanksgiving for anything, it seems that the choice is restricted to 'Praise, my soul' and 'Now thank we all our God.' The former of these hymns I frequently sing twice a Sunday, and I have even once sung it three times on the same day. Bread and butter is an essential article of food, but we do not want always to be eating bread and butter. There is an abundance of first-class hymns with which our people should be familiarised."

The *Evening Standard* says that the Bishop of Chelmsford "is not the only one who finds many hymns over-sentimental. The Rev. H. P. Kingdon, chaplain of Exeter College, Oxford, speaking at the Modern Churchmen's Conference there, said: 'The Church probably loses as many good members from the maudlin sentimentality of some of its music as from the irrationality of some of its beliefs. Most of the best of our modern music has lost touch with the Church, while we are too often content with slipshod renderings of fifth-rate music.'"

### DR. INGE ON PRAYER

Whilst the Bishop of Chelmsford is criticising Church hymns, Dr. W. R. Inge, ex-Dean of St. Paul's, criticises the views of Prayer held by many Christians.

Speaking at the Modern Churchmen's Conference at Oxford, on Friday last (August 21st), Dr. Inge is reported (*Evening Standard*) to have said "that the more we knew about causes of climatic phenomena the less likely we were even to dream of changing them by prayer in order to save our hay crop or secure a fine day for our garden party.

"But can we consistently give up praying for rain with the expectation of altering the weather for our benefit, and continue to pray for the recovery of a relation or friend in sickness?" he asked. "Knowledge has been enlarged in this field during our lifetime. We know something about microbes; how can they be affected by our prayers?"

"Is the husband of a loving and prayerful wife a better life from the point of view of life-insurance than a man who has no Christian relative anxious for the prolongation of his existence?"

"These are questions which a man really asks without impiety, and they are questions which a statistical inquiry could answer. I would go further, and say that they are questions on which a Christian ought to have some information.

"I believe that many would shrink from an impartial test because they wish to believe that prayer can alter events, but are afraid that their belief would not stand investigation."

Es fer War, I call it murder—  
There you hev it plain and flat.  
I don't need to go no furdur  
Than my Testament fer that.  
God hez said so plump and fairly:  
It's ez long ez it is broad,  
An you've got to get up airly  
If you want to take in God.

—The Biglow Papers.



## 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).

## "THIS FORCE IS INTELLIGENT"

Sir,—The account of Madame Bisson's séance with Eva Carrière, which appeared in *LIGHT* of August 20th, suggests a novel method of experimentation with materialising Mediums which promises to throw more light on this form of mediumship. It is surely high time that the perpetual attempt to discover fraud should be replaced by more intelligent experiment. Evidently, if M. Jeanson's method be followed, protecting the Medium from light, there is no inhibitory effect on the materialisations, which can be observed in full daylight.

I suggest that we adopt the working hypothesis that the ectoplasmic protrusion is a living substance—alive to a moderate extent, but devoid, or nearly devoid, of directing intelligence, and that it can be moulded into form, apparently by mental forces. These forces may conceivably be exerted, (1) by the Medium herself, consciously or unconsciously, or (2) by the sitters, or (3) by external influences, by "spirits" or otherwise. A very interesting series of experiments is indicated.

This theory of ideoplasticity is favoured by M. Liebedzinsky, President of the Polish S.P.R. "He refers the whole of these phenomena to four faculties: the faculty of creating personalities (ideoplasticity of the psychism), the faculty of transforming and modelling matter (ideoplasticity of matter), the faculty of transforming and emitting energy (ideoplasticity of energy), and the faculty of perceiving things which are not perceptible by the senses" (*Introduction à la Métapsychique Humaine*, René Sudre, p. 47). It will be noted that M. Sudre's analysis of M. Liebedzinsky's theory makes no mention of the directive power of Life. He defines ideoplasticity as "the faculty of producing results in the psychological and material realm, conformable to the idea" (*Ibid*, p. 54).

But there is a much simpler mode of accounting for such a little figurine. My own friend in the Unseen points out that the little figure "had less life than a gnat," as shown by her disappearance. She was really not "a being" at all. The Teacher to whom I referred the question said: "The ectoplasm . . . was alive, though I think the little figure was the result of a wish of a spirit on this side, and an artist, as it were, to indulge the sitters. The shaping was done on this side by hands—the idea came first."

Is it not our universal experience in this material world that leads us to imagine that every object which shows faculty of movement in response to our suggestions must be alive in the same sense as animals or humans? Why should not persons in the etheric body have the same power of moulding ectoplasm as we have over clay? I think that if our experimentalists would condescend to invoke the co-operation of friends on the Other Side of life, they would get much more decisive results than they at present do. Crawford's experiments were conducted on these lines, and were remarkably successful.

STANLEY DE BRATH.

## A CURIOUS STATE OF MIND

Sir,—Dean Inge is, on his own showing, not open to conviction. He calls himself a "hard boiled sceptic" and is "not quite prepared" to give up Mechanism. But strangest of all in a Christian Minister is his attitude towards miraculous cures, Telepathy and Clairvoyance. Compelled to admit a cure at Lourdes to be genuine, he says: "Of course, the Virgin Mary had no more to do with this case than Queen Cleopatra." And again, after describing "alleged phenomena" of

Telepathy, he adds: "Is it possible to escape from the perhaps unwelcome (!) conclusion that these phenomena are genuine?"

In other words, he regards miraculous healing as an impossibility and proof of the ability of one mind to influence another at a distance as something to be feared. This is a curious state of mind in a clergyman of the Church of England, but alas, it is a state of mind that is all too common. It is one of the saddest features of the decadence of the various denominations to-day, that many of their leading clergy are engaged in explaining away the miracles recorded in the New Testament, while the Spiritualists, whom they regard as immersed in devilish practices, accept them as literal accounts of actual events.

Dean Inge says that the cures admittedly occurring at Lourdes are "wrought by suggestion." If he will read the fully documented accounts of miraculous cures given in *The Great Problem*, by Dr. Lindsay Johnson, himself a distinguished member of the medical profession, he will see that they cannot possibly be explained on these grounds. Cures of genuine external cancer and putrid wounds treated for long periods by fully qualified doctors are instantaneous. One moment they exist in the sight of men, and in another the condition has disappeared and the patient is perfectly healthy. Unwelcome as it may be to many members of our Established Church (to which I myself belong) these cures are miraculous and cannot be explained on any other grounds.

~ Clairvoyance, automatic writing, and other messages from, and appearances of, those who have passed over to the next world are equally firmly established. Dean Inge says: "The whole subject needs much more investigation on strictly scientific lines." But it is impossible for these phenomena to have been more carefully or more scientifically investigated than in the investigations conducted by Sir William Crookes, Sir William Barret, Sir Oliver Lodge, and other scientists of International reputation in Europe and America. Many of these men have started with the idea of explaining away these phenomena, only to end in being convinced of their truth. The trouble is that the great body of scientific workers will not investigate the facts themselves, and will not accept the findings of those who do. Nowadays many clergy have borne witness to the reality of these things, but their fellows will not believe their evidence. Meanwhile, the Churches are empty and religion fails to appeal to the younger generation because it cannot be convinced of the truth of Survival.

B. ABDY COLLINS, C.I.E.

[This is a portion of a letter first sent to the *Evening Standard*, but returned unpublished.—ED.]

## IS IT A "LEG-PULL" ?

Sir,—In last week's issue you have a Reincarnation story by Mr. C. F. S. Hill, of Cardiff, that I fear must be classed as sheer humbug. Two or three years ago the *Daily Express* offered half-a-guinea for Reincarnation "experiences," and after printing this gentleman's story, with a picture of the natives attacking a man in sun helmet, they wisely announced that the series was closed.

The story then told differs in many ways from the recent version, and was obviously a leg-pull. For one thing, the learned man *presented* the orange-sized head to the steward. Considering the great value of any grown man's head reduced to the size of an orange (quite different from a dried infant's head), it was strange that an archaeologist should give it casually away. Moreover, Mr. Hill's friends must naturally have asked to see it as proof of his story. He has wisely cut out the gift and pruned away other extravagancies in the new version.

A. HORNGATE.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## DR. INGE AND PRAYER

Sir,—“The prayer of faith shall save the sick” said St. James; and probably he spoke from experience.

“We know something about microbes, how can they be affected by our prayers?” asked Dr. W. R. Inge of the Modern Churchmen’s Conference at Oxford. The notion,” he pointed out, “that the world was governed by natural laws which might be suspended at any time by Divine intervention was now felt to be one of the least satisfactory of philosophies.”

What is really the least satisfactory conception of the philosophers is that they know all there is to know about the laws of nature, as though a list had been handed to them complete on tables of stone like the Ten Commandments; and they, therefore, will not condescend to study facts which would illuminate their ignorance of those laws.

To imagine that we, three-dimensional incompetents, can *know* the laws which operate a many-dimensioned Universe is really childish, and this talk about microbes is scarcely creditable in an educated person. Seeing that an animal may be made immune from microbes by the sounding of a horn, one doubts if Dr. Inge really knows very much about them, and he seems to have even less knowledge of human nature.

The immortal part of us, in which, possibly, Dr. Inge does not believe, can obtain the mastery of every sort of microbe; and it is the object of prayer to put that immortal part in commission.

Christian Science, ill-informed as it may be, should surely have made that clear, and every “miracle” of healing is not a contravention but a consummation of the laws of nature.

Dr. Inge is “ashamed to believe” in African rain-makers; he might be ashamed to disbelieve had he any acquaintance with African magic. It is this shame to believe in anything that lies beyond a personal experience or comprehension which blocks so implacably the path of understanding. H. F. PREVOST BATTERSBY.

## HAS SHE LIVED BEFORE ?

Sir,—I have read with interest Miss Dorothy Gordon’s account of her “memories” of the trial and execution of Lady Jane Grey.

May I suggest, as a possible explanation, that she was overshadowed by one of the characters who took part in that tragedy, so that, although she was not “controlled,” she felt the experiences of the spirit as if it had been her own?

I have one clear “memory” myself, that I had supposed came from a former life, long past. Since I was five years old, this little episode has been to me like a fragmentary recollection from a forgotten time. I seem to be about 17; lying along the branch of a spreading tree, with the hot sun pouring on my brown shoulder, and my soft straight black hair hanging down, stirred a little by the air. Behind me is a cave with friendly folk inside. Beyond is a valley, and from it suddenly there comes some terrible danger, and all is extinguished in darkness. I was told this was not my experience, but that of the spirit-friend who was seeking to control and speak through me. E. BLOMFIELD.

## “PITY THE POOR CRABS”

Sir,—Reading in last week’s issue of *LIGHT*, Dr. L. Johnson’s letter concerning “crabs,” might I ask him to be good enough to pass his verdict on the cooking of lobsters? I have it on excellent authority (from a fishmonger of many years standing and others) that lobsters are put into cold water and slowly brought to the boil, otherwise the delicacy of the flesh is spoilt.

Is Dr. Johnson going seriously to suggest to us that any living creature, slowly brought to boiling point, does not feel intense pain in the process? Has he ever been present at the cooking of lobsters? If so, can he deny that the poor creatures make terrible noises whilst being boiled.

G. O. CLIFTON ALLEN (Mrs.).

## “WISDOM FROM THE EAST”

EVERY Christian remembers that the Wise Men who came to worship the Infant Jesus came from the East, and that remembrance of Eastern wisdom is kindled afresh by reading the new book by Professor Shastri, *Wisdom From the East* (Muller, 5/-). It is not, let me add, a book based on Christ’s teaching as recorded in the New Testament, but is concerned with expounding more ancient writings still, that have lived through thousands of years to the present day.

Professor Shastri will not quarrel with me, I know, if I say that much of the ancient Indian teaching and Indian mysticism is at one with Christian thought and Christian mysticism. When I presided at one of his intensely interesting and thought-stimulating lectures, I put to him this question of the similarity of Eastern Yogi mysticism with its Western and Christian brother, and I am certain he will not withhold to-day his former agreement with that point of view.

“Experience of God,” says Professor Shastri, “is intuitional . . . It is consistent, whole and verifiable by means of a purified heart, harmony of emotions and inner spiritual communion.” Another mystic, Richard of St. Victor, has affirmed: “Let whoso thirsts to see his God cleanse his mirror, purge his spirit.” There is no opposition in either of these, Hindu Philosopher and Christian Mystic, to those eternal words of Jesus Christ, “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.” On the contrary, here is evidence of the Eternal Christ.

## KINSHIP WITH CHRISTIAN THOUGHT

In his book, Professor Shastri makes no special claim to this kinship with Christian thought, although he notes the relationship, as he shows by relevant quotations from Christian writers; his object is rather to reveal to Western, as well as Eastern minds, the ancient wisdom of ancient India, but he has too clear a sense of spiritual values to neglect, even in a work primarily concerned with other religious thought, the “main stream of Christian tradition.”

Reading this volume, there will be found statements conditioned by and explanatory of the philosophy of the *Upanishads* with regard to “Karma” and “Maya,” and what is termed “Chitta” or mind, with which we may not be able to agree, and I, personally, should like to discuss with the author this sentence on page 84: “God-realisation is possible only in life, and not in the state between death and reincarnation.” Spiritualists will want to know more precisely what this means, but no one, and certainly not myself, will dispute the truth of the lines immediately following those just quoted. They read thus: “Blessed are they who think only of God, knowing him to be everywhere.”

Chapter xii. gives meditations based on two “Shrutis” (*Shruti* is translated as a “direct soul experience of a self-realised sage”), one of which is one of the oldest of profound sayings—“I am food, I food eater . . . I the food, eat him who eats food.” This thought, at first sight, is not very acceptable in its phraseology to Western minds, but Professor Shastri does make it more understandable.

Indeed, again and again, philosophical teachings, whether they be Eastern or Western, are made clearer for the seeker of truth, and I would especially recommend chapter vi., where the question of morality and spiritual insight is made crystal-clear.

To sum up; the doctrine so ably set forth in this book tells of the God in man—“God is the real self, the Reality in man.” The progress of the soul, intuitional realisation, what mind is, and its part in life are all dealt with.

Professor Shastri is justified in the title of his book, *Wisdom from the East*, and those who add it to their library will read it, not once, but many times, and they will absorb much wisdom. In this book, Spirit speaks to those who will hear.

FRANK H. WALL.



# Light

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EDITOR ... .. GEORGE H. LETHAM

## As We See It

### EVIDENCE ESSENTIAL

A BOOK is issued to-day (Thursday, August 27th) in which Spiritualism is not mentioned but which yet provides conclusive proof of the importance of Spiritualism. It is entitled *The Mysteries of Life and Death* (Hutchinson, 6/-) and includes essays by ten "great authorities," including the Rev. Dr. E. W. Barnes (Bishop of Birmingham) and Bertrand Russell—both Fellows of the Royal Society.

The essay by Dr. Barnes is on the topic: "Is there an After-Life?" Very cleverly, he builds up the philosophical case for an answer in the affirmative: There is a God who is wise and reasonable; God made man to know right and wrong; it would neither be wise nor reasonable to suppose that God made man for nought; therefore there must be an after-life "where the hero has his reward and where life's loose ends are knitted up."

Bertrand Russell follows with a flat denial of the validity of the reasoning of Bishop Barnes. "It is not rational arguments," he writes, "but emotions that cause belief in a future life." He admits that "no one can prove" that there is no life after death, but he gives many reasons why he believes Survival to be unlikely.

Here is stalemate. Bishop Barnes asserts his belief that there *must* be an after-life. Bertrand Russell asserts the contrary. Neither of them gives any indication that there is any possibility of putting the matter to the test by an appeal to evidence.

That Bertrand Russell should ignore the existence of evidence for Survival is not surprising. It is part of the outworn theory of Materialism, to which he adheres, that, as mind is a product of matter, no evidence is possible, since the mind dies with the brain.

But with Dr. Barnes the case is otherwise. He is Bishop of a Church which proclaims belief in the after-death appearances of Jesus—that is, of a Church based on concrete evidence of Survival and not merely on philosophical belief. He is doubtless well acquainted with St. Paul's argument (1 Corinthians, xv.) that "if the dead [other than Jesus] rise not, then is not Christ raised," and he should also know that an essential part of Paul's argument was that the dead "came back" in recognisable form, as Jesus was reported to have done, to prove their Survival.

Like other Church dignitaries, Dr. Barnes prefers the philosophical argument to the direct evidence on which Paul relied; but the contents of this book,

(Continued at foot of next column).

## PREJUDICE AND DEAN INGE

THE *Evening Standard* of August 12th published an article by Dean Inge dealing with Telepathy and Clairvoyance, in which he discovers that there is some foundation for belief in their reality, and admits his own prejudice against them [see LIGHT, August 20th.]

One is tempted to observe that the Dean's real discovery is not that there may be some truth in these matters, but that he has found out that he is prejudiced about them. Anyone who has studied these subjects impartially knows that both Telepathy and Clairvoyance have long ago been clearly demonstrated as facts beyond dispute, and that we must take account of them as such. If the Dean has formerly been able to reject the countless attestations of responsible witnesses as to the reality of their occurrence, he must find it hard to ignore the investigations of such men as Richet and Driesch; and, although he may be unwilling to enter Queen's Hall on a Sunday evening and observe Clairvoyance himself, he now finds it impossible to disregard the laborious, if somewhat superfluous, work of Dr. Rhine at Duke University.

We all have our own blind-spots, and it is a splendid discovery to find them out and get rid of them. A fog of unrealised prejudice envelopes us all from the cradle to the grave, and perhaps beyond. It is a great thing to be able to see through our own mist, if only dimly, and from time to time; that of others, we can observe much more freely and easily, though, of course, only through our own particular cloud.

Psychologists call some of the more awkward of these prejudices by such names as "complexes" and "inhibitions," and offer to help us get rid of them by the treatment of psycho-analysis, at three guineas an hour. Few of us, however, apart from a certain reluctance to undergo the process, could afford the time or money for a doubtful result, and would prefer that some of our friends should first try the treatment—as, of course, they need it much more urgently than we do. More practical methods to dispel the fog may be to try and follow in the path of the old philosophers and "know thyself": and to make a rule of, at least, attempting to understand the points of view of the fellow from whose opinions we may differ.

In no sphere of human thought is prejudice so deep as in that of Religion, though this is not so marked as it was in past generations. During medieval times, a heretic was a *rara avis*, and that the son should not follow the faith of his forefathers an almost unheard of thing. Here in England, until the middle of last century and beyond, it was the rule, and not the exception, for the son to adopt unhesitatingly his father's creed, no matter how few its adherents or strange its doctrines. "Blind unbelief is sure to err" wrote the poet Cowper, but surely by leaving out the *un* he would have been nearer the truth.

In these days, belief is not so bound, and we appraise at a truer value the doctrines and dogmas by which our ancestors were oppressed; though the enchantment of tradition and glamour of doubtful history still warp our minds.

The Spiritualist has the advantage in common with the early Christian of being able to add to his faith knowledge of Survival as proved in his own experience, and in the light of that knowledge he is better able to dispel his own cloud of prejudice and see through the mists to what is beyond.

A. G. THOMPSON, M.B., Ch.B., Oxon.

(Continued from previous column).

to which he contributes, ought to convince him that, without evidence to support it, his philosophical argument must fail to carry conviction, since it is countered and challenged at every point by men equal to himself in learning and reasoning power. And Spiritualism offers all the evidence that is needed.



# LOOKING ROUND THE WORLD

## BISHOP WILSON'S PROTEST

WE congratulate the Bishop of Chelmsford (Dr. Henry Wilson) on his discovery that certain Church hymns misrepresent the true Christian doctrine regarding the place and state of the dead—namely, those that speak of the dead as "asleep within the tomb," waiting for the resurrection day. One of these often used at funerals ends:

Leaving him to sleep in trust  
Till the resurrection day.  
Father, in Thy gracious keeping  
Leave we now Thy servant sleeping.

Spiritualists have long protested that such hymns are untrue in their statements and misleading in their teaching, and they will rejoice if the Bishop's protest leads to their exclusion from Church hymnaries.

## WHERE THE BLAME SHOULD REST

We think, however, Bishop Wilson is not justified in his assertion that opponents of the Christian religion (amongst whom he apparently includes Spiritualists) erroneously charge the Churches with teaching the "appalling doctrines" contained in the hymns to which he objects. These hymns are, as a matter of fact, based on the teaching embodied in the creeds of all the orthodox Churches, and particularly on that part of the daily-recited creed in which the proclamation is made: "I believe in the resurrection of the body." Until the Churches make it clear that, by this declaration, they mean the *spiritual* body, the majority of those who hear it will continue to associate it with the physical body.

The Bishop should, therefore, begin by attacking the erroneous wording and interpretation of the creed, and not by trying to cast the blame on people outside the Churches.

It is, indeed, highly desirable that, in this respect, the Churches should bring their teaching into conformity with the teaching of the primitive Church, which Spiritualists claim, with good reason, to be identical with the teaching derived from the ascertained facts of modern Spiritualism.

## "SPIRITUAL GIFTS"

How little the origin and value of mediumship is understood by some of those associated with even the most liberal of the Churches is indicated by an astonishing sentence in a letter in last week's issue of *The Inquirer* (Unitarian).

"May not mediumistic powers be attributed," L. F. Cole inquires, "to a perverted use of the human capacity for the transcendental which is shown in its highest and noblest degree in the spiritual achievements of the great Christian mystics?"

It would appear that there is good reason why the Rev. Herbert Crabtree (who recently contributed several articles on mediumship to *The Inquirer*) should continue his efforts to give enlightenment to his fellow-Unitarians regarding what St. Paul described as "spiritual gifts." The "ignorance" of the Corinthian converts regarding these gifts could surely not have been greater than that indicated in L. F. Cole's inquiry.

## VALUE OF "GHOSTS"

It would appear that "ghosts" have a distinct social value (and perhaps a money value also) when associated with an otherwise desirable house. In *Building* for August, there is a rhymed story entitled "The Ghost Talks," which concludes as follows:

"Our final aim: to boast a house on the South Coast and keep a cook, a gardener—and a ghost."

The suggestion is that, added to an establishment which includes a cook and a gardener, a ghost gives the social status necessary for people who wish to shine in exclusive circles. Perhaps, however, the cook may have other views.

## "CONFRATERNITY" CAMPAIGN

THE "Confraternity" Caravan, named by Mrs. St. Clair Stobart "The Polestar," is again "on the road." Last week-end and this week, a series of meetings have been held in selected centres in the Southern Counties, at which efforts have been made by Mrs. Stobart, and those working with her, to show that Spiritualism is not antagonistic to true religion, but that, on the contrary, it is urgently needed by all the Churches to provide a secure foundation for the belief in "the life eternal" which they all teach. This is the chief object of the Confraternity, but it also aims at convincing Spiritualists that help from the Churches is not to be despised—that, indeed, it is essential if the vital truths of Spiritualism are to be spread as widely as all convinced Spiritualists wish them to be.

So far, active support from the Churches has not been much in evidence, but many individual Churchmen (clergy and lay) have been reached and influenced, and a few have given their aid in practical fashion.

One of the most important features of the "campaign" has been occasional "drawing-room meetings" for clergymen, at which frank discussion has been possible.

Before long, Mrs. Stobart is to make a "raid" across the Border into Scotland, where a series of meetings are being planned; and we understand that a tour (without the caravan) is also being arranged in the North of England.

## "STERILIZATION OF SPIRITUALISM"

A writer in *The Catholic Herald* (R.J.J.W.) welcomes Dr. Harold Dearden's book, *Devilish—But True*, so far as it applies to Spiritualism—an attitude which bespeaks either ignorance of what Spiritualism really is, or unreasoning religious bias against it, or both.

But he does not agree that Dr. Dearden is correct when he includes the cures at Lourdes, under the banner of the Roman Catholic Church, "as instances of hysterical phenomena." He applauds Dr. Dearden in his foolish attack on Spiritualism and Spiritualists, but is hurt by the equally foolish attack on the healing work at Lourdes.

For some reason, not made clear in the article, *The Catholic Herald* gives to it the heading "Sterilization of Spiritualism." If the suggestion is that Dr. Harold Dearden's book has had the effect of "sterilizing" Spiritualism, the *Herald* and its writers are likely to be disappointed, for all the indications are that Spiritualism grows stronger and healthier the more it is attacked.

## London Spiritualist Alliance and The Quest Club.

### NOTICE TO MEMBERS

#### HOURS

Please note that on and after September 1st, 1936, the London Spiritualist Alliance and The Quest Club will be open daily, Monday to Saturday inclusive, from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. and until the close of Thursday evening lectures.

The library will be closed at 7 p.m., except on Thursdays when evening lectures are held, when it will remain open until the commencement of the lecture.

#### REFRESHMENTS

Teas are served daily from 3.30 to 5.30 p.m. No other refreshments will be served except after Thursday evening meetings.



# MISS BESSINET'S MEDIUMSHIP

By MRS. HEWAT MCKENZIE

In *Psychic Science* for July-September.

NEWS has reached England of the recent passing of the American Medium, Miss Ada Bessinet, at a comparatively early age. Her visit to the British College, for some months in 1921, is still a vivid memory to many, as various letters in the current psychic press testify.

Her work at the College was the occasion of an exhaustive report by the Hon. Principal, Mr. J. Hewat McKenzie, which can be read in the first issue of *Psychic Science*, Vol. I., April, 1922, to be found in the College Library.

Miss Bessinet came from Toledo, U.S.A. She had been a private Medium for many years, having been developed as a girl by her stepmother in a home circle. In 1909-10 Prof. J. H. Hyslop, of the American S.P.R., investigated her powers, and his report, entitled "A Case of Hysteria" (the word used in a broad sense), left some points unsettled. Many requests reached Mr. McKenzie from U.S.A. asking him to endeavour to clear these up, and Miss Bessinet herself declared that her desire was to have light thrown upon her mediumship. The range of her phenomena was very wide: trance-control, fine sustained whistling, beautiful singing, both in clear-cut soprano and baritone voices, highly-skilled tambourine playing, gifts which it was stated the Medium did not normally possess and was never found rehearsing. In addition, there was direct voice and trumpet voice, direct writing, and the brief appearance of faces, self-illuminated by a fair light, presented as and often claimed by sitters as recognisable likenesses of deceased friends.

The claim was made by the Medium and her friends that these phenomena were objective, separate from the Medium's physical possibilities; they all took place within a short radius of the Medium as she sat with the sitters round a large table, separated from the nearest sitter on her left hand by a gramophone kept in constant use during sêances, which were always held in complete darkness. The general sittings open to members were remarkably uniform in method and quality, there was never a blank sitting, and apart from variations in the messages they might have been cut from a stereotyped pattern; these were highly pleasing to sitters because of the abundance and quality of the phenomena, always pleasant and harmonious, and if "Black Cloud," the chief control, was at times rather surly and uncommunicative, this was amply compensated by "Pansy's" cheerful and chatty personality.

A Research group composed of the College Council and selected members met once a week for special investigation, and it is upon the reports of this group, of which he was the director, that Mr. McKenzie's record depends. Miss Bessinet herself was charming to deal with, modest as to her work and unspoiled by adulation, careful of her life so that her work might not suffer, and apparently ready to assist the investigation; but to deal with "Black Cloud" was another matter, he offered little co-operation or advice when consulted, and seemed to resent any suggested change in the usual procedure. The trance state was undoubted, and while under it the Medium moved in her seat or "was moved" in the most noiseless fashion, so that those who sat next to her would declare that it was quite out of the question to think so; a hidden electric connection with her chair proved, however, that she did so continuously during the singing, the whistling, the tambourine playing, and when the faces were presented. At one stage of the sêance the guides used a rope for binding the Medium for added proof; this was done in the dark in a most skilful manner, but it was found that a carefully arranged slipknot allowed

the Medium to release and return one hand, thus leaving her free for manipulations.

As many claimed recognition of the faces presented to them, recognitions often endorsed and confirmed by the trumpet voice, this phenomenon and the illumination used had to be tested, for many other experienced sitters, including the Research group, Mr. McKenzie, and myself, who had viewed the faces scores of times, seeking recognitions with the greatest sympathy and anticipation, had never been able to see anything but Miss Bessinet's own face presented at different angles and draped in various fashion with some white material which could not be regarded as ectoplasmic.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Lady Doyle, who sat with Miss Bessinet on several occasions, testified to having seen the face of his mother and another relative in unmistakable fashion, others claimed to see two faces at the same time. At the last sêance of the series it was agreed by the Research group that a weak red light should be turned upon the Medium when the faces were presented. Full responsibility was assumed by the group and the Principal for this procedure, which in view of other defects discovered in the mediumship was considered necessary. The Medium was found standing up and leaning across the table towards a sitter with a light surrounding her, but the usual drapery was absent. No appliance for producing the light was discovered. Miss Bessinet was nervously upset by the occurrence for several days, and also by the relating of what had been witnessed. Her defence was that she was in trance and trusted her guides, and had always been told by her home group that the manifestations were objective to herself. If the year had been 1936 instead of 1921 the use of infra-red photography would have made such procedure unnecessary, though few physical Mediums yet avail themselves of this opportunity of verifying their work. In voice sêances, for instance, many messages are considered evidential, but many doubt that these are delivered by an independent voice, or that the movements of the trumpet in the dark are beyond suspicion. Every Medium who presents himself or herself to the suffrages of the Spiritualistic public should be utterly willing to take advantage of this new opportunity in the interests of his own integrity. Until this is volunteered by the conscientious sensitives, the present very unsatisfactory condition of physical mediumship will remain.

Miss Bessinet returned to the States, and before leaving England was seriously advised by Mr. McKenzie to seek co-operation from her group and her guides in placing her work on a satisfactory basis as far as objectivity rested. Her friend, Mr. Wm. Roche, Editor of the *Toledo News Bee*, was also communicated with; Miss Bessinet subsequently married Mr. Roche, who predeceased her in 1934. Reports of subsequent sêances came to our notice from time to time apparently under the old conditions. At one I remember it was claimed that a face was clearly recognised as that of Sir Ernest Shackleton by a sitter who knew the explorer. The kindest interpretation as to these variations of opinion as to the faces is that on occasions a vivid transfiguration of the Medium's features occurred, as has been observed with others. Such changes I believe depend on the psychic force supplied by individual sitters, which, in collaboration with the will of a communicator, may momentarily clothe the Medium's face with a resemblance to one who has gone; others who do not supply such force, or if they do it cannot be co-ordinated at the moment, see only the face of the Medium.

Again, there are Mediums who seem to have the power of projecting a manifestation a considerable distance from themselves, others can only do so at a much shorter range, while others with similar dynamic

(Continued at foot of next column).



## ITALIAN NOTES

By ISABEL EMERSON

August 15th, 1936.

## PHANTOM WITH A GUN

SOME time ago, the leader of a criminal gang, Bruno Albenevoli, disappeared from San Lorenzo, near Reggio, in Calabria. He was last seen by an old woman, who sheltered him in her hut in the mountains one stormy night, and it was thought that he had been murdered that same night.

Soon a story began to circulate that a phantom, armed with a gun and wearing a large glittering ring, was wandering among the mountains invoking help, and the vicar of the nearest parish went with a few followers to bless the locality.

Various individuals were arrested in connection with the man's disappearance, and finally the murderer was discovered. In the meantime, the body, wearing a ring and with a gun by its side, was found in a crevasse near the spot where the phantom had been seen.—(*Mondo Occulto*).

## PSYCHIC CENTRES

Professor Galligaris, the discoverer of sensitive cutaneous plaques on the human body, claims that by suitable treatment of these plaques the most varied psychic powers could be unfolded. He has recently made a special study of the subject with a view to developing such powers as psychometry, autoscopy, and certain forms of clairvoyance.—(*Ali del Pensiero*).

## A "MIRACLE" AT MASS

A great stir has been created at Paganico Sabino, near Rome, by an incident which occurred during the celebration of Mass. The parish priest, Don Raffaele Codipietro, had just divided the consecrated Host, when he noticed what appeared to be a flash of light proceeding from it, followed by a jet of bright red blood. Eight drops fell on the altar cloth, one on the cover of the paten, and others on various objects on the altar.

Don Raffaele, who was almost fainting with emotion, exclaimed: "My God, what do I see? This is a miracle!"

Hearing his exclamation, the congregation crowded round him and all saw the drops of fresh blood. The priest, although in a great state of agitation, was able to continue the Mass, and communicated with the blood-stained Host.

On hearing of the "miracle," Monsignor Rinaldi, Bishop of Rieti, hurried to Paganico, where Don Raffaele gave him the particulars of the extraordinary occurrence and showed him the bloodstains on the various objects. The Bishop ordered these to be locked

(Continued from previous page).

force working through them cannot project it at all, and yet in trance may simulate the manifestations by means of their own organs and limbs. Such Mediums are to be sincerely pitied if they have not secured a group or guides who will be honest and frank with them about what is really taking place. From this point of view, Miss Bessinet may have been sincere in her protestations and she herself the victim.

It is for investigators of the present day, when opportunity allows, to use the fresh facilities available and improve on the methods of the past, and I have briefly outlined this case to recall to our minds what a serious and difficult task is involved in the scientific investigation of mediumship. But if the researcher can add one grain to our knowledge he is to be praised.

In the midst of controversy, I remember gratefully the pleasure and comfort Ada Bessinet gave to many, and the cheerful and courageous spirit she showed in her work.—(*Reprinted, by permission, from the July-September issue of "Psychic Science," the quarterly Transactions of the British College of Psychic Science, Ltd.*)

up in the Tabernacle. He then returned to Rome and informed the Congregation of the Holy Office of the occurrence. Further investigation must take place before any decision can be arrived at as to the miraculous nature of the incident.

Don Raffaele states that, as he broke the sacred wafer, he offered a fervent prayer for the return to the Church of certain wanderers from his flock, and asked for a sign to convince unbelievers.

The Bishop regretted that no portion of the wafer had been preserved; but this would have been against the strict rule that, once the consecrated Host has been divided, it must be entirely consumed.

A similar incident, which occurred at Bolsena in 1263, formed the subject of one of Raphael's finest paintings.—(*La Nazione*).

## AN OTHER WORLD PILGRIMAGE

Much interest has been aroused in psychic circles by Gino Trespioli's latest and largest work, *La Vita*. A perusal of this remarkable volume leaves the reader perplexed as to its exact significance. If it is intended as an allegory in the style of the "Divine Comedy," it is a very fine and interesting work, in which the author's erudition and classical culture are brought into play, and a highly spiritual tone is maintained throughout. But, if it is intended as a veridical record of spirit-communications received through the Medium, Bice Balbonesi, and extending over a number of years, it is exceedingly difficult to form an opinion as to its merits, since no proof is, or perhaps could be, forthcoming as to the identity of the historical and even legendary personages whose names throng its pages.

The author's symbolical journey through the realms of the Other World is divided into seven stages: Lethargy, Remorse, Awakening, Evolution, Ascent, Consciousness, Wisdom. During this pilgrimage, it appears to have sufficed for him to think of any historical personage he wished to interview, and the guide immediately announced his presence, whereupon a long dialogue ensued, in which Trespioli showed an extraordinary knowledge of the earth-life and opinions of the entity, while the latter gave much interesting information concerning life on both sides of the veil. In this manner, more than three hundred personages were interrogated, the most convincing incidents being naturally those connected with personal friends of the author, whose mannerisms he could recognise and whose statements he could verify.

The book is very well presented and profusely illustrated; it is provided with carefully prepared indexes, which are a great asset for tracing any particular character or incident one desires to read about. Its popular appeal has been so great that the first edition was exhausted in a few weeks from publication, and a second is in preparation.

## "FATE AND PRECOGNITION"

An interesting brochure on "Fate and Precognition," by Leone Vivante, has just appeared; it has been compiled from articles published in *La Ricerca Psichica*.

## MAJOR CECIL PETERS

In *The Times* of Monday, August 17th, there was an intimation of the death of Major Cecil Peters, an ex-president and ex-secretary of the Ghost Club and a former member of the Council of the London Spiritualist Alliance.

Major Peters was in a British cavalry regiment and served with it for some years in India. After retiring from the Army, he resided for some years at Putney. He took a very deep interest in Spiritualism and was a member of the Council of the L.S.A. from 1921 to 1925. About the same time he joined the Ghost Club and, after serving as president, undertook the office of hon. secretary, which he held for some years. He was a firm believer in spirit-communication and had regular sittings with a non-professional Medium.



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## A MAN POSSESSED

THE Rev. John Levo, of Kennel Ride, Ascot, Church of England priest (whose letter to *The Times* was quoted in our issue of August 13th), is of opinion that witchcraft is not confined solely to the backward races.

"If it were possible for a witchcraft census to be taken in England," he said to an *Evening Standard* representative, "and the replies given were honest, one would be astonished at the large proportion of people who believe in it—only they would not call it witchcraft. In this country, as everywhere else, superstitions are as common as motor-buses."

Mr. Levo lived for many years in the West Indies, where, he states, witchcraft, or Obeah, is believed in.

"It says in the Bible that the Lord cast out a devil from a man who was brought to Him. I believe that to be literally true," said Mr. Levo, "for I once saw a man possessed of a devil. I used to hold an adult Sunday School. One day a simple-minded man, who lived some miles from the church, created a commotion when he got into the class. He demanded to stand on his seat. He told me that the Obeah man had put a devil in him, and that he had come to the church to have it driven out. He wanted to stand up so that he could see the whole of the Cross and be seen by it."

"When I explained that he could not very well do that, he said he would lie on the floor, arguing that he then would be in a position where the devil was least likely to see him. Afterwards I talked to that man. He was mad, but he had not the ordinary look of a lunatic. I handed him over to the police and in a short time he was dead. It is impossible to prove anything definitely, but I am convinced that that man was possessed of a devil and that the Obeah man was responsible."

Negroes will always deny that they know or believe in the Obeah man, but they undoubtedly do, said Mr. Levo. Human sacrifice has been considered always the most efficacious way of getting into touch with a spirit, and to this day it is not unknown for children to

disappear. They never return, and one can only assume that they have been offered as sacrifices.

"And then, how can you explain this?" he asked. "Years ago, the wealthy men of the islands made a habit of placing all their treasures in an iron box and sending two natives with it to the top of a hill to bury it. When the hole had been dug the natives were killed to make sure the hiding place was never revealed, and buried with the treasure."

"The present-day negro believes that by getting into touch with the spirits of the slaughtered slaves they can locate the treasure. I do not pretend to know what they do, or how they do it, but it is an undeniable fact that some of the black labouring people quite suddenly become very rich—and I mean very rich."

## THE MOON AND ITS INFLUENCE

A WRITER in the *South Wales Evening Post* has some very interesting things to say about the influence of the moon.

The Man in the Moon (says the writer) has had the finger of blame pointed at him for all sorts of occurrences. He has been accused, amongst other things, of causing death, headaches, dogs to bark, and sleeplessness.

A physician in Paris once showed by statistics that the largest number of births occurred when the moon was near the horizon. Other investigators have discovered that certain inhabitants of the sea are plumper at full moon. The best catches of herrings, for example, are usually made at full moon.

Possible explanations of this are that the greater degree of moonlight attracts the fish to the surface, or the movement of the water caused by the moon may cause concentrations of the tiny ocean creatures and plants which form the fishes' food.

Regarding sleeplessness, a doctor has stated that in the East, exposure to the direct rays of the moon caused nightmares and headaches and, the next morning, a "thick head."

Few people will sleep in the full light of the moon without superstitious qualms, telling tales of sailors being found blind or dead from sleeping on deck when there was a full moon.

In various parts of the country there are many beliefs and superstitions regarding the powers of the moon.

Some people only plant certain seeds when the moon is new, believing that the plants will grow with the moon. In the Orkneys there is strong preference to marry when the moon is new, the symbol of all happy beginnings. Incidentally, it has been said that the most serious quarrels in married life occur when the moon is full.

Some astronomers, and particularly Devonshire people, say that the time to have a hair-cut is when the moon is in its last quarter. Mushrooms, as well as human hair, apparently grow better when the moon is approaching the full. At the full moon the hair has most sap, and should not be cut. It ought to be cut when the sap is low, that is, just before a new moon.

Other country folk believe that it is unlucky to see the new moon for the first time through glass, although it is supposed to be lucky to turn your money over in your pocket at the new moon.

## A REALISTIC DREAM

Some time ago I lost a ring, precious to me for its sentimental value. After searching along the roads through which I had passed, with no result, I went home to bed, and after much thinking fell asleep. Then I dreamed that my ring was lying on a small heap of stones in the gutter; the name of the road I knew so well stood out on a sign post in absurdly large letters. So realistic was the dream that I got up and dressed myself, and, taking a torch, went to the spot so clearly indicated. There, on a heap of flint stones used in road repair, to my amazement and joy I found my ring.—(A.D., in *The Star*).



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6.30 p.m.—Captain E. J. LANGFORD GARSTIN, M.C.

Clairvoyante: Mrs. Helen Spiers

Sunday, September 6th, at 11 a.m. ...

Mr. JAMES LEIGH

Clairvoyante: Mrs. Helen Spiers

Sunday, September 6th, at 6.30 p.m. ...

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Monday.

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

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## "OLD CASTS"

### NOTES ON INTERESTING MESSAGES FROM THE OTHER SIDE

I THINK some writings, which I receive from time to time at what I call dictation (I am clairaudient) from a friend in spirit and a present associate of Frederic Myers, may be of interest.

"Old Casts, or partially deadened likenesses of personalities still vibrate in the ether with habits and memories still intact, and when by some accident or change about them they are again brought into action, they are often the cause of some confusion in the minds of those seeking facts of Reincarnation. This reaction of old lives is sometimes said or claimed to be Reincarnation when it is not really so. The old cast-off memories are, as it were, still floating about, and because of the before-mentioned accident or change, they sometimes become drawn into what are called Lines of Affinity or Attraction existing between a mind incarnate and some magnetic stream here. This mind (incarnate) when linked up in this way, receives these memories of another person's life when incarnate, and as they are brought up into his consciousness, he believes them to be recollections of some past incarnation. It is, put briefly, just a flash or glimpse of another person's past life on earth brought into play as on a screen upon the mind of one who is in affinity. Many dream experiences also thought to be relative to past incarnations come under the same category."

I think the term Old Casts, which my friend uses is synonymous with Myers' "Marionette—a figure not animated by the soul that had once uttered the words," etc., and quite equally applicable to either a phase of a past incarnation as Myers suggests, or to the linking-up by Lines of Attraction referred to above.

Speaking of the Great Memory has brought to my mind another bit of writing from this same communicator on the subject of memory in the after-life:

"Just a few words as to why some of the details investigators ask for are not very easily given by us. As our earthly soul progresses, we acquire certain knowledge, which along with other memories and personality persists after death. The wider knowledge and experience gained in spiritual progression after death of the mortal body, to a great extent obliterates earthly memories not of a fundamental nature. Then again, memories of a purely physical nature are not so fostered or necessary to us in our present state, and gradually lose meaning and are difficult to recall. Details relative to our earthly existence are often unknown to us without exterior aid in a special manner from our Cosmic Intelligence. That is, of course, after definite mental and spiritual growth. Time elapsed after passing (death) does not govern our retention of earthly memories. A kind of stagnation near earth, lack of will to progress, and, of course, contact with earthly mentalities, achieve the best results for the enquirer after petty details of a spirit's earthly existence. If an enquirer wishes for these lesser and often directly personal details of a 'progressed' spirit, they are most often given from the enquirer's own subconscious mind, which is an open book as it were to some of us in spirit, when we are working with guides giving messages.

"As our spiritual self progresses, our intercourse becomes almost entirely one of attunement, and our recollections of our physical life with its manners and defects peculiar to place in history, race and creed, gradually become merged, or lost in the whole."

Though these communications are given very briefly and in simple language, I have had ample proof in various ways of the high mentality and integrity of the communicating spirit, and any errors apparent to one of greater knowledge than myself would most likely be due to my reception of such information.

Bristol.

(Mrs.) B. BISHOP.

## MR. DENIS CONAN DOYLE MARRIED

MR. DENIS CONAN DOYLE (son of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle) was married to Princess Nina Mdivani at the register office, Bridgend, Glamorgan, on Tuesday, August 18th. The bridegroom's age was given as 27 and the age of the bride as 31.

In an interview published in the *Sunday Referee* (August 23rd) Mr. Doyle is reported to have said: "Of particular joy to me is the fact that my father approves of our marriage and knows of our happiness. I am constantly in touch with him, and, from the messages he has given to me, he rejoices in the step I have taken.

"Although my wife," he said, "is not attached to any Spiritualist society or organisation, she is a Spiritualist. She knows that survival after death is a fact. From the Other Side, her brothers—Prince Alexis and Prince Serge Mdivani—have communicated with her. They are not 'dead.' They are living personalities. After the wedding ceremony we knelt in the small chapel, at St. Donat's Castle, and received their blessing."

On their honeymoon tour, the couple flew from England to Paris. Then on to Berne, where they have been attending motor-race meetings. Soon they will be in Venice, at the Palazzo San Gregorio, one of the most famous palaces in Italy, which belongs to the Princess. There they will be joined by her brother, Prince David Mdivani.

Honeymooning over in three weeks' time, they will be back in England, house-hunting and home-building. They will seek a flat or house in London, and a country residence.

"Next year I will resume my motor-racing activities," said Mr. Conan Doyle. "My wife shares my interest in the sport. She is keen to enter cars for important events. I will drive them."

## CLERGYMAN'S PREDICTION

More heavenly visions—as seen by the saints of Bible history—may be seen by ourselves in the future, according to the Rev. T. F. Royds, rector of Houghton, Staffs. And they may come through Telepathy.

Speaking at the Modern Churchman's Conference at Oxford Mr. Royd said:

"Two years ago I understood for the first time the story of Elisha and how the young man saw the mountain full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha," he said.

"I do not mean that I actually saw anything; but I knew it was there, as surely as I know I am in this room.

"There are several kinds of psycho-therapy—for example, Christian Science, Coué-ism, auto-suggestion and the miracles of Lourdes—and they all deliver the goods to some extent, or they would not survive long.

"Our physical evolution has been complete for many thousands of years, but our spiritual evolution is much slower. If a new revelation of God ever comes to this planet, it will be through some heightening of the Telepathic thought."—*Daily Mirror* (19th August).

## A USEFUL DREAM

Some years ago I was employed by a firm producing terminals, and one particular type was a tremendous lot of trouble; the heads would keep coming off.

The manager sent for me, and asked me the reason. I pointed out their mistake, and they agreed, and gave me permission to experiment with same.

This went on for four days, until the Friday night, I woke up with a start and looked at the clock. The time was 3 o'clock.

My wife asked what was wrong. I said I had dreamt how to produce the terminal, also the tools for doing it.

On Saturday morning, when I arrived at work, I made the tools, also six terminals, and offered them to the manager, and he said, "Well done, why didn't I think of it?"—J.P., in *The Star*.



L.S.A.

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