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"SPIRITUALISTS CAN BE CHRISTIANS"

PSYCHIC LAW DISPLACES MIRACLE

By MRS. ST. CLAIR STOBART

From an address delivered at the Spiritualist Community Service at Grosvenor Hall, London, on Sunday morning (October 18th).

I WANT to draw your attention to a fact which is not generally realised—a fact which is of supreme importance to the cause of Religion, the fact, namely, that the Gospel story, the story of Christianity, can only be accepted as a religion (a) by those who believe in Miracle, or (b) by those who believe in Spiritualism. Why do I say this? Because the Christian story is impregnated, from start to finish, with phenomena for which the only possible explanation must be either miracle or laws of psychic science.

The Churches hitherto have accepted miracle as the explanation of phenomena for which they could not otherwise account. Miracle is said to have been responsible for the birth, works of healing, signs and wonders, transfiguration, resurrection, post-crucifixion appearances and ascension of Jesus of Nazareth. It has been assumed that, for a brief period in the history of mankind, within a restricted area, on behalf of a specially favoured people, the Almighty exercised arbitrarily His supernatural power in a display of phenomena which had never occurred before and could never, it was supposed, occur again. And then, when the last word of the last chapter of the Book of the Revelations in the New Testament was written, God shut the doors of heaven. Revelation was at an end.

No other explanation of the phenomena to which I have referred has been permitted than that of unique miracle. To doubt the miraculous was to doubt the Bible, doubt Christianity, doubt Religion. All this has been solemnly taught by the Churches.

But now, apparently unnoticed by many Spiritualists, there is to-day amongst the Clergy an advance-guard, which includes Bishops, Canons, Deans and many highly-placed officials of the Church of England, who, under the title of "Modern Churchmen," are rejecting miracle and the miraculous element in the Gospel story and in the Bible generally. You have but to glance at the pages of any one of the series of Modernist

books written by well-known and esteemed Church dignitaries, to test the truth of this assertion.

But to give immediate proof. The Modern Churchmen's Union, to which many of these modern Clergy belong, informs us in the explanatory leaflet that "the Union is a Society of members of the Church of England, united to promote certain aims." These aims, as stated in their constitution, include: "affirmation of the progressive character of God's self-revelation, and the certainty that no truth can lead away from him."

"To proclaim Christ and His Gospel, in the light of modern knowledge."

"To maintain the right and duty of the Church of England to reject what is false and to restate what is true in her traditional dogmas."

"To promote the study of the Bible according to modern critical methods, and to interpret its message in the light of such study."

But specially I would draw your attention to the following. The Modern Churchmen's Union advocates the rejection of what is obsolete. And amongst those things which are reputed to be obsolete are the miraculous happenings in the Gospel story.

In the second paragraph in their leaflet announcing the aims of the Union, we read that: "The intellectual difficulties and uncertainties through which we have passed have until recently made clear constructive teaching difficult. Evangelisation has flagged, in the effort to face an increasing complexity of problems, chief of which have been the miraculous, the eschatological elements in the Gospels." Now listen please. "The recognition that these do not affect the substance of the Christian Faith has been one of the acknowledged achievements of the critical study of the New Testament." What an achievement!

The Modern Churchman thus says that the miraculous elements in the New Testament do not affect the substance of the Christian Faith. In other words, the deletion of the miraculous element in the Gospel story leaves that story unimpaired. The Modern Churchman is almost forced to that conclusion if he

wants to retain any of the Christian story—if he rejects miracle and has as yet no other interpretation of those miraculous features.

But I contend that, unless you accept those features hitherto known as miraculous, unless you accept them as part of the Christian story, there is very little left of that story.

Let us examine this briefly. Let us see for ourselves what there is left worth treasuring as Religion, when the element of so-called miracle is deleted. And we must remember that the Modern Churchman does not reject the main events in the life of Jesus—he rejects all that surrounding atmosphere of other-worldliness, which is the essence of Religion and which distinguishes the life of Jesus from that of any ordinary missionary in foreign parts.

The Rev. R. G. Griffith, in his book, *The Necessity of Modernism*, tells us, for instance, that “historic study has revealed a human Christ whose powers were strictly limited to the normal.”

That sentence alone rules out the major portion of the acts of Jesus, as recorded in the Gospels. For though Spiritualists do not claim that there was anything supernatural in the works of Jesus, we can see that He possessed, to a remarkable degree, the supernormal gifts of a sublime Sensitive.

The Modern Churchman rejects all that gives the events in the story of Jesus life and meaning. He turns a blind eye to phenomena which he is unable to explain on any hypothesis except that of miracle. He pretends that these occurrences of a supernormal, but not supernatural order, which were running accompaniments of the life of Jesus, that they never occurred and that, though they are recorded in the Bible, they are of no consequence to Christianity. They somehow or other found their way into the Bible by mistake, and Christianity is unaffected by their rejection.

But is Christianity unaffected by their rejection, the rejection of all that for which miracle has hitherto been claimed as the only explanation?

Spiritualists have an alternative, the only alternative explanation of these phenomena. For us there is no need to eliminate and invalidate the larger portion of the Gospel story. We see that it was not miracle, but laws of psychic science which were responsible for that element for which miracle has been claimed to be the only explanation. But for the Modern Churchman, this interpretation is not yet available. He refuses to look at it. And since he now rejects his old interpretation of miracle, I invite his consideration to the following: I suggest to the Modern Churchman that if neither miracle or laws of psychic science were responsible for the prenatal manifestations of spirits to Mary and to Joseph, to the Shepherds, to the Magi, to Joseph, warning him to escape from Herod's massacre of infants—all giving spiritual significance to the birth

of Jesus—then these manifestations did not take place, and we are left with a bare record of an ordinary birth, under doubtful circumstances, of one of the sons of a village carpenter. As the Rev. R. G. Griffith puts it: “Jesus was born into the world in the normal way; his parents were married Jews of Galilee.”

Now Spiritualists have no wish whatever to make out a case for anything supernatural about the birth of Jesus, but we see no reason to select for rejection, as incredible, accounts of spirit-manifestations which are analagous with phenomena which we are experiencing to-day. *We cannot claim them as historical facts, but we can claim them as phenomena which are being paralleled in our world to-day.*

Whilst we see no need to read into the story of the birth of Jesus, as recorded in Matthew and Luke, any happenings of a supernatural order, we acknowledge that the manifestations from the spirit-world preluded and gave spiritual significance to the birth of One who was Himself to exercise spiritual gifts of a rare but not exclusive nature. And I affirm that the elimination, the arbitrary elimination of these spirit-manifestations from the story of the birth of Jesus is gratuitous, unnecessary and extremely harmful to the cause of Christianity as a religion.

Again, if neither miracle nor laws of psychic science were responsible for the works of healing and the signs and wonders which were distinctive features in the story of the life of Jesus, if neither miracle nor laws of psychic science accounted for the manifestation of Moses and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration; if neither miracle nor laws of psychic science were responsible for the resurrection, post-crucifixion appearances, and final so-called ascension of Jesus of Nazareth, then it is probable that *none of these events can ever have occurred*, since these events, as described in the New Testament, embodied as their distinguishing features phenomena for which either miracle or laws of psychic science alone can be held accountable.

And, logically as it seems to me, Modern Churchmen must in their heart of hearts be coming to the conclusion that these events never occurred at all—that they are fairy tales and legends to which only the credulous could pay heed.

It would even seem that the test of the truth of the Christian story is to be found by the test of the truth of the psychic phenomena, of Spiritualism. And, quite apart from the question as to the veridity of the whole story, without these manifestations of a spiritual nature what a dull affair is made of the Christian religion!

What is left of the story? The moral teachings of Jesus, extracted chiefly from the Sermon on the Mount—which in itself was not original, a similar teaching having been given by Krishna and other great religious teachers. Truly, the Modern Churchman is left with an emasculated Christianity.

But, thank God, there is an alternative to miracle, and that alternative is Spiritualism.

Spiritualism clothes each one of those basic-episodes in the life of Jesus with realism, whilst eliminating all necessity for recourse to outworn miracle. Like the Modern Churchman, we too reject miracle, but we have an alternative interpretation which accounts satisfactorily for all the phenomena for which miracle has hitherto been claimed as the only explanation.

We can maintain the Christian story intact, without depriving it of those features which gave it the spiritual atmosphere essential for religion.

We Spiritualists can be out and out Christians—hot Gospellers if you like, without any prostitution of our reasoning faculties, because there is no need for us to delete all that which lifts the story on to a higher plane. Assuming it is true as history, we can swallow the New Testament whole. We can accept it as it stands. We find that Spiritualism corroborates the Bible, and the Bible corroborates Spiritualism.

It comes to this, that *Spiritualism is saving Christianity.*

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MANGO SEED

PUZZLING PHENOMENON IN AN
AUSTRALIAN CIRCLE

Mr. George Garscadden, of Sydney, New South Wales, Australia (formerly of Glasgow, and for some time vice-president of the Glasgow Association of Spiritualists) sends us the following:

THERE has always been a controversy regarding the growing of the mango seed. Many dozens of times this has taken place with Mr. Charles Bailey as the Medium. Dr. H. Moroney Whitcombe generally controls the Medium, but for this particular phenomenon the control is a Hindoo spirit. About the 7th of May, Mr. Bailey handed me a mango seed which came as an apport in another circle to be given to me—as mangoes were not in season and seeds would be rather difficult to get. This particular seed was almost black. Dr. Whitcombe sent a request that we should prepare a pot of soil, water and a small cover, and have same ready for the Hindoo spirit to germinate the seed at our usual fortnightly circle, which we hold in Brookvale, about 11 miles from Sydney.

The home in which we hold our circle belongs to Mr. and Mrs. Harry Murphy. Mr. Murphy keeps a room apart for these circles, and it is not used for any other purpose. The circle is somewhat select and we only admit some friend of a member of the circle occasionally. Mr. Murphy has a brother, named Jack Murphy, who is a wireless operator on board a steamship at present visiting Sydney, but while the ship is here he is living with his brother. When told of the intended experiment with the mango seed he was very sceptical, having been in India with his ship several times; and, having heard of the mango "trick," he believed it was simply a repetition of the Indian jugglery trick carried out under the guise of Spiritualism. He was quite frank in giving expression to his scepticism. He is not a Spiritualist and at that time knew very little about it.

On the circle night, May 14th, 1936, Mr. Harry Murphy asked his brother Jack to get the pot of soil ready; and the mango seed, which is somewhat large and a bean shape, was marked with white duco so that it could be easily identified during and after the circle.

In due course, Dr. Whitcombe asked for the red light to be put on, and the Hindoo spirit took control. He scooped out a portion of the soil and placed the seed therein, then covered it over, poured on some water, then put the cover over the pot. Dr. Whitcombe resumed control; the red light was switched off, and the circle proceeded as usual for about twenty minutes. Dr. Whitcombe asked again for the red light to be put on.

Again the Hindoo took control; he uncovered the pot, scooped out the seed, but while doing so he somewhat jerkily remarked in broken English: "This no mango seed, but *this* mango seed." We did not know to what he was referring. He then took the seed out of the shell, which, in germinating, had opened, showing a sprout and root, each about an inch long. He threw the shell out—the same shell that was put in, as proved by the duco marks. The little plant was now put back into the soil and covered again. Dr. Whitcombe resumed control.

Now, Dan Leno frequently comes through, tells some funny story and makes jocular remarks, and he now came, and talking through the Shastaphone, said: "They put in peas and expect beans to come up." This seemed rather a pointless remark for him to make, and we took no notice of it.

Dr. Whitcombe said that nothing more would be done towards growing the plant that evening, but asked us to keep it in the dark till the following circle night. I may say that the plant is usually anything

from four to seven or eight inches high with a number of leaves at the end of the circle; but on this occasion, as I have said, Dr. Whitcombe said that nothing more would be done. Voices came through as usual till the end of the circle.

"NOW I AM CONVINCED"

It was all rather puzzling, but the explanation came when the circle finished. Jack Murphy was laughing, and said: "Well, now I am convinced that that was no trickery. When I put in the soil, it occurred to me that if the spirits could grow a mango seed they could also grow other seeds at the same time; so, unknown to anyone, I put in three sweet pea seeds, and when the Hindoo spirit came the second time and said, 'this no mango seed,' he had contacted the sweet pea seeds, and these had germinated and sprouted much higher than the mango seed."

Jack and his brother were sitting about two and a half feet from the pot, and they clearly saw the shoots of the peas above the soil in the red light. This apparently accounted for Dan Leno's remark, as he evidently knew what had been done, and also for the failure in having the plant grown as large as usual.

At a subsequent sitting, the plant had disappeared altogether—Dr. Whitcombe remarking that the Hindoos had taken it away as it had died, but the sweet peas were still growing and were a long way over the pot.

This surely should dispose of any doubts of growing the seed—at all events in Mr. Bailey's circle. The acceleration of vibrations necessary for growing the mango seed in such a short time were evidently concentrated on the whole pot of soil, and not concentrated solely on the mango seed.

FRAU KOEBER'S ACQUITTAL

As briefly reported in LIGHT last week, Frau Ingeborg Koeber (the Medium daughter of the late Judge Dahl, author of *We Are Here*) has been cleared by the Norwegian Court of all the charges brought against her.

These charges were, manifestly, absurd—namely that because, in a trance, she had predicted her father's death, she must have desired his death and eventually murdered him. Twice she has stood her trial on these absurd charges; now, according to Reuter's Oslo correspondent, "all charges laid bare and every shred of suspicion dispelled, Mrs. Koeber has been acquitted and released."

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CHRISTIANITY FROM THE OXFORD GROUP

Review by H. F. PREVOST BATTERSBY

THOUGH its salient theme is only indirectly concerned with the interests of LIGHT, many of its readers have wished for an opinion on Mr. Beverley Nichols' courageous plunge into the Siloam Pool of Buchmanite Confession—*The Fool Hath Said*.

"I am writing this book as I go along," the author tells us, "feeling my way. I don't know what the last chapter may be any more than you do."

Well, in a measure, it need be none the worse for that; it may gain in spontaneity what it lacks in precision, and precision is not always an asset in things which are spiritually discerned.

The book really begins with its Second Part, since it was Mr. Nichols' experience with the Oxford Group which impelled him, as he puts it, "to get as many people as possible to share with me in the excitement of living Christianity."

So he starts to explain Christianity to them: no easy task, especially for a novice; and faces, as his fundamental problem: "How can God—if there be a God—conceivably take any special and particular interest in this peculiarly insignificant planet?"

He thinks it is "vitally important" that the average man should be able to answer such a question.

Really it does not matter in the least; and he gets dreadfully tied up trying to explain the *uniqueness* of our Earth and the comparative insignificance of the remaining Cosmos.

He quotes from the astronomers, forgetting that astronomers *have* to write books, and that the "uniqueness" of the Earth is just one of those astronomical guesses which only remain in circulation for a year or two.

"There is nothing in the laws of Nature," he assures us, "to prevent us from believing that this little earth may be the only 'fertile' member of the immense galaxy of stars."

It *does* strike him that such a distribution is rather wasteful; but a somewhat irrational Deity is essential to his argument.

Having re-centralised the Earth into its pre-Copernican importance, he demonstrates, measuring up from man, that God has a moral sense; and makes an effort to prove survival from the New Testament, which leaves us rather hopeful than convinced.

Explaining why Christianity came when it did, and putting the arrival of man, as we know him, on the Earth at 30,000 years ago—a very conservative estimate—he tells us that: "If God were to speak to man, instead of leaving him in a bewildering silence, God would choose to speak about the time in which the Christian says He did speak."

Surely to condemn mankind to twenty-eight thousand years of "bewildering silence" was paying too high a price to secure the "uniqueness" of Christianity, and must have strained the "moral sense" of the Almighty.

Even the Jew—that appropriator of uniqueness—had glimpses that, after all, Jehovah might be doing something elsewhere for the rest of humanity.

Explaining God to men is a terribly difficult business. The miracles of the New Testament also involve explanations from which an acquaintance with psychic science would have absolved the author.

He says: "The miracles are totally unlike anything that has occurred in the world before or since. We proved this by referring to the miracles of the Apocrypha, which were invented." Surely a somewhat quaint idea of proof.

And again: "If men *tried* to invent a Christian miracle, they could not."

What *does* he mean? A miracle is merely something that we cannot explain. Pagan or Christian makes no

difference—save that the Pagan to-day is the more competent performer.

But this must be said. He does believe in Christ's miracles, despite a growing ecclesiastical propensity to explain them away.

WHAT CHRISTIANITY SHOULD DO

The second part of the volume, describing the 'change' which brought its first part into being, is altogether delightful. It is the kind of stuff which, in the vulgar phrase, Mr. Beverley Nichols can "do on his head"; but this is done, quite unmistakably, from his heart as well.

Viewing with excitement a great gathering of the Oxford Group, he turned to his companion: "This is news," I said to him. "News with a capital N. Genuine front page stuff. Are all the newspapers crazy? Why don't they do something about it?"

"He looked at me and smiled. 'Why don't you?'"

And here he is doing it.

We all know the story of the English workman, who, having knocked down a Jew, explained that he had done it because the Jews had killed Christ.

But that happened nineteen hundred years ago, he was reminded. "Well," said the honest fellow, "I only heard of it this morning."

Mr. Nichols has "only heard of it this morning," hence his sense of it as news, and his commendable vigour in striving to make as many people as possible share with him "in the excitement of living Christianity." More power to his pen!

But, like the honest workman, he has a rather restricted field of vision. Hence his craving for uniqueness.

But there is nothing unique in the Gospels.

Christ did but once more illuminate the message, hand on the torch, which for thousands of years had been passed from one to another of the world's Saviours. "God left not himself without witness," as St. Paul put it.

The upward urge blazed out as each great soul was lit by it; the same urge that pushed the fish from the water, the reptile from the slime. Evolution only has physical effects because it has spiritual causes.

And in his interpretation of that message, Mr. Nichols reveals something of that "only-heard-of-it-this-morning" point of view.

"The Christian maintains," he tells us, "that all Christ's words are workable. They are not merely patterns of abstract beauty, they are a practical guide to worldly policy."

No! Christ never spoke a word about worldly policy; he never showed the slightest concern for it. "What," asks Mr. Nichols, "would a Christian dictator of the British Empire do?" That is simple. He would, on discovering himself to be a Christian, cease to be a dictator.

Mr. Nichols "wants to put his Christianity into practice" by giving away the British Empire. But why should he counsel his country to do something he does not do himself?

Christ gave no instructions for dealing with other people's property; but he offered some drastic suggestions for the disposal of one's own.

Mr. Nichols quotes Tolstoy as an ally; but Tolstoy never visualised Christianity as a State religion.

To sincere, but worried people of importance, who asked what would become of their country if they followed Christ, he used to say: "When you follow Christ you haven't got a country."

Not that that helped them much!

And admirable as are the author's efforts, and those of men like-minded, to bring peace to the world, quoting "The Sermon on the Mount" is not going to be of any service, since it outlaws force, and on force must rest all forms of government. "Can you see Christ with a bayonet in his hand?" asks Mr. Nichols. Can you see

PRAYER BOOK TEACHINGS

MR. R. A. WHITMORE'S REPLY

DEAR Mrs. ST. CLAIR STOBART: Thank you for your kind and courteous reply to my letter. Far be it from me to be otherwise than polite to a lady whose whole life has been consecrated to sacrifice for the good of her fellow-men!

Nevertheless, you and I differ—though I am convinced that deep down we both mean very much the same thing. As the Catholic once said to the Protestant: "I believe all you *affirm*, it is only where you begin to *deny* that we part."

You certainly are mistaken when you say that my "apparent acceptance of your main tenets" is the result of "frontal attacks." For years past I have considered the evidence (*e.g.*) for the appearance of "Katie King" as convincing as any Biblical evidence for Survival. I cannot logically accept one and reject the other.

You complain that there is too much Old Testament, and too little New, in the Prayer Book. Yet the teaching of the New Testament is much more severe than that of the Old—I need hardly remind you that the idea of a Gehenna was unknown in Old Testament times. The punishments threatened in Old Testament times were all *temporal*—those in New Testament times, *spiritual*.

The most awful pictures of the "Wrath of an angry God" are in the New Testament—"the fire and worm," the "cutting off of the right hand," the denouncements against Cherazin, Capernaum, etc. The judgment, "Sheep and Goats," "Bind them in bundles to burn them," "The Lake of Fire," etc. These are all New Testament teachings.

Moreover, God is revealed as a Father, and One who loves His children, equally in the Old Testament. "The Lord is loving unto every man," "As a Father pitieth His own children," etc.

If God is able to feel the emotion of Love, He feels it in varying degrees according to the nearness to His own perfection which finite beings attain. If God can feel more Love, He can feel less, and (relatively) less love is only another name for "Wrath."

I do steadfastly maintain that to teach that God is a Being Who can witness deeds of atrocious cruelty without feeling angry is to degrade the conception of Deity below the human level. I hope you will not think the illustration I am about to give both irrelevant and irreverent. In a certain town a very well-known and respected citizen was very frequently photographed—and always with a smile! It was quite a standing joke, and people heard with relief that there existed a single example of a photo of the same gentleman without the

smile. A fabulous value was put on this strange deviation.

No wonder the exception was valuable—for it showed that the gentleman was *human*—a constantly smiling man would be horrible. Imagine a man watching a brutal murder with a smile on his face! A judge saying, "The sentence of this court is . . . etc.," smiling ghoulishly at the prisoner! The same idea applies with greater force to the Deity. Indifference to cruelty and wickedness is quite incompatible with perfect Love, either in God or Man.

Personally, I do not think that either of the conflicting parties in Spain believes that God approves of murder. Whatever they may say, it is with them, as with every wicked man when his passions lead him to do evil, "The worthless man says in his heart, there is no God." The Bible teaches us not to avenge ourselves, *because* vengeance belongs to God.

The Deluge was doubtless brought about by natural causes, as was the Pestilence in the days of David. God no more caused those people to die than he causes you and me to die when our time comes, but their fate occurred in a particular way, and at a particular time, to teach a lesson, in both cases, salutary to survivors.

I have no desire to defend the ridiculous hymn you quote, and many others of the same kidney. They are unauthorised. There is only one Prayer Book hymn, and that is the "Veni Creator."

I have shown that the Prayer Book clearly teaches that the soul lives with God after bodily death. I admit there is a certain confusion both in the Prayer Book and the New Testament about the "sleep" of death. We are told that St. Stephen "fell asleep." St. Paul says that the departed "sleep in Jesus," while he also says that to depart is to be "with Christ." I suppose "sleep" refers to the appearance of the body after death. In the same way "the dead" in contradistinction to the "quick," simply means those persons who will be alive when Christ comes and those who have died before. Most people understand these terms. After all, resurrection only implies the resuscitation some time or other of the entire personality. Remember, it is Christ, and not the Old Testament, who speaks of "all that are in the graves" hearing the Voice of the Son of God and coming forth.

Surely, my dear lady, we must apply sanctified common sense to our reading of Bible or Prayer Book, and balance one with another, making all allowance for symbolical and poetic expressions. I think—forgive me—you raise bogies to knock them down!

After all, every Creed is only the nearest approximation to the truth that man's mind can conceive. The truth itself is beyond all human conception.

The exhortation in the Communion Service which you think severe, was the work of Protestant reformers, and I am not at all anxious to defend it or retain it. So far as I am concerned, you may delete it (with other innovations from the same source) from the Prayer Book—no regrets and "no flowers!" All I have to say about it is, that so far as it quotes the Bible it speaks truly when it says in figurative and poetical language that God loves good and will reward it, and hates evil and will punish it.

I still adhere to the grand Old Faith well expressed in the concluding lines of Miss Sewell's "Little Forester":

"The forest trees are levelled now, no wolves disturb
our rest,
But still the wicked are accursed, and still the
righteous bless'd,
And still the humble sinners cry, who doth his sin
forsake
Is heard by God, all merciful, for Christ our
Saviour's sake."

Thank you

ROBERT A. WHITMORE.

(Continued from previous page).

him with a policeman's baton? It is the method and not the implement that matters.

"Christianity has, of course, never yet been tried," says Mr. Nichols.

Yes, it has been tried; but, alas! for so short a while; and its failure came when it looked like a success, and tried, as Mr. Nichols would have us try, to give it a political application.

Yet he does understand that it is within us that the Kingdom of God must have its being.

"For Christ's words, as I have said before, were never addressed to the man next door. They were always addressed to *you*. It is for *you* that the infinite comfort of them is stored, and for *you* that the breathless challenge is delivered."

Let that stand for the sound core of a volume for which one must wish the widest circulation, certain that, thanks to the sincerity of its instruction, "the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein."

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).

REINCARNATION

Sir,—In the interesting article by Mr. A. Howgrave-Graham on the theory of Reincarnation (LIGHT, October 8th), he convincingly brings forward the philosophical arguments in its favour, especially those which offer an explanation of the apparent glaring injustices of life.

As one, who in very early youth was attracted to this doctrine, or perhaps I should say hypothesis, by its *inherent reasonableness*, I would like to emphasise another point which appears to me of great importance.

Not only does a belief in Reincarnation offer the best solution of the, to any reflective mind, tragical inequality of human destinies, but the conditions of earth-life, with its grim struggles, its wild alternatives of joy and suffering, alone provide opportunities for *growth* to the incarnate soul—above all for the growth of love, the one enduring strand which irradiates the complex web of terrestrial existence.

All the world religions teach that this, our earth, is a place of probation.

Keats calls it the "Vale of soul-making": "There may be Intelligences, or sparks of the divinity in millions, but they are not souls till they acquire identity . . . Do you not see how necessary a world of pains and troubles is to school an Intelligence and make it a Soul? A place where the heart must feel and suffer in a thousand adverse ways."

But of what use as a *training school* can one brief sojourn on earth be to such varying types as, for instance, a tribal African negro, a saintly and learned bishop, a Parisian apache, or a child whose time has been too short to have learnt any but the most elementary lessons. Also, from what source have they derived the qualities which to a large extent spell destiny?

Mr. Howgrave-Graham rightly stresses a belief—held by all who have studied the subject, that pontifical utterances issuing from the mouths of Mediums should be received with caution, yet it is a significant fact that *all* teachings from this source are in agreement in picturing (for such as have led a normally satisfactory life) after-death conditions as devoid of "pains and troubles," and of the stern spur of necessity which invoke effort and endurance and lead to the formation of character.

Perhaps Plato, in that marvellous myth, "The Vision of Er," in his modest and undogmatic manner, adumbrates this ancient belief with greater insight than any other.

It is one which is held to-day by more than one-third of the human race, and one towards which—in the West—some of the greatest philosophic and poetical minds have gravitated.

With regard to the difficulty expatiated upon at the conclusion of Mr. Howgrave-Graham's paper, the attainment of spiritual perfection, this, although the ideal which all religious teaching seeks to inculcate, is surely not held out as possible of ultimate achievement *during embodiment*.

"Why callest thou me good? There is none good save God," was the attitude of one whom the Christian world hails as Lord and Master. The exhaustion of Karma does not imply immediate perfection. It *does* imply a loosening of all the fetters which tie the soul to earth, all obligations fulfilled, all wrongs forgiven, the love-nature deepened and freed from the insistent claims of the lower self: "Love—glorious though it be—is a disease as long as it destroys or even impairs the freedom of the soul."

And, from the positive side, it must include the

passionate desire of the personality for closer union with its Divine Source, which invokes fulfilment.

Plotinus, whose philosophy was based on Reincarnation, in his rare moments of ecstasy, was able to contact this condition of infinite expansion which he terms: "The Intelligible World," in which all spirits share, and to which all contribute: "In this intelligible world everything is transparent. No shadow limits vision. All the essences see each other and interpenetrate each other in the most intimate depth of their nature. Light everywhere meets light."

S.W.5.

URSULA LOW.

IMMUTABLE LAWS OF NATURE

Sir,—Mr. Howgrave-Graham's article on the Problem of Reincarnation, ends with a very provocative question, "Do you believe in Reincarnation?" He adds: "I suspect you cannot tell me, either." Personally I can answer that question with an emphatic affirmative.

The memory of past lives is probably far more common than he believes, particularly in the East where some form of Reincarnation is accepted as a commonplace of existence. This comes out very clearly in Fielding Hall's book, *The Soul of a People*. Naturally, the bulk of Europeans, who have never even heard of Reincarnation, would attribute any fleeting memories of their own past lives to imagination, or racial, rather than personal recollection.

I have no doubt whatever that Reincarnation and Karma (one may not be divorced from the other), are immutable Laws of Nature or, as I should prefer to say, of God; but there are so many Laws of Nature of which we understand little or nothing, that the absence of memory is in itself no valid argument against the truth of Reincarnation. Memory of past lives is by no means always desirable, and would to many souls be a crushing burden. The harvest of experience from the past is converted into both character and environment, irrespective of the individual's memory of that past.

My own Guide told me recently that a belief in Reincarnation is the one hope for the world. Certainly no other theory explains the apparent injustice of Life, nor does any other scheme make man the "Captain of his Soul," and arbiter of his destiny. "As a man sows even so shall he also reap." That is the Divine Law.

From what I have been told from the Other Side, the law of cycles seems to apply to Rebirth, as well as to so many other matters in this Universe. Human lives run in cycles of sevens, the time spent between lives depending on a variety of causes, not the least being that certain souls tend to reincarnate in Groups, when they are working and developing on the same vibration.

The attainment of spiritual perfection is, I believe, the purpose of life. Have we not warrant for that belief in the injunction of Jesus: "Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father in Heaven is Perfect"? He would hardly have suggested an unobtainable goal, or one beyond the reach of all mankind.

We have no reason to suppose, however, that perfection is necessarily attained on this material plane. May not this world, with its series of lives, sometimes as a man and sometimes as a woman, in health or disease, in brown, white, black or yellow bodies, be but the kindergarten, the preparatory school, and even the public school, but not the University where we shall take our degree?

What, may we ask, is to put a limit to the number of our earth lives? When we can look deep within our own hearts, and find no hatred there of any man, when the love for God, and the service of mankind are the only ideals towards which we are constantly striving, forgetting in them the very small matter of our own salvation, then we are ready to leave this earth behind, and "go up higher." And perhaps the most important work we can do for our brother Man is that which can be carried out best from the Other Side.

Paignton,

IRIS VALERIC YEOMAN.

South Devon.

(Other letters on Reincarnation are held over).

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

RESCUE CIRCLES

Sir,—I should like to reply to Mr. J. R. Bennett's letter in the issue of October 8th.

Firstly, your correspondent seems confused over the "attributes" of a human entity on earth, on the near-earth spirit-planes, and on the more advanced planes of spirit. This earth is equally the "House of the Creator," but here we each have a body (including a physical brain), an etheric counterpart, or soul, and some part of the Divine Spirit. At death we shed the body, keeping the other two, soul and spirit. Eventually we dispense with the etheric counterpart and become pure spirit. This is the teaching of the High Guides to-day, and of the Great Spirits, who have, in the past, returned to earth.

We, who do hear from "those countless numbers who are in utter misery" through our rescue circles, can easily understand that the etheric body does suffer from maladies which are independent of the physical body, which is shed at death. These maladies of the soul continue on the Other Side until they are put right by Mediums, such as C. S. Collen-Smith, Dr. Wickland and others, together with their earth helpers.

Really, Mr. Bennett should join a reputable rescue circle, so that he might learn of these things at first-hand. Spiritual and natural laws would be far from immutable were man to become "pure spirit" without let or hindrance, by the mere accident of death.

Man is always part of the Divine Spirit both on earth and in the immediate hereafter, but not for aeons of time can he reasonably expect to discard all outer encumbrances.

E. F. BENTLEY.

Sir,—There is only one answer to Mr. Bennett's letter, published on October 8th. Will he kindly take the trouble to investigate his subject, *i.e.*, conditions on the lower planes, before attempting to argue about it!

E. M. PHILIPSON.

DOCTORS ON THE OTHER SIDE

Sir,—I was interested to read the views expressed in Mrs. M. Saunders-Knox-Gore's letter (LIGHT, October 8th) and beg a short space of your valuable columns to correct one or two errors with reference to my letter of September 17th.

Your contributor writes; "First and foremost, I suggest that investigation and experience of a subject is surely advisable before beginning an argument on the said subject." I am not entirely without experience of "Rescue Circles," as I have both sat in one and read many reports of the activities of others. Secondly, "Why does Mr. Mobbs imagine that the plane of Mother Earth is so advanced with War, etc., active and imminent in all parts of the World." There was nothing in my former letter to suggest that I hold such an opinion, on the contrary, my contention was that the etheric realms offered the greater scope for advancement.

Again; "Life is progressive only when the mind is anxious to follow the path of progress. Surely Mr. Mobbs does not imagine such a thing to be automatic?" I do not. I said skill and knowledge were acquired, and, to my mind, that implied aim and industry. Also I am told that; "If I understand anything of the different states of vibration in the Universe, I should appreciate that to be controlled by evil or ignorant entities is a very great strain upon the Medium, and it needs the co-operation of the higher spirits to render the experiments both successful and harmless, and there

are many mediums who cannot and will not expose themselves to the risk."

In my opinion, there are enough Spirit Doctors and healers of both "High" and "Low" states of consciousness, over on the Other Side to handle effectively patients suffering from possible diseases of an etheric origin. And if "reasoning" with the entities brings light, the spirit helpers must be devoid of the faculty, if only members of "Rescue Circles" can bring this about. Finally, in view of the many etheric planes of being, why should Mrs. Saunders-Knox-Gore assume that "spirits obsessing other etheric entities, "are earth-bound?"

Lowestoft

REGINALD O. MOBBS.

INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS

Sir,—It is no doubt open to Mr. Barbanell to criticise the choice of Glasgow as the venue for the next congress, but the fact remains that the invitation of the Glasgow Association was the only one received.

Prior to the last Congress at Barcelona, Mr. J. B. McIndoe came to London to put his claims of the I.S.F. before representatives of all the large London Groups, but there was no response to his appeal for affiliation to the I.S.F. This is the answer to the unwarranted charge made by Mr. Barbanell of selfishness on the part of the Glasgow Association and the S.N.U.

The plea of Mr. Barbanell that overseas delegates should be given the opportunity of seeing British Spiritualism at its best is quite in order, but he did not stop at that. Without enquiry as to what was being done by the inviting body, he set about arranging for certain Spiritualists to act as hosts, a matter which was entirely outside his province.

The President of the Union only intervened because Mr. Barbanell had conveyed a wrong impression to our American friends. He made it clear that the London District Council of the S.N.U. had the matter in hand, and would invite the co-operation of the London Groups. There is no point, therefore, in Mr. Barbanell's insistence that the co-operation of other Spiritualist bodies should be sought.

By his failure to publish Mr. J. B. McIndoe's letter he has given a one-sided view of the matter to his readers, many of whom have had no opportunity of judging the merits of the case. I am sorry to see the *Psychic News* resort to such tactics to gain a point.

J. M. STEWART, President, L.D.C.

THE AURA

Mrs. Bertha Harris gave a lecture on the Aura before a large audience at the B.C.P.S., on Wednesday (October 14th). She recounted many of her interesting experiences gained, from childhood onwards, from her ability to see the aura not only of human beings but of everything that has life. She had proved to her own satisfaction that pain and other sensations endured even by the so-called lower forms of life are reflected in the aura, and had noted this change not only in horses, dogs and cats, but in flies, beetles and crabs. This would seem to have some bearing on the recent controversy in LIGHT regarding the preparation of shell-fish for the table.

The lecture was succeeded by a remarkable demonstration of aura reading. Mrs. Harris described the characteristics of several persons present, mentioned their predilections and capabilities, and gave their past and present physical ailments. In every case her "reading" was admitted to be correct. At the conclusion she answered several interesting questions in a manner entirely satisfactory to the audience.

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EDITOR GEORGE H. LETHAM

As We See It

IDENTITY OF "CONTROLS"

WHO or what are the "Controls" that speak through Trance Mediums? Invariably they claim to be beings quite distinct from the Medium—human beings who have passed through the doorway of Death to a greater Life, and who, having a mission to speak to the people of Earth, use the mind and the body of the Medium as the necessary means of communication. This is the view accepted (with reservations as to particular cases) by Spiritualists and by many experienced Psychical Researchers; but orthodox psychologists and physiologists are yet to be convinced.

Generally speaking, the psychologist—when he condescends to discuss the subject—assumes and asserts that all "Controls" are secondary personalities of the Mediums through whom they speak, and that, apart from the Mediums, they have no existence whatever.

Yet there is evidence—and it is growing—worthy of consideration by scientific men, which goes to prove that the Spiritualists are right and the psychologists wrong.

There is the strange case of the "Controls" of Miss Geraldine Cummins, discussed in *Psychic Science* for October by Miss E. B. Gibbes. There are two chief "Controls," Astor and Silenio, who act as "door-keepers" for the Messengers and others (including Frederic Myers) who use Miss Cummins' hand. Astor describes himself as a pre-Christian Pagan and expresses views regarding Christians and Christianity with which Miss Cummins strongly disagrees. Silenio represents himself as a Christian martyr, and he has played a very important part in the production of the Scripts of Cleophas, which contain historical information which Miss Cummins has had no opportunity of acquiring in a normal way. These two "Controls" criticise each other and object to each other, just like human beings who find themselves in the position of rivals or competitors.

Then there is the case of the "Controls" of Mrs. Eileen Garrett, as described by Mrs. Garrett herself and by Dr. Elmer Lindsay in addresses delivered at the British College of Psychic Science and reported in *Psychic Science* for October. There are, again, two chief "Controls," namely, Uvani and Abdul Latif, both of whom claim to be beings quite separate from the Medium. In the United States, we are told, Dr. Cornelius Traeger, of the Rockefeller Institute, was induced to undertake a long series of physiological experiments for the purpose, as he thought, of demonstrating that the "Controls" were imaginary. Actually, what he demonstrated was that the reactions of Mrs.

(Continued at foot of next column).

COSMIC CONSCIOUSNESS

IN connection with the three lectures on this subject by Miss Charlotte Woods (one on June 11th, reported LIGHT, August 6th; the second on October 8th, and the third to-night (Thursday, October 22nd), it is helpful to recall some of the accounts of this experience reported by Dr. Bucke and others.

One of these concerns the Spanish mystic, John Yepes, known also as St. John of the Cross. This man was a Carmelite Friar of Medina (1542-1591), and wrote a number of religious books. At one time, he was imprisoned for adhering to some monastic forms and, as far as can be ascertained, it was near the end of his term of imprisonment that Illumination—or the experience of Cosmic Consciousness—came to him. The brightness of the light which, as apparently so often, accompanied this happening, was so great that, like St. Paul, this Spanish saint suffered partial blindness after it for some days. The light continued, however, according to accounts from his contemporaries, to be reflected from John of Yepes' face as he sat in his cell.

When, later on, he was frequently importuned by his disciples to describe what exactly happened to him during his "Illumination," St. John for a long time refused to comply with their request, because, he said, "Such explanation relates to matters so interior and spiritual as to baffle the powers of language. All I can say falls far short of that which passes in this intimate union of the soul with God; that Love still more perfect and complete in the same state of transformation."

The nearest approach to a description of which he felt himself capable, runs as follows:

"I entered, but I knew not where; and there I stood, all science transcending. I knew not where I entered; for when I stood within, not knowing where I was, I heard great things. What I heard I will not tell: I was there as one who knows not, all science transcending. Of peace and devotion the knowledge was perfect, in solitude profound. The right way was clear, but so secret was it, that I stood babbling, all science transcending.

"I stood enraptured in ecstasy, beside myself, and in my every sense no sense remained. My spirit was endowed with understanding, understanding nought, all science transcending. The higher I ascended, the less I understood. It is the dark cloud, illumining the night. Therefore, he who understands knows nothing, ever all science transcending. . . . The knowing that knows nothing is so potent in its might that the prudent in their reasoning can never defeat it; for their wisdom never reaches to the understanding that understandeth nothing, all science transcending. . . .

"And if you would listen, this sovereign wisdom doth consist in a sense profound of the essence of God: it is an act of His compassion, to leave us, nought understanding, all science transcending." M.A.B.

(Continued from previous column).

Garrett, Uvani and Abdul were totally different. "The results of these experiments," say Dr. Elmer Lindsay, "were really so startling that Dr. Traeger, being a scientist and a medical man, hesitated to show them to the public. The electro-cardiogram records were quite opposed. For Eileen Garrett they showed one type, for Uvani a distinctly different type, and for Abdul Latif they were tremendously different."

Dr. Traeger's results go beyond anything suggested by Spiritualists, for they give different physiological reactions for the Medium and the "Controls," indicating that the three persons are so distinct that, although manifesting through one organism (that of the Medium), they show differing physical characteristics.

Here, surely, is something on which scientific men can take hold; and it may be hoped that Dr. Traeger will overcome his professional reluctance and make his records available for study.

LOOKING ROUND THE WORLD

WHO ARE THE MASTERS?

NOTWITHSTANDING the "debunking" of the Mahatmas by the Hare brothers in their book, *Who Wrote the Mahatma Letters*, and the doubts cast upon their existence, the Editor of the *Occult Review* retains his belief in them and proclaims it confidently in his October issue.

First of all he tells his readers what the Masters are not. They are not "common spooks of the séance-room" (note the word "spooks!"), neither do they control "misguided Mediums," or appear to "deluded psychics," or purvey the "platitudinous slush" published in their name. Of all this the Editor of the *Occult Review* seems to be quite certain, although he does not explain on what his certainty is based.

"Who then," he asks, "are the Masters?" And he answers confidently: "They are God-realised beings, whether embodied or disembodied, men of our own or some other humanity, who collectively may be regarded as constituting a Spiritual Brotherhood, whose task it is to foster every budding germ of spirituality in man, individually or collectively, and by Their inspiration to forward the upward development of the human race."

DOGMATIC, BUT UNPROVED

This is dogmatic enough, and, like some other dogmas, quite beyond the possibility of any proof understandable by ordinary men and women. Still it presents the idea of real beings; but this idea is immediately shattered by the equally dogmatic assertion that: "They are essentially *spiritual powers*, and as such to be sensed through intuition by the Divine spark which lies buried deep within the human heart. They are not to be seen in the way that Mediums and other psychics draw them. They are beyond name and form."

From which it may be gathered that *the Masters are not beings but powers, without name or form*, and whose very existence must be accepted as a matter of faith.

To Spiritualists this will not be very acceptable; for although Spiritualists recognise the value of faith, they usually insist on having a basis of ascertainable fact on which it can be rested—and if such a basis of fact exists in regard to the Mahatmas, the Editor of the *Occult Review* does not tell his readers what or where it is.

"GREAT MEN"

In the *Occult Review* there is another article on the subject of the Mahatmas, by Helen Savage, M.A. (described as "a contribution from Point Loma," and therefore presumably representing the view of American Theosophists).

In this article, the conclusion reached is that "the Mahatmas do not need our defence. Indeed," says the writer, "all too often have their supporters, by misplaced enthusiasm and ignorance of the Masters' true work, made these *great men* look ridiculous in the eyes of the world."

This is a different view. "Great men" may be "spiritual powers," as the Editor of the *Occult Review* asserts, but one cannot picture them as "beyond name or form," for then they would not be men, either great or small.

It would be interesting to have Helen Savage's view as to where the "supporters" are to be found whose "misplaced enthusiasm and ignorance" she deplores.

NOT FORTUNE-TELLING

By the decision of the Lord Chief Justice and other Judges in the Divisional Appeal Court, in the case *Barbanell v. Naylor*, it is established that it is not fortune-telling within the meaning of the law to publish astrological predictions in a newspaper applicable to all readers born on a certain date. This decision follows the line most people expected and will not, therefore, cause surprise, whatever may be thought about the wisdom, or unwisdom, of the predictions.

AN ANGLO-CATHOLIC SPIRITUALIST

OCCASIONALLY we read, or hear, the defiant assertion that "a Christian cannot be a Spiritualist." When made by a Spiritualist, this assertion means nothing more than that a Christian cannot be a Spiritualist of the particular type to which the assertor belongs. But there are many types of Spiritualists, and quite certainly many Christians claim to be Spiritualists and show good reason for their claim.

Of such is our esteemed correspondent, Mr. Robert A. Whitmore, who is an Anglo-Catholic Spiritualist. In a covering letter sent to *LIGHT* with his reply to Mrs. St. Clair Stobart (published on another page), Mr. Whitmore writes: "It is, I think, a great pity that any questions are introduced at all about orthodoxy or heterodoxy. The whole evidence for proved Survival should be driven home in season and out of season—and then each denomination could draw its own private inferences from the ascertained facts."

This is a point of view with which we have much sympathy, although we recognise the difficulty of avoiding controversy when feeling is strong, as so often it is.

"After all," Mr. Whitmore continues, "there is no consensus of opinions, evidently, in the spirit-world as to abstract religious dogma. Some (spirits) say Christ is God, some deny it; some say God is a Trinity, some deny it; some say there is Reincarnation, some don't know and some deny. Until the spirit-world has made up its mind and agreed to one creed," he concludes, "we cannot be expected to give up the faith of centuries."

SPIRITUALISTS CAN BE CHRISTIANS

There are, as we have said, many kinds of Spiritualists, and some of them do assert that a Spiritualist cannot be a Christian and, conversely, that a Christian cannot be a Spiritualist. This view is once more put very strongly by Mr. Arthur Findlay in his novel (just published), *The Torch of Knowledge*, in which the teaching of his earlier books is put in story form. Mr. Findlay's view, as thus expressed, is strongly anti-Christian; but we need scarcely point out that Mr. Findlay's view cannot be regarded as representative of Spiritualism in any comprehensive sense.

This can be made abundantly clear by a reference to the address of Mrs. St. Clair Stobart published in this issue. Quite properly, Mrs. Stobart points out that an understanding of psychic law enables Spiritualists to "maintain the Christian story intact," and that, as a consequence, "Spiritualists can be out and out Christians—hot gossellers if you like, without any prostitution of our reasoning faculties."

It does not follow that all Spiritualists *must* be Christians—there are Jewish Spiritualists, Muslim Spiritualists and Hindu Spiritualists, and there are also Spiritualists who find in the implications of Spiritualism all the religion they require. But it is certain that many Spiritualists *are* Christians. Indeed, Bishop Welldon (a former Dean of Durham) has declared that "all Christians are Spiritualists," and we hope the time will come when this will be true in the fullest possible degree.

JUST TO REMIND YOU!

To-night (at 8.15) at L.S.A. headquarters, Miss Charlotte Woods will deliver the second of her lectures on "The Path to the Higher Consciousness." The first lecture (rightly described as "an intellectual treat") dealt specially with "The Platonic Tradition;" to-night's subject will be "The Yoga of the East and the Yoga of Christ," and there is every reason to expect that it will be even more interesting than the first.

To-morrow (Friday) night (at 8.15) at the Caxton Hall, Westminster, under the auspices of the L.S.A., Mrs. Helen Hughes will give another of her wonderful demonstrations of clairaudience as a means of obtaining evidence of Survival, and an introductory address will be given by the Rev. C. Drayton Thomas.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

"DIVINITY THE SOURCE OF LIFE"

MR. W. J. MACMILLAN gave the second of his series of Study Classes on Tuesday, October 13th, at the L.S.A. After referring to the chief points of his address on October 6th, on "The Body as a Machine," the lesson mainly took the form of question and answer. It was not so much as a machine that Mr. Macmillan spoke of the body in this second lesson, but rather as "A Temple"—a temple that was at the same time a power house.

"The ideal from the physical standpoint," he said, "is that the body should run in such a way that one is simply not conscious of it." It is when things do not run smoothly that we become aware of the body; and this smoothness of running is achieved by "perfect co-ordination of mind and muscle," and by *relaxation* which must be both of mind and body: "It is impossible to relax completely if one's mind is in an absolute turmoil."

The whole essence of what was said might be summed up in the speaker's reply to one questioner: "I am moving on the principle that divinity is the source of life, and on that principle one then has to include all the world—the physical world as well as the mental and the spiritual; and then the problem lies in the recognition of that divinity in the physical world." Not only in objects of inherent beauty are we to see this divinity; we must train ourselves to recognise and make ourselves at one with all things, including such things as a recalcitrant piece of machinery; in which case, instead of exhausting ourselves in the struggle, we shall literally "absorb energy."

Regarding the body as a temple, a generating station for power, Mr. Macmillan gave a demonstration of helpful breathing exercises, instructing his hearers to "visualise the air as God and endless life pressing in upon you, and the motions as terms of acceptance of that divinity." So each day, and each item of each day, should be met from this point of view; our meals, our food, our little daily duties, if recognised as vehicles for expression of divinity, can all become a means for generating creative power.

Other questions brought out the necessity for balancing the emotions with the intellect; for concentrating not upon one's own difficulties and problems, but upon one's latent divine qualities; to do the former tends to develop egotism, to dwell on the divine attributes enlarges one's capabilities immeasurably. "I do not believe," said the speaker, "one accomplishes spiritual growth by *striving* at all. It is in accepting something which is there. If you *attempt* to breathe, you make it difficult, and rather a nuisance. If you accept breathing, there is no problem."

Also he reminded his audience that: "One draws from a person exactly what one has emphasised in oneself. If one is angered, instantly one irritates the other person. One's voice becomes slightly edged. But if one loves a person, as soon as that person dares to trust it as such, it calls forth love."

The development aimed at by these studies results in an enlargement of awareness—a *joyous* acceptance of that of which before we were unaware. The way to establish the desired "co-ordination is in terms of joy," that true joy that overcomes even the greatest of human griefs, the joy "that no man taketh from you."

"One's whole object," concluded the lecturer, "is to make one's body and mind as perfect an instrument as possible for Christ to use . . . Let us worship God in the body of holiness, let us sing unto the Lord."

If our age is really resolved to heap scorn on all that mankind have loved and admired since they began to find in Beauty a vision of God, we must be prepared for what in very old-fashioned language was called the coming of Antichrist.—Dean Inge, in the *Evening Standard*.

QUESTIONS ANSWERED

DESTRUCTIVE EFFECTS OF WRONG THINKING

THERE has been a repeated suggestion of late that, the demand for "evidence" having been so repeatedly and fully met, many readers of LIGHT and other Spiritualists would be glad if more prominence could be given to the Teachings of Spiritualism—to its philosophy rather than to its phenomena.

Such seekers after Teaching composed the majority of those who met at the L.S.A. on Wednesday, October 14th, to listen to the answers given by the ancient Chinese Wong through the Trance-mediumship of Mr. P. A. M. Annan.

During the unavoidable absence of Mr. Kenway, the chair was taken by Miss Yeatman. One of Mr. Annan's controls, Father John, gave the invocation, after which Wong took control, and answered the written questions handed in by members of the audience. These questions were—according to request—of an impersonal and general character, and the replies were listened to with evident interest and enjoyment.

Perhaps the two main points stressed by Wong in making his replies were: first, the destructive effects of wrong-thinking. This came out repeatedly: as diseases here weaken and destroy the physical body, so wrong-thinking weakens and impairs the astral body; the continual endeavour of Wong and collaborators of his on the Other Side, known as The Blue Band, is to work against such wrong thinking and to teach and instil into minds, here as well as there, the ideal of lofty and pure thought. It was also emphasised in the last question put, as to the cause of the present distressful European situation: this, too, the Chinese Teacher ascribed to selfish and unenlightened thinking. "Pray," Wong urged, "pray for wisdom and strength that the people of the earth may understand that life continues, and that what we do here, we repeat on the Other Side. There must be thoughts of love and humility, and all those wrong thoughts must go." The Law of Service must take the place of the law of self.

The second point of importance was one the wireless is gradually helping us to understand, namely, the importance of right and harmonious vibrational contact. "Could the spirit-people see us clearly?" They could if they were able to attune their vibrations to ours, so that they could enter into our aura. "How were spirit-controls enabled to find a suitable Medium through whom to speak?" Wong told his audience how, after seeking and watching, he had discovered a small boy (Mr. Annan), whose vibrational note was in harmony with his own; how long and patiently he had worked gradually to make his own higher spirit vibration and the growing boy's vibration approach more and more closely, until at last they were so harmoniously attuned to each other that he was able to make use of the earthly instrument.

Mr. Annan is to give further teachings on Wednesday, 28th, when Wong will deliver a short address on "How to attain self-knowledge in its spiritual aspect, before answering questions." This subject was suggested by a member of the audience.

THE GREAT PYRAMID

He drew for all humanity his plan,
In symbols universal, curve and line
Hewed it in everlasting rock that man
Could read, unfaltering, with the key divine.
Find there the saga of man's suffering climb,
The losing of his way in passages between
The pit from whence he came in course of time
To realms of mind, the Chamber of the Queen.
Here revelation comes at God's appointed hour;
The time is ripe and Nations play their part;
Humanity is turned from lust for power
To Charity, King's Chamber of the Heart.
E.W.J.

HOUSE WITH WEIRD NOISES FROM NOWHERE

WEIRD noises have been heard for some weeks in a house in Aketon Road, Castleford, occupied by Mrs. Wilkinson.

The sounds, which are described as being like dull thuds, were first heard some weeks ago, but little notice was taken of them until they became more insistent.

The owners of the property were then informed, and they caused investigations to be made by skilled tradespeople, who have ruled out suggestions that the noises may have been caused by subsidence owing to colliery workings or some defect in the hot water system.

The noises are chiefly heard in the hours of daylight, and more especially when the wireless is turned on.

A peculiar feature is that if a person asks for the sound to be given once, twice or more times, the sound is immediately heard in the walls or ceiling as many times as was requested.

More mysterious still is that small pieces of partly-burnt coal have fallen on, or near to, people in the house, even when they have been in rooms in which there has been no fire for some time, it is asserted.

Responsible men in various professions readily admit having heard the noises, and the mysterious happenings are causing no little interest in the district.

DR. F. H. WOOD AT BRADFORD

A LANTERN lecture on the "Rosemary" Xenoglossy was given on October 12th to the members of the Bradford branch of the Yorkshire Society for Psychic Research. Dr. F. H. Wood showed a number of photographs of transcriptions and translations of the Egyptian language-phrases analysed by his colleague, Mr. Howard Hulme. These were followed with great interest by an appreciative audience, who were obviously impressed by this convincing evidence of extended human survival for not less than three thousand years.

Prior to the lantern exhibition, Dr. Wood gave an address on the Six Stages of Psychic Inquiry, which he, as a student, had followed in the Rosemary case. They were: clarity of definition, accurate observation, truthful recording, the quest for corroborative evidence, the test of hypotheses, the publication of new truth.

These stages, he held, led naturally into each other. The necessity for the first was shown by the confusion of thought which exists concerning what was meant by the phrases "Psychic Research," "Spiritualism," and "Medium," which he analysed in detail.

Dr. Wood said the Rosemary Records had been compiled with a scrupulous care which noted all details contrary to his opinions, as well as those which confirmed his belief.

All known hypotheses had failed to meet this case except those of Extended Survival on Nona's part, and Reincarnation of "Vola" as Rosemary in this life. Having reached this stage, there was no other course open to him but to publish the truth demonstrated by these two hypotheses.

DOCTOR FODOR'S FIRST VOICE SEANCE

In the *Empire News* of October 11th, Dr. Nandor Fodor describes his "first interview with the Dead." It was in New York at the house of Mr. Arthur Ford, and the Medium was William Cartheuser. In full detail, Dr. Fodor tells how a Voice speaking in Hungarian (his native language) addressed him, claimed to be his father, and used words and phrases which clearly supported that claim, and how a prediction was made regarding an uncle which was literally fulfilled.

Dr. Fodor says that what he heard could not be explained by guessing nor by telepathy. "No one knows what telepathy is," he writes, "or how it works, but from experiments and observations we know how it does not work—and it does not work in the way it would have to do in this case."

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GREATER THAN LOVE

By E. B. GIBBES

WITH reference to the extract taken from the essay entitled "God is Greater than Love," which was published in *The Road to Immortality* and reprinted in *LIGHT* (October 8th), this section of the book roused interest and controversy before and after its publication. Two or three people questioned its orthodoxy. Others found in it an answer to the, to them, insoluble problem of reconciling an all-merciful and loving God with the fiendish cruelties and injustices that have been, and are still being committed in our world.

In view of the different attitudes of mind adopted by the readers of this essay in *The Road to Immortality*, I may mention that in a letter to me written two years ago, Sir Lawrence Jones recorded the fact that he had just found, in Miss Wingfield's *Guidance from Beyond*, the following lines (p. 165): "God is Love. But God is more than Love; He is also Wisdom."

About the same time another friend made the following reference to the same essay, in a letter to me: "I am now reading Reginald Hegy's '*A Witness through the Centuries*.' It impresses me as being sincere and is full of beautiful teaching, but 'God is Love,' on page 125, does not fill my mind with the same majestic truth as 'God is Greater than Love.'"

An intelligent critic of *The Road to Immortality*, who read this essay before the publication of the book, considered that the views expressed in it were too advanced for the majority of the public, and suggested its deletion. Others felt that it took the Cosmic, or wider, view of the greatest of all problems—the nature of God. And it would seem in these days, when Jews are persecuted in Germany and revolting atrocities are being committed daily in the civil war in Spain, that this essay does suggest a cogent, reasoned explanation as to why a powerful God, who is all-goodness, can permit such things to be.

Its brevity did not permit it to go into the details of this tremendous question. It was evidently intended merely as an introduction to the analysis of the nature of God which is published in Myers' second book, *Beyond Human Personality*. To obtain the complete answer, from the communicator's point of view, that would seem to harmonise our idea of a beneficent Deity with the evil and good of His creation, it would be necessary for the reader to compare this essay with the section related to it in the last mentioned book.

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(See special announcement, page 674)

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" 4.30—5 (Animal Group)

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WHEN YOU PRAY

By W. H. EVANS

IV.—CONFESSION

HOW natural it is when we draw nigh unto God to pour out to him our mistakes, failures, misunderstandings, struggles, and confess our weakness. There can be no healthy spiritual life for any who hold and suppress the struggles they have daily with circumstances or their fellow men. It is good to go to God as a son to a Father and tell him where we have failed, how we fell when in temptation, and how ashamed we are at being so unworthy of our high destiny. To do so is to be cleansed, to realise something of that wholeness which a consciousness of his forgiveness bestows upon us. One should not be unduly overwhelmed, for the overcharged heart is prone to exaggeration.

In confession one must be honest. God does not desire an extreme abasement, though he does wish us to empty ourselves of everything that is unworthy. It is good to go to him at the end of the day and plead his forgiveness, asking him to strengthen us so that in the days to come we may be able to prove ourselves more worthy. By such practices we maintain the balance of our spiritual forces. We can go forth knowing that though we must reap what we sow the reaping will be tempered with the awareness that behind the pain is the loving caress of a patient and understanding Father.

Many a heart hugs its care, keeps to itself its woes

and tribulations, turning inwards upon itself, feeding upon the diseased vanities of life, thinking that by so doing they are exhibiting strength. Alas! what can be the end of such but further pain until at last Giant Despair lays hold of the soul and whips it to an extremity of action which brings further misery and pain. What a relief such hearts might have if they opened up their souls to the loving gaze of one who, because he suffers and rejoices in so many human hearts, completely understands.

Those who practise confession and empty their hearts experience a daily renewal of the spirit. As time passes and strength increases they grow more worthily into the likeness and image of God, experience the refreshing rains of the spirit so that upon the desert of their lives spring up the flowers of lovely virtues, strong and vigorous in their growth, full of delights and shedding an aroma of sweetness upon them.

It is striking how the great souls who have won their way to the light agree in these things. The sense of separateness—due to sin—which weighs upon them is itself a pain. The heart longs for reunion. It is as if the soul had, through misunderstanding, quarrelled with God and rushed out into the world flouting his gifts, and striving through satisfaction of the senses to forget that act of sin. This is parabolic, but it reveals a great truth; for why should we when we awake to life be so conscious of separation and strive so earnestly for reunion if the separation were a falsity? The separation is in our wills, we wished it, we willed it, we went into the "far country" and exploited the things of the world until satiety made us turn homeward. Then the sense of separation desolates us, we yearn for reunion, reconciliation with the Father. How sincerely do we then confess our weakness and strive to achieve union with him. We reach out to him who alone can give satisfaction, until at last, out of the urgency of our desire, we reach the point where the human and divine mingle in loving fellowship. Comes the light, the joy, the wondrous sense of completeness. One with the Father, dwelling in him. Oh heart rejoice, for "underneath are the everlasting arms."

THE POWER OF THOUGHT

Thought is the great channel which connects all life, and by thought can contact be established with states of existence which have hitherto been unknown. Your thoughts, of whatever character they may be, are the basic influence moulding your ego, which is the permanent structure persisting after your body has passed back to its chemical constituents.

Thought comes not from but into your ego, and can be retained or rejected as you will. The impressions which are termed "thought" emanate from universal consciousness, and evil thoughts are but mutilated and distorted fragments of the great truth which lies in that power. It may be easier for you if we instance the evil which may spring from a portion of a truth about one of your daily happenings.

The power of thought is only limited by the capacity of the individual, and although you may consider that you mould your thoughts, this is not so: all that your ego is capable of doing is to tune itself to receive impressions of one kind or another, or to shut them out.

The character of the ego being moulded in accordance with its powers of reception, it is of the utmost importance that reception should be developed on a plane which will promote intellectual as well as spiritual progress.—(From a message from the Other Side received by Mr. and Mrs. Hope, Colchester).

A well-known medical man who visited a Spiritualist Church to satisfy his curiosity is now one of its most ardent supporters.—*Reynolds News*.

The Hamburg branch of the German Association for Psychical Research has been forbidden and its property confiscated.—*Daily Telegraph*.

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(See special advertisement, page 683.)

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SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25th—

11 a.m. Mr. Frank Wall

6.30 p.m. Mr. H. Ernest Hunt

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27th, at 8 p.m.—

Miss Lily Ford's "Know Thyself" Meeting

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28th, at 7.30 p.m.—

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nosis and Healing from 5.30 p.m. to 7 p.m.Fridays—Mr. F. Pitt and Mrs. Wharhirst will give Healing from
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11 a.m.—Mr. H. ERNEST HUNT

Clairvoyante: Miss Eveline Canon

6.30 p.m.—Rev. G. MAURICE ELLIOTT

Clairvoyante: Mrs. Gradon Thomas

Sunday, November 1st, at 11 a.m. ... Mr. JOHN G. FINDLAY

Clairvoyante: Miss Lily Thomas

Sunday, November 1st, at 6.30 p.m. ... Mr. HAROLD CARPENTER

Clairvoyante: Mrs. Helen Spiers

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Clairvoyante: Mrs. Lilian Austin

Wednesday, October 28th—Speaker: Mrs. Marjorie Livingston

Clairvoyante: Mrs. Helen Spiers

Monday. **WEEKDAY ACTIVITIES**

2.30—4 p.m. Mrs. Livingstone, by appointment.

2.30—Mrs. Bird's Ladies' Healing Circle. For appointments write to
the Hon. Secretary.

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

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

Tuesday. Mrs. Livingstone, by appointment.

Mrs. Helen Spiers, by appointment.

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

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

6 p.m.—Mrs. Bird's Ladies' Healing Circle. For appointments write
to Miss Robertson, Hon. Sec.

Thursday. Miss Lily Thomas, by appointment.

6.30 p.m.—Mrs. Bird's Mixed Healing Circle. For appointments write
to Miss Michell (Hon. Secretary).

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

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Sunday, October 25th, at 11 a.m.—Service, Address and Clair-

voyance: Mr. Gerald de Beaurepaire. At 6.30 p.m., Mr. Murray Nash

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of Christ "to seek." All visitors are therefore welcome and postal
information will be sent on enquiry. All services are free, the Fellowship
being maintained by voluntary offerings only.

OBLIGATIONS OF PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

ADDRESSING Leeds Psychical Research Society at the Leeds Institute on Wednesday night (October 14th) on some aspects of Psychical Research, Dr. W. H. Maxwell Telling said he found no fault with the old term Spiritualism. The study of the supernatural would be a more inclusive title, but some people found Psychical Research a more respectable title than Spiritualism.

Was it desirable that the public should indulge in Psychic Research, and did it do any practical good, he asked. It was more a means to an end than an end in itself, but it led to a fuller understanding of the spiritual life. The objective of Psychical Research should be the development of the spiritual life. For many, it formed a bridge into new territory; it was the bridge which took him from the sterile territory of agnosticism to new and wider country. It restored the balance of life, the spiritual element of which had lagged behind because of the wonderful influence of physical science.

Much more allowance should be made for those who found all that was necessary in the faith they possessed, but that such was not sufficient for many people was shown by declining attendance at Church. One effect of the impact of scientific materialism had been to blow away many things besides superstition, and in the fallen edifice was the lost faith of many. Psychical Research had been the means of recovering that faith.

No man could look into the subject exhaustively and emerge from it the same man, or hold the same opinions. Spiritualism or Psychical Research was in direct line of God's revelation and witness.—(*Yorkshire Post*).

SEANCE OF THE FUTURE

TELEVISION, ultra-violet photography, blood tests, sound recorders and graphology will revolutionise psychical research, said Dr. Nandor Fodor, Research Officer to the International Institute for Psychical Research, in an address to the Sheffield Society for Psychical Research.

Dr. Fodor described the séance of the future. The séance-room would be in total darkness, he said, and observers in another room would be able to see on a screen everything that happened in it.

The cost of the apparatus was alone holding back the experiments. Cinema pictures of séances were already being taken. Ultra-violet photography was more complicated than infra-red and not so developed, but he was sure the full solution of the problem was at hand.

Before very long it would be possible to take ultra-violet photographs with no visible light at all, and go as far as to take cinema pictures in total darkness.

Through sound recording they could record not only the actual voice, but the direction in which they travelled and the place in which they originated.

Dr. Fodor said the results of a blood test had shown that the blood of a Medium changed while under control.

A graphologist had also proved that some characteristics in the handwriting of a Medium under control were contrary to the writer's normal character.

Dr. Fodor appealed to Spiritualists not to concern themselves solely with mourners. Spiritualism, he said, concerned people before they were mourners. It taught them not to fear death.

MASONIC THEOSOPHISTS

THE new Headquarters of the British Federation of the Order of International Co-Freemasonry was solemnly consecrated "to the Glory of the Great Architect of the Universe and to the Perfecting of Humanity" on Sunday, October 4th. The building, which contains a large and a small temple, library, offices, refectory, and dressing rooms, is situated at 10 Ladbroke Terrace, London, W.11.

The Order is a world-wide body, having Lodges in many different countries, and works under an International Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite. It differs from "Orthodox" Masonry in that it admits women on equal terms with men, holding that the promotion of universal brotherhood, which is one of the primary objects of Freemasonry, cannot be properly practised if women are excluded. Its career began in 1882, when a French masculine Craft Lodge, deriving from the Grand Lodge of France (a body different from the Grand Orient) admitted a certain Mdle. Maria Deraismes, an authoress noted for her service to humanitarian and feminist movements.

In addition to the degrees worked by the usual Scottish Rite bodies, the Craft degrees (usually under the government of a Grand Lodge) are worked, and in the British Federation also those of Installed Master, Mark and Royal Arch. These have all been introduced by persons holding those degrees, so that the Order possesses what may be called a "valid" line of succession for all the degrees it works.

The Order was started in England by the well-known Theosophist lecturer and writer, Mrs. Annie Besant, who remained as head of the British Administration until her death in 1933. The British Federation has bodies working in Great Britain and Ireland, India, Canada, S. Africa, Australia, New Zealand and Tasmania.

The Lodges are regarded by most of the brethren as points of contact with the higher spiritual worlds, and the working as a system for the spreading abroad of spiritual influences upon the world, which may do much to neutralise the forces and native instincts working against brotherhood and peace and human self-realisation. Religion and Freemasonry may be viewed as two complementary schemes for the helping forward of human welfare and progress. Religion lays stress primarily on man's relation with God. Freemasonry recognises this also, but stresses man's relation with man.

The consecrating officer was Mr. Arnold S. Banks, the Most Puissant Grand Commander of the British Federation; and there were present the Most Puissant Sovereign Grand Commander of the Supreme Council, Monsieur H. Petit, Chevalier of the Legion of Honour; other members of the Supreme Council, and visitors from France, Belgium, Holland, India, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Netherlands, Indies and other countries. The Grand Secretary for this country is Mrs. D. Hodgson-Smith, 10 Ladbroke Terrace, London, W.11. It stands to the credit of this Order that it was the first Masonic body to admit women.

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SPIRIT EYES

I WONDER if other clairvoyants see the marvellous lights and tints which sparkle in advanced spirit-people's eyes?

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Through the mediumship of Mr. Harry Brown, in direct voice, came a message from Mrs. Perriman. It will be remembered that Mrs. Perriman was very closely associated with "The Link" in its early days, being the Medium who carried out some most successful public direct voice at mass meetings. It was not surprising, therefore, that she should make an early attempt to manifest at a "Link" function. Mrs. Perriman intimated that she had been enabled to come because of the love and sympathy extended to her. To several of the sitters, parts of the communication were of an extremely evidential nature. As the voice faded away it was heard to say: "I now go back to my rest."

At the close, the knocks peculiar to Mr. Harry Brown's mediumship, and those peculiar to the "Circle of the Cross," were heard simultaneously. The former knocks continued after the séance both in red and white light, thus proving their supernormality to the sitters, many of whom heard such manifestations for the first time.—MARJORIE J. BELL.

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