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THE TRAINING OF MEDIUMS

SOME OF THE PROBLEMS TO BE FACED

By J. B. M'INDOE

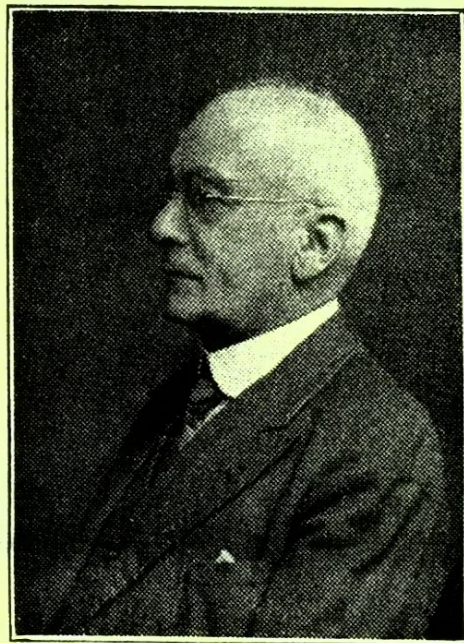
(Ex-President of the Spiritualists' National Union)

CLAIRVOYANCE and clairaudience provide us with evidence of different modes of communication corresponding to sight and hearing. The clairvoyant talks of "seeing," of something "building up," of being "shown" a scene or an object. The clairaudient claims to "hear" the message which she passes on. Observation suggests that there are processes involved corresponding to seeing and hearing. But there are other mental Mediums who neither claim to see nor to hear, but merely to *sense* or to *feel*, yet they may give very detailed and evidential communications.

Mediums dealing with unfamiliar words or pronunciations provide interesting subject matter. We have English Mediums visiting Scotland or Wales, coming up against personal names and place-names whose spelling is anything but phonetic. The first contacts of the Mediums with such conditions are the most suggestive, before they have quite realised that they are using a "foreign" tongue. The clairvoyant will go straight ahead without hesitation, pronouncing the words she "sees," in the way in which an English-speaking person would expect them to be pronounced. But the clairaudient will pronounce the unfamiliar word in a hesitating way, may say: "Is that right?" or "Is there such a word?" and her pronunciation will probably be correct, or very nearly so.

An instance of this sort occurred at a public meeting in Scotland, when I was sitting beside the Medium on the platform. She gave a message from someone whose name she pronounced in a hesitating way, "In-glees," and, turning to me, asked: "Is that right?" The Christian name which had been given, and other items in the message, indicated a lady who would be known at least by repute to a good many in the audience. Some of them interposed, suggesting "Ing-gils" or "Ing-ils," two forms of pronunciation common in Scotland of the name spelt "Inglis." The usual pronunciation by English people is "In-glis." The Medium told me she had never heard the name before. Though, apparently, no one in the audience was then aware of the fact, I learned afterwards that the lady in question had, in fact, always used the pronunciation of her name which the Medium had given. Something equivalent to the perception of sound must have occurred at some stage in the transmission of that message.

Tom Tyrrel, the famous Lancashire Medium of a quarter of a century ago,



J. B. M'INDOE

was clairvoyant and clairaudient to a remarkable degree. But the two phases, though often apparently involved in some message from the public platform, were quite distinct to him. He would, apparently "read" details of a most evidential kind from what he "saw" as a funeral invitation, an "In Memoriam" notice, or an inscription on a tombstone. Writing of some sort seemed to be the source of these items of evidence. But he would also "hear" things "said." He would preface such items with: "He is telling me," as distinct from the "He is showing me," which often came out in his clairvoyance. He once told me that the messages which he "heard" commenced usually as a kind of buzzing sound, which often seemed to him to be in the solar plexus. This gradually but quickly developed into distinct words which he "heard" and repeated aloud.

One telepathic process may possibly underlie both types of message, but at least the method of presentation of the messages to the conscious mind of the Medium is different.

But we have no idea how one mind influences another by telepathy. We do not even know how the sensations which light and sound produce in our nervous systems and brains become perceptions in our minds.

We may postulate—or affirm, if we like—that telepathy is the method by which discarnate communications reach us. But we are not entitled to say it is the only method, or that there are no variations in it. Sensations in the brain become perceptions in the mind. May there not be some process by which what are to our discarnate friends equivalent to sensations are transmitted to the minds of Mediums as perceptions?

The artist and the musician receive very different training. Is it desirable that the training of the clairvoyante should be the same as that of the clairaudient?

AUTOMATIC SPEAKING AND WRITING

These phases of mediumship, in their didactic as distinct from their evidential aspects, present their own problems. And these problems seem to be the same whatever the state of consciousness, whether the Medium is apparently "normal" or in deep trance.

We have all heard of or met the so-called "ignorant" Medium who "never reads a book," who "leaves it all to the spirit-world." They are often spoken of as if they were responsible for all, or nearly all, that is undesirable in the public presentation of Spiritualism. Are we entitled to talk thus? I think much may be said in defence of such Mediums as a class. Often they are very sincere and self-sacrificing and, though perhaps "uneducated," they may display intelligence and understanding above the average. Verbosity, irrelevance, faulty grammar, and the other sins usually laid at their door are by no means peculiar to trance-speakers, nor do they characterise all of them. We should judge them on their work as Mediums, not on how they have been educated.

Quite apart from the fact that economic circumstances may often be the determining factor, we have no right to assume that neglect of reading and study necessarily arise from intellectual laziness.

Criticism of that sort is no doubt justifiable from the point of view of those who regard Mediums as instruments to be "played upon" by spirit-controls. The better the instrument, the more varied the sounds produced, and the better the performance of the accomplished musician; and, so they argue, the more mentally developed the Medium, the more suitable is he as an instrument for discarnate control. Possibly, they overlook the fact that the more intricate the process, the more complicated the machine, the easier it is thrown out of action.

But the other aspect of mediumship—the Medium as a channel for the transmission of something—must not be ignored. Will mental development by reading necessarily tend to widen and deepen the channel, or to

remove obstructions in it, or, as we have already mentioned the case in which close study of Psychical Research was an adverse influence, should we assert that at least a carefully selected course of reading may be beneficial?

PHYSICAL PHENOMENA

Certain Mediums seem to be debarred from séances for physical phenomena. If they attend one, they are so uncomfortable that they do not seek admission to another. I know one Medium whose very presence seems to inhibit physical phenomena, and she is by no means unique. Her Control has told her not to attend such séances. Obviously then, mental development by observing physical phenomena is not for her.

I have met two or three Mediums who never read "serious" books, though they read fiction and magazines. If they try to read a philosophical or religious book, they at once "fall asleep." They are convinced that their Controls do not want them to read such literature.

Are those who clamour for "educated" Mediums better qualified to judge what is good for these particular Mediums than the Mediums' own Controls are? And the Controls are not just imposing arbitrary conditions.

I have in mind one Medium whose trance addresses are of a high order—interesting, logical, educative. Her Controls have asked her not to read philosophical or religious books. They told her that such reading put certain ideas in her mind, gave a certain turn to her thoughts, which, although she was in deep trance, might impede the flow of their ideas through her mind, might distort, or at least colour, her expression of their thoughts.

It needs no very close study of the literature of Other-World communications for one to appreciate that the religious beliefs, the scientific knowledge, and the philosophical outlook of the Medium influence at least the terms of the communication. Is it to be wondered at, then, that a Control desires that his

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Medium's training should be such as to minimise these effects on his work?

Granted that there may be methods of development by which the Medium, say, by a conscious effort of the will, may inhibit the intrusion to any serious extent of his own ideas. Possibly, some Controls may know themselves how to do so. But either implies effort, which the Control may wish to avoid.

And, after all, the reading of "serious" books is not essential to the happiness of Mediums.

So far, nothing has been said as to the training of Mediums for physical, as distinct from mental, phenomena. In certain phases of physical phenomena the mental aspects are also prominent, and to that extent the considerations above apply; but there are others which arise when we regard the Medium as the source of the raw material and, perhaps, of some of the energy used in physical séances. But, in such a passive role, the influence of normal education can scarcely be of much importance.

The goal to be aimed at psychically in physical mediumship will surely be different from that in mental mediumship. Of the pathological and physiological conditions, we know so little in regard to physical mediumship that scarcely anything useful can be said. What seems essential is that the functional activities and the body structure of the Medium should be even more subservient to the control of the discarnate operator than are the mental processes during mental phenomena in deep trance. That, it seems to me, involves such a surrender of the personality that the training—if training is possible—must be of an altogether unique kind. Perhaps it is a psychic gift.

All psychics are not Mediums, though all Mediums use psychic gifts. Perhaps our ideas of training would be clarified if we could first decide on the appropriate training for psychics, and then discuss what modified, or additional, training is desirable for the psychics who wish to be Mediums.

WAR TRANSITIONS

MRS. HELEN HUGHES, at a recent meeting under the auspices of the Edinburgh Psychic College, 30 Heriot Row, gave some remarkable messages associated with the war to individual members of a crowded audience.

At an early stage she pointed to a woman and announced: "Your son, George, is here." The woman indicated agreed that it was her first time at a meeting of this kind. Mrs. Hughes asked: "Was George killed?" With a kind of gasp which had a marked effect on the audience the woman replied: "Yes." Mrs. Hughes said she was not going to go into details about how he was killed. She, in a way, waved this aside as unnecessary in the circumstances and went on with the message. The mother was not to look at things that had belonged to her son, said the communicant. She had been in the habit, apparently, of taking up garments which her son wore and staring at them. "Do not die of a broken-heart," said Mrs. Hughes.

She turned to another member of the audience, but had to come back again with another message to the mother of George. Mrs. Hughes said the son was holding up an envelope and was saying this was just like sending a letter to his mother. "He has never been back before," she declared. The mother assented. "He is back to-night and does not want to leave," said Mrs. Hughes. "Do you know you have heard him before. He says: 'You are right, Mother, you did hear me! Do not worry.' You have told your people about this and they are concerned. Don't you be afraid of yourself." The son informed the mother: "So long as you weep I cannot get near you."

To another member of the audience a point of identity was that recently the person addressed had bandaged a small bird which had afterwards died. This fact was acknowledged.

Another communicant, Eddy, was described as in uniform, and gave a message that he was "looking after the doctor." This was understood by the person addressed, who also acknowledged the further fact that the doctor was abroad.

Another youthful communicator made a cryptic reference which was at once recognised by the person addressed. Quoting what she heard, Mrs. Hughes told the sitters: "I am hearing—'Say it is Ian who is here.' " The full name was then given, and a point of identity was the fact that when he was very small he had heavy curls, and the communicant recollected that the person addressed at one point threatened to cut his curls. "He was killed," said Mrs. Hughes, "and thrust into the spirit-world without any warning, but he is happy and he is well."

SURVIVAL AND IMMORTALITY

BEFORE a large audience at the Albert Road Spiritualist Church, Blackpool, Dr. F. H. Wood said Survival could be discussed as immediate, prolonged, or extended. Many people had received evidence of the first. A few had obtained proof of prolonged survival of, say, two or three hundred years. He instanced his own contact with John Bunyan as a most evidential one discussed in his pamphlet, *A Challenge to Sceptics*. But proof of extended survival amounting to thousands of years was rare. Nevertheless, he had secured this in the case of Rosemary's Guide, Nona, or Telika-Ventiu, and his book, *This Egyptian Miracle*, had provided overwhelming evidence of her continued existence.

Immortality, however, was a bigger problem, which could not be proved to human understanding. All that could be suggested was that if we survived for 3,300 years, as Nona had done, this took us a long way towards an inference of immortality.

He quoted Nona's statement that the spheres of higher grades of existence above Earth were nearer 700 than the conventional 7 so often referred to, and suggested that, among future experiences of the spirit, reincarnation might well have a place. Rosemary's former existence as Vola in ancient Egypt had been proved, and Nona's teaching had implied that a variable number of experiences on each plane were necessary for the discipline and education of the soul, but when these were complete the individual did not again return to that sphere.

Personality became complex and multiple, for individual traits were carried over from each incarnation. To-day we were bundles of our former selves, and our present characteristics, good and bad, might be carried with us into future lives.

A number of lantern slides of Egyptian xenoglossy were shown, and many questions were asked at the close of the lecture.

GLASGOW SPIRITUALISTS' OUTING

Over 60 members and friends of the Glasgow Central Association of Spiritualists spent the afternoon of Saturday, 18th May, at Shuma, Skelmorlie, where they were hospitably entertained by Mr. and Mrs. Lyon. Ideal weather favoured the party, who saw the grounds, with their woods and their waterfall, and their flower and fruit gardens, at their best, while the magnificent view of Rothesay Bay and the Clyde helped to divert their minds for the time from war topics. Mrs. Lyon's healing work at Shuma (which is a beautiful well-equipped guest-mansion on the shore of the sheltered Clyde estuary) has aroused much interest amongst medical men in the Glasgow area.

WHERE TWO WORLDS MET

Review by H. F. PREVOST BATTERSBY

FEW men have played a more useful part in the campaign for Spiritualism than the Rev. Charles L. Tweedale. More than thirty years ago, when it was considered fatal to his future that a clergyman of the Church of England should profess any leaning towards our faith, Mr. Tweedale sounded, in *Man's Survival After Death*, a challenge to the world, and to members of his own Church in particular, which still remains one of the most impressive volumes on Survival which have been written. It has been blessed by Bishops, commended by them to their clergy, gone through edition after edition, and is still the most forceful exposition of the Christian's understanding of Spiritualism, and the one which one would offer to any doubting and religious soul.

He has now, in the present volume*, continued to pile up the evidence he has received, and, though it may not have the comprehensive quality of *Man's Survival*, it can thus afford space for the narration of his personal adventure.

It is inevitable that any who are making their first acquaintance with the subject should be staggered by the casual acceptance here of spirit intercourse, therefore it is well they should remember that the author is not the owner of an untrained and gullible type of mind.

He is an astronomer who has not only made and mounted a clock-driven equatorial telescope, but has ground his own lenses, a job which very few amateurs would care to tackle. He has an expert's knowledge of many branches of chemistry, he is something more than a first-class cabinet maker, for he has produced violins which can hold their own beside famous products of the past.

In these days, when the importance of hand-craft is stressed as an aid to level-headedness, that is a salient fact to remember.

On the psychic side he has, of course, been amazingly favoured. Since he was nine years old he has been accompanied by a spirit-teacher, who was to help him to achieve the great ambition of his life, the composition of a violin varnish, the secret of which had been lost for two hundred years. His wife "proved to be one of the most powerful spontaneous psychics that has ever lived. Within a few months the amazing physical, clairvoyant, clairaudient and other manifestations began . . . and continued for thirty-five years." Spirit influences attended the birth of his youngest daughter, Dorothy, who developed strong mediumistic powers, as did his other daughters, Marjorie and Sylvia, whose clairaudience and clairvoyance were doubtless inherited from their mother. The servants also were apparently interpenetrated by the gift, two of the maids being spirit-conscious and able to report a surprising and alarming psychic scene.

Indeed, one of the marvels of Weston Vicarage seems to have been the calm with which the domestics endured what to most would have been a shattering contact with wraiths in such a phantom-ridden establishment, where even the highest class of spirits indulged occasionally in a poltergeistic exuberance, which Mr. Tweedale describes, good-humouredly, as "the spirits thoroughly rubbing their presence in." It was all that!

On the other hand, it is not easy to understand that Mrs. Tweedale never seemed to become acclimatised to the demonstrations for which she was so largely responsible. Of course, compressed into a book, such happenings seem much closer together than they really were; yet these by no means represent the full story, since the author mentions that the records in his journal fill more than 4,500 quarto pages.

The long gaps, even of years, in the earlier communications are surprising. Nothing happened in the first

four years at Weston; then, three years later, knocks were heard which continued at intervals for two years, when the first apparition appeared. This is curious, considering the power that was packed in the Vicarage, and that the author was under guidance from his ninth year.

LIFE IN THE VICARAGE

Some of the manifestations were unusual. The crashing and smashing of furniture did not suggest the Master craftsman of Cremona, and other of his violent methods must have seemed too effusive for so mature a spirit.

Of his most striking achievement the author says: "I believe the production of a child's figure from the side of another materialised form, the two connected by the luminous cord or psychic umbilicus, to be absolutely unique."

The incident happened just after the birth of Mrs. Tweedale's third girl. She was lying in bed with her new-born baby, when at 2.15 a.m. a ball of white phosphorescent light appeared, spinning on its axis, and grew into a pillar of light which took shape as a man.

Advancing to the bedside, a stream of phosphorescent light shot out from his side, and turned into the form of a young child with a frilled cap round its face. The child began dancing all over the bed, and on Mrs. Tweedale's feet and knees, still connected to the man by the milky white cord. On Mrs. Tweedale's alarmed cry, the figures disappeared, and the nurse, arriving, described her bed-clothes as having been dragged down tightly upon her.

The man, till then unknown, proved to be Stradiarius. By the same force, two years later, the bed on which Mrs. Tweedale was sleeping, with her baby Dorothy, was lifted eighteen inches, and fell with a crash on the floor. An even heavier bed was also raised a couple of feet in broad summer daylight; and, after floating for a few seconds, was allowed to crash.

The numerous materialisations seemed continually to vary in consistency; passing indifferently through closed doors or opening them with the handle. A typical instance of this was once noted by Mrs. Tweedale and two of her maids.

They saw a woman in white, with long black hair, carefully manœuvring a coffin she was carrying to get it twice through a doorway, and yet, as they followed her, she passed, coffin and all, clean through the dining room door, which was shut.

Apports were of common occurrence, coming through walls and ceilings or dropping out of the air; articles were sometimes returned after being carried away for months.

Violins were played in the house, and notes sounded on a piano which was upside down; indeed, little was left out to create what would be considered a thoroughly "spooky" household.

Ghostly cats and dogs roamed about the rooms, and the author has, despite Thomas Aquinas, strong views on animal survival, as strong as those which he seems to hold unfavourable to reincarnation, in support of which he could get no confirmation from the spirits he consulted. He does not, however, realise that far from there being "no limit to the absurdities and inconsistencies of this most pernicious and reprehensible reincarnation theory," it supplies the best explanation of the apparently inexplicable uncertainties in human existence.

There is a chapter on *Premonitions*, many of them carefully documented; and the author's interest in spirit-photography is evinced by numerous photographs, some of which were no doubt more convincing in the original printings.

He had many distinguished visitors—Hiram Maxim, Horatio Nelson, Arthur Conan Doyle, William Crookes, Archdeacon Colley, Emily Brontë, Robert Ball, among

(Continued at foot of next column)

* *News from the Next World*, by Charles L. Tweedale. London. T. Werner Laurie, Ltd. 1940. 12/6.

WHAT OUR READERS ARE SAYING

JESUS LIVES!

SIR,—Though I think we all owe Mr. Findlay a great debt for *The Psychic Stream* and for his other researches, I for one do not find myself convinced as to the mythical aspect of Jesus of Nazareth.

It is not a matter of documents, as a rather foolish section of the clergy seem to imagine. The very nebulous evidence of written records would almost seem to be due to a Higher Wisdom than our theologians were able to conceive. But this is all in accordance with the teaching of Jesus—"the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."

Many of us, I think, feel as possibly the early writers felt, that exact legal or historic records were out of place in drawing a picture which was meant to arouse the same enthusiasm which they themselves felt.

The Gospels ought not to be treated as legal documents are treated, otherwise they lose their power. They are meant to arouse thought, not controversy, and clearly enough they have been able to do this successfully for two thousand years. Jesus lives! Never more vividly, perhaps, than when, in the Galilean hills, one looks down upon the tiny little jewel among the hills on the shores of which the Great Teacher made history. Back in Nazareth, where churches have smothered truth in gilt and tinsel, Christ is indeed a myth encrusted with jewels which, for the spirit, have no value.

Q. C. A. CRAUFURD.

HOW TO DREAM

Sir,—Your correspondent, M.C.S., of New Zealand, should regard himself as fortunate in his comparative immunity from dream consciousness.

On the other hand, this writer would be glad to know how *not* to dream, because the continual consciousness of them has become a deterrent to proper sleep and to some extent a menace to health with which it is difficult to cope.

Mr. J. W. Dunne refers to the mental strain entailed in the purposeful recollection of dreams. D. JAYE.

(Continued from previous column)

them; but the two to whom most space is devoted are Antonius Stradiuarius and Frederic Chopin.

The violin maker was naturally attracted to a man who was making violins, and whose life ambition was to concoct a varnish comparable with the Cremona product; though the interest, perhaps premonitory, began in his early years.

The Chopin connection seems to have been brought about by Dorothy's fondness for his compositions.

The whole story had better be read here at length, since quotations might seem to emphasise its sensational features.

Stradiuarius never conveyed directly to the author the composition of the varnish, but his influence is acknowledged as a lead in the right direction; and a photograph in colour, for comparison with the Alard Strad, proclaims its triumphant achievement.

Chopin, on his arrival ten years ago, had very little English, but in four months he had learnt enough to improvise drollish verses. Probably most readers would sooner he had refrained, preferring the impression one has acquired from his music; but we are told that this propensity was a habit of his when on earth, and that specimens of his versification given in Uminska and Kennedy's *Life of Young Chopin* show a remarkable similarity in style to those contrived at Weston. So they become "evidential"; though in Polish they would have been more so, and might have sounded less elementary.

I wish I could reveal more of this surprising volume than is possible in a war-time review, but it is certain to be eagerly sought for by all who have read its predecessor.

SPIRIT PROPHECIES

SIR,—With reference to my article in your issue of the 18th April, and to the comments in relation thereto of Mr. Harrison on the Time question in your issue of the 2nd May, may I be allowed to say that I am entirely in agreement as to the difficulty of reconciling the computation of Time on the Spirit Side of life with that by which we ourselves are governed.

We are always told that on the Other Side there is nothing other than the present, by which it can only be understood that the sequence and progression of events is there otherwise measured. The higher Guides claim that they are shown a picture—at any rate a partial picture—of the plan of this world's evolution. Events thus forecasted presumably become active factors only at the actual time of occurrence—that is to say, "in the present"—after which they doubtless pass automatically out of the line of vision. That is as far as I am able to conjecture the position.

It is, admittedly, curious that, at times, prophecies are recorded which are remarkably accurate as to dates here below, while the majority of predictions fail badly in that respect. May it not be that the former are the exceptions which prove a general rule?

In my opinion there are no teachings of greater general interest and reliability than those which are given by the White Brotherhood in *Man Made Perfect*. This is what is said on the Time question, and I do not see how it can be made more intelligible to our finite understanding:

"When we make errors in names or in time, that is because your ideas of time are set in a curious fashion, not easily recognised by us over here. We have no time as you know it. Time is something entirely different, and so we can only see some measure of a period from the angle at which we visualise it over here, and it is very often incorrect."

Cannes.

DUDLEY B. MYERS.

FORECASTS OF THE WAR

Sir,—As Mr. Collins says (May 23rd), some apparitions are undoubtedly objective. We have had many instances of this here at Weston, as is set forth in my book, *Man's Survival After Death*, now in its fourth edition, and also in my new book, *News From the Next World*. In this matter, Gurney, Balfour and the S.P.R. have been in complete error.

Recently there was a great outcry because the peace predictions of some persons proved fallacious, and this was absurdly thought to disprove spirit-communication, regardless of the fact, itself proved a thousand times, that predictions have been accurately made and fulfilled. The present war was undoubtedly foreseen and predicted to us here at Weston by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. These predictions were substantiated and confirmed by Sir Arthur's communications to Lady Doyle. I recorded these in my journal, but as they appeared to be so incredible and as I did not wish to pose as an alarmist, I did not publish them. The records, however, stand, and from them it is perfectly evident that Sir Arthur knew what was coming.

CHARLES L. TWEEDALE.

Weston Vicarage, Yorks.

MRS. MADGE DONOHUE

After a long illness, Mrs. Madge Donohoe passed to the higher life in a Surrey nursing home on Tuesday, May 21st, and the funeral service took place at Golders Green Crematorium. When her last illness overtook her, Mrs. Donohoe was engaged on the work of arranging and describing the hundreds of messages and pictures she claimed to have received on photographic plates held between her hands and then developed. Quite recently in *LIGHT*, Mrs. Donohoe described some of these pictures received, as she believed, with the help of her husband (a famous journalist in his day) and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. Mrs. Donohoe was widely known and highly esteemed amongst Spiritualists in London.

Light

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EDITOR - - - GEORGE H. LETHAM

SPIRITUALISM AND THE WAR

WHATEVER may be our individual views upon the nature and origins of the prophecies commonly obtained through Mediums and automatists, I think many of us will have been grateful to Sir Dudley Myers for his very experienced and helpful article in *LIGHT* for April 18th, entitled "Spirit Prophecies." And perhaps I may be allowed to remark that my own less extensive experiences of like kind generally confirm Sir Dudley's interpretations; while I am glad to see that he re-affirms some of the ideas which I put forward (see *LIGHT*, Sept. 28th and Nov. 16th, 1939).

It is also good to see that Mr. Conan Shaw, in a letter appearing in the same issue, has taken the bull by the horns, instead of vainly trying to excuse our Mediums and communicators, who, for one reason or another—as already discussed by various writers—failed to foresee the true course of events in this second great war. One must submit that hard-headed realists, however materialistic and "worldly" they may seem to the softer-hearted idealist or more spiritually-minded thinker, are usually right in their prognostications. And so it has proved once again, unfortunately.

There is more to get on with than ever, in time of war and universal unsettlement, for Spiritualists, philosophers, peace-makers and constructive workers: offering encouragement and consolation to those who fight or are bereaved, with patient personal example of religious faith, tolerance and self-sacrifice—a stolid steadfastness of idealistic purpose that is every whit as hard to maintain as bodily courage in the face of murderous enemy bombardment; only that it is courage and grit of another sort, the immediate results and merits of which are not always so self-evident.

Such a battle Spiritualists and ethically-minded folk the world over have to wage unceasingly even in so-called "peace" time; how much more urgent, therefore, must be the call in time of war and general neurosis and anxiety, with death staring men of uncertain conviction everywhere in the face, and their material and spiritual possessions being exploded around them on every side? Yet, with all that, if a man has principally laid up his treasure "in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal," then the situation may be very different, and war's terrors greatly abated. And to teach such invaluable precepts by word and example is at once the hardest and the highest form of service that life provides. Those, therefore, who feel able to do so, as well as to attest to the reality of the higher values in general and the sure continuance of life after bodily death, in terms of their own first-hand experience, need not feel themselves to be by any means useless or out of place in the present struggle. Let them trim their sails and set a straight course for the more distant and worth-while goal of man's destiny, that fog, hurricane and surrounding tempest often seem to belittle and blot from the sight of our more practical-minded comrades, who may be prepossessed by the purely relative bigness of present events and individual or nationalistic problems.

PSYCHIC WAR MESSAGES

Friends often ask me what I think of the war and whether I have any "psychic" messages. My answer

is that, although I have, in fact, a number of forecasts and communications, collected before or shortly after the outbreak of this war, I do not propose now to divulge them; since recent experience, with all its disappointments and disillusionments, makes one very chary of accepting such "messages" at their face value. For whereas some have proved correct (often the least expected) not a few have proved entirely fallacious; and the latter can, on subsequent analysis, usually be traced to evident sources of personal wishful thinking or suggestion that frequently countermanded earlier answers obtained at times of less emotional tension. I also reply to enquirers that I do not consider this at all a safe time to seek such enlightenment, since every Medium and automatist is inevitably far too prejudiced, personally, by current anxieties and emotions, which are bound to colour his or her subliminal or inspirational replies to a large extent. Should such answers be optimistic, moreover, we might merely be falsely buoyed up, resulting in a disillusionment far more painful than our worst fears, much as it is worse to be *deceived* in love than merely to be *denied* in love.

FAITH AND STRENGTH

There is, I think, much to be said for a philosophy of pessimism in this hard world, as Schopenhauer indicated, or of grim stoicism; since the less one expects, the less one has to lose.

Let us, therefore, summon up faith and strength to face the worst for some months or even years to come, trusting only in an *ultimate* victory of right and good-will over might and ill-will.

We should also aim to count, meanwhile, our individual and racial blessings, which these times, despite all their tragedy and loss, are undoubtedly affording us. For men's souls had grown parched and barren, their ways spoiled and selfish; to rectify which ingrown deficiencies only a second Armageddon would, it seems, suffice. But, like Nile floods, one may be sure that this war will leave a tilth of good and fertile soil behind it, over and above the chaotic ruins of much that was either needless or undesirable for the healthy progress of our race.

We must try to take our medicine with whatever grim fortitude we can now summon up; and the first step to ultimate victory over present calamities is to recognise our own personal guilt—not only making good resolves, but keeping them. The sooner we do that—and I see people doing it all around me ever since last September, thank God—the sooner shall we attain both bodily and spiritual salvation.

J. CECIL MABY.

L.S.A. DEVOTIONAL HEALING GROUPS

AT this time of stress and strain I would like to draw the attention of our readers to the work of the London Spiritualist Alliance Devotional Healing Groups. There may be amongst our readers some who have relatives or friends who are wounded, and who would like to avail themselves of our services.

It is a good thing to supplement the splendid care and attention which our wounded receive from doctors and nurses with those healing spiritual forces which are of such help to the sick and suffering. We shall be willing to give the service of our healing groups to any who would like to avail themselves of it.

May I also suggest that the help of these groups is willingly given to any in danger. We cannot promise immunity, but the power of prayer to help is great, and help of this kind is always worth while.

If any would like to avail themselves of this service on behalf of their friends, either for healing or guidance and protection, please send their full names with particulars of service needed to me. Please enclose stamps for reply.

W. H. EVANS.

THE PSYCHIC THREAD

THE HOLY GRAIL

THERE can be no spiritual thoughts, no facet of the Higher Law, better fitted to calm the mind and lead it upward at this time than that mystic meeting place of holiness, heroism and romance which is so gloriously typified in the Legend and Allegory of the Holy Grail. Thither, almost unconsciously, my *Psychic Thread* guided me last week, and there let us abide awhile. Even as I, who write, snatch here and there an hour from national duties and compose my mind to set down as best I may these thoughts, so will you, my readers, find some brief moment of rest to read my words. If they can bear you at that moment to where time ceases to strike relentless hours, to that borderland of two worlds where the harsh angles of brutal materialism glide imperceptibly into the softer contours of wonderland, a wonderland that is as real, nay, far more real, than this sad, storm-swept sphere of outer husks, then you and I will find ourselves in a region, the streams and forest-fountains of which have healing and strength in their waters. We shall return thence refreshed and fortified for whatever call the gathering night or dawning day may bring.

THE GRAIL LEGEND

What is the Holy Grail? It is the vessel—cup, dish or shallow bowl—from which Christ drank at the Last Supper, the first and original chalice of the Eucharist. After the Crucifixion, Joseph of Arimathea, a man of wealth and consequence in Jerusalem, asked Pilate for permission to take down the divine body from the Cross. His request granted, he went to the upper chamber in which Christ and His disciples had partaken of the supper, and found there the chalice, which he took with him to Golgotha. As the body of Jesus was taken from the Cross, the drops of blood that issued from the wounds in His side, in His feet and His hands, were caught in the vessel and thus preserved. Later, Joseph went to Britain, taking with him the Grail. He went to Avalon (Glastonbury) and built there the first Christian Church in that sacred place, henceforth to be the shrine of many saints and countless pilgrimages. Thus came the Grail to British ground. This was not, the legends say, Joseph's first visit to Britain. As a merchant he had come years before, bringing the boy Jesus with him. It is to this legend that the mystic poet-painter Blake alludes in his famous lines.

THE MYSTERY OF THE GRAIL

That the Grail should be a sacred thing, charged with the subtlest and most powerful virtues, is no matter of surprise. Its twofold character, as the chalice of the Last Supper and the receptacle of the blood of Christ, rendered it immeasurably holy. It was itself the visible symbol of the Blessed Sacrament. The material vessel merged utterly into its sacred content and the immortal memories with which it was surrounded. It became a thing of power, itself a mystery. The gift of healing was in the touch of it, in the sight of it, even in the distant presence thereof.

From this mystery, this holiest talisman, shone forth in a clear stream the *Light Divine*, the Astral Light, the Universal Force. It became, as it were, the special guardian and receptacle of the *One Thing* in its quintessential form. Such sanctity and such power could not be entrusted to the world's keeping. The Grail was, of necessity, withdrawn, like all holy things, like all sacred knowledge which it contained and symbolised. A sacred thing is of its very nature a secret thing. Of such is the Holy Grail.

In the sixth century, the Grail was brought to King Arthur's Court at Camelot, long identified with Winchester, but now and certainly with Cadbury, near Glastonbury. It was Arthur's custom to hold high festival each year at Pentecost and to await there some marvellous adventure, nor did one ever fail to emerge

at that season. But the old adventures were now achieved, and the fellowship was wearing old in arms, great names were passing from the roll of knights. Destiny was drawing in upon the Round Table. "Merlin made the Round Table in tokening of the roundness of the world, for by the Round Table is the world signified by right, for all the world, Christian and heathen, repair unto the Round Table; and when they are chosen of the fellowship . . . they think them more blessed and more in worship than if they had gotten half the world; and ye have seen that they have lost their fathers and their mothers, and all their kin, and their wives and children, for to be of your fellowship . . . When Merlin had ordained the Round Table he said, by them which should be fellows of the Round Table the truth of the Sangreal (Holy Grail) should be well known" (Malory, *Morte d'Arthur*). Here is a mystery. The Round Table with its perfection of chivalry typifies the highest worldly fulfilment. Truly its symbol is the Rose. A Rose is actually painted in the centre of the table preserved at Winchester and traditionally held to be King Arthur's. Writing of the Mystic Rose (*The Psychic Thread*, May 9th), I observed how it symbolised the divine eternal rebirth of Nature, typified Beauty and Life through Love, and (citing Eliphas Lévi) how "The problem proposed by high initiation was the Union of the Rose and the Cross." This problem is, in truth, the argument of the Legend of the Round Table. The goal of the Fellowship was the Rose till the coming of the Grail. The goal of that Quest was the Cross. The Arthurian Ideal is the Union.

THE QUEST OF THE GRAIL

The coming of the Grail to Camelot is thus described by Malory. The narrative is alive with mystic significance: "Then anon they heard cracking and crying of thunder, that them thought the place should all to-drive. In the midst of this blast entered a sun-beam more clearer by seven times than ever they saw day, and all they were alighted of the grace of the Holy Ghost. Then began every knight to behold other, and either saw other, by their seeming, fairer than ever they saw afore. Not for then there was no knight might speak one word a great while, and so they looked every man on other as they had been dumb. Then there entered into the hall the Holy Grail covered with white samite, but there was none might see it, nor who bare it. And there was all the hall fulfilled with good odours, and every knight had such meats and drinks as he best loved in this world. And when the Holy Grail had been borne through the hall, then the holy vessel departed suddenly, that they wist not where it became: then had they all breath to speak" (*Morte d'Arthur*, bk. xiii., vii.).

The Fellowship is stirred by the Spirit of God. Two by two the champions seek the Grail. But not by valour only, nor yet by noblest chivalry, was the Quest to be attained. None but three attain that blessed goal: Galahad (Launcelot's son), and Percivale, virgin knights, and Launcelot's cousin the good Sir Bors, the pure in heart. Launcelot, who was "never matched of earthly knight's hand, the courtest knight that ever bore shield, the truest friend that ever bestrad horse, the truest lover of a sinful man that ever loved woman, the kindest man that ever struck with sword, the goodliest person that ever came among press of knights, the meekest man and the gentlest that ever ate in hall among ladies, the sternest knight to his mortal foe that ever put spear in the rest," came nearest of any "sinful man" to the Grail; he beheld it "covered with red samite, and many angels about it." To attain so far he came near to lose his life, for the *Light* of the Grail is "a breath intermeddled with fire," and the love of Guenever was in his heart.

C. R. CAMMELL.

The Psycho-Dynamics of "Knocks" and "Raps"

9—HOW IS IT DONE?

By ALAN HOWGRAVE-GRAHAM

THE question now is: In what manner, by what means, are these sounds produced? How is it done?

To use an every-day figurative expression, "I wouldn't mind betting" that, were this question put to them, nineteen out of every twenty Mediums would be found to have a vague picture in their minds of an invisible but semi-material wraith rapping with its knuckles, or thumping with its fist, or otherwise delivering blows on the surface of our wall or our door. The point is of some importance, because if that is what they have in mind—and I am pretty sure that it is—an explanation to some quite different effect purporting to be given *through* such a Medium, when under control of any kind, gains substantial initial credibility from the very fact that it thus differs from what would be the explanation offered by the Medium *in propria persona* giving us her own ideas.

As I pointed out earlier, it is not, and could not be, a question of blows of any kind. I devoted some thought to the matter before ever I began to seek information from discarnate sources. To suppose that any hand, or foot, or knuckle, or finger, or stick, or hammer, or other object that is not material could be, or become, sufficiently material and solid to produce, in the form of blows on the solid surface of solid matter, such as a brick wall or the side of a cupboard, the loud sounds which we hear, and yet be at the same time so unsubstantial and ethereal as to be absolutely invisible, whether in darkness or in strong light, would be to suppose a phenomenon so self-contradictory as to amount to a miracle. (Unless, indeed, it were at the same time unable to reflect light, like H. G. Wells' unfortunate Invisible Man, which would make the reading of the Antecedent Improbability thermometer rise dangerously far above normal.) It would also involve, in view of the absence of a "physical Medium" and his assisting power-contributing circle, a faculty of materialisation for which there is no precedent except, just possibly, in certain very rare and exceptional cases of physical mediumship of which I, for instance, am thankfully certain that I am not one.

But one hypothesis did at the outset present itself to me as worth entertaining. This is that the sound, however caused, might be produced, first of all, in the "etheric counterpart" of the cupboard or table, or what not other material object in question, and thence, in some unknown manner not yet explained, reproduce itself as a physical effect in the physical original, the material or terrestrial counterpart, of such object. In curious support of this idea is the fact, to which I think all close observers of these sounds will bear witness, that the sound always seems to take place *within the very substance of the material itself* of these objects, and never as if on their surface. It is a peculiar internal sound, which is quite distinctive, indefinitely different from any normal rap or knock, and impossible by any means we employ exactly to imitate.

Of course, the critical student will here at once enquire whether there is any good evidence for the existence of these "etheric counterparts" of physical objects. The reply is that it depends somewhat on what one is prepared to accept as "good evidence." That there is none which could rank as scientifically watertight from the conventional, or for that matter from the ordinarily, legitimately, rigorous, Psychical Research standpoint, goes almost without saying. But the impartial student who has taken the trouble to familiarise himself with the real world of the psychical, or spiritistic, can not afford to ignore the formidable mass of positive testimony which may be said broadly to have come from all communicators, through all Mediums, in all countries, in all the years of what we call "modern" Spiritualism, to the existence of etheric

counterparts of material objects, including, first and foremost, an etheric body surviving the physical body. As to this last, not only is it taught by Spiritualists: it is taught by the Buddhists and many other Eastern religions of which study of the occult has been a prominent feature. It is even taught by Christianity, notably by St. Paul; the Bible is full of apparent instances of it. Indeed, there are perhaps few other beliefs which are held in common by so many and so widely diverse people—diverse in colour, in race, in philosophy, in language, in everything which does make people diverse. In fact, the synthesis of belief and of testimony is impressive. We cannot deduce therefrom the existence of etheric counterparts of inanimate objects, but it is legitimate on several grounds to infer it as probably consequential.

PREVIOUS SUBJECTIVE EXISTENCE

Looking at the matter metaphysically, it is worth noting that nothing can exist objectively without having a subjective—in the case of man-made articles a *previous* subjective existence in Mind. That is to say, a carpenter cannot make a table before he has *thought* a table; his primary creation of it is a thought-creation. In a realm or region or state of existence which in its essence must be, and which, indeed, we know to be as certainly as we can yet know anything about it, a Thought-state, that which in this life is subjective may well become in that life objective. Therefore, the etheric counterpart is, I suggest, quite *en règle* from a metaphysical point of view.

One of the most informative, intelligent, and constructively suggestive communicators known to the annals of Psychical Research is Mr. Raymond Lodge, son of that honoured and fearless leader of Psychical Research in the ranks of British Science, Sir Oliver Lodge. A deal of flippant and ignorant fun-capital was made in the columns of the halfpenny press and among its flabby-minded readers about the whisky-and-cigar statements made through Mrs. Osborne Leonard and published in *Raymond*. Properly understood, there was nothing unreasonable or ridiculous about them. Those who have troubled to make themselves acquainted with the real nature of the system of excarnate existence put forward through Mediums may or may not pin their faith to it as having been reliably substantiated, but they find no theoretical difficulty in entertaining the possibility of a thought-creation or a thought-simulation of luxuries of this or that kind which have persisted as cravings after an incarnate life chiefly centred on such things; such subjective creations—for this they claim to be—would have a spurious objectivity affording

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temporary satisfaction of a self-indulgence in reality itself subjective. Indeed, it would seem to be likely enough that our whole conception of the relation of the subjective to the objective may, after our separation from the physical organism, have to suffer radical, even startling, readjustment, and that the boundary-line between the two may turn out to be scarcely even determinate. This, again, may seem to be not unsound metaphysics.

The following, then, is the conversation that took place between Mr. Lodge and Sir Oliver on September 16th, 1927, long after the publication of *Raymond*, Mrs. Leonard being the Medium:

Mr. RAYMOND: "You have thought that probably our world is the same world as yours, looked at from another side; another view of it."

Sir OLIVER: "Yes; is it?"

Mr. RAYMOND: "Our world is so different from yours in some ways. It's rather difficult for us to look at it from that point of view; but I can see eye to eye with you on one point which seems to bear upon your theory, and that is this—that everything that is necessary to man, everything that man in a sense makes his own, has an etheric duplicate. We see the etheric duplicate . . . It may be that the chair you see at home, your material chair, and the chair that we see, which is your chair on our side, the etheric chair, are one and the same thing, really. Yet the etheric chair seems to be with us. You have heard communicators surprised to find over here the table, or the chair, or the picture they were fond of. You would regard it as the same thing from another side."*

The following is an extract from a sitting I had with a trance Medium in Johannesburg on April 6th, 1939. The producer of my knocks was operating the Medium. I had enquired of him regarding a Pretoria friend's child who had died some months previously, and to whom, before his death, I had given a boy's illustrated book of adventure. The Medium knew nothing whatever of him or the book, or anything about it:

J.: "He is convalescent."

A.H.G.: "What? Still?"

J.: "Yes, but I am going to bring him some day—Stop! Wait!" (excitedly) "Here he's coming now! He's walking round you and he puts his hand on your knee. He has a message . . ." (What followed is too personal for publication.) "No, he can't get that. He can't get close enough. But he brings a book, a schoolboy's book, with pictures."

A.H.G.: "Oh, yes. Where did he get that?"

J.: "It is a replica of one he had on earth."

A.H.G.: "Oh, yes. Where did he get it?"

J. (Medium's head turned aside as if listening): "Yes . . . Oh! You gave it to him! Him you met while he was on earth, didn't you?"

On another occasion, the same communicator mentioned having in his possession "the spiritual counterpart" of certain flowers.

Several references to the "etheric" counterpart or duplicate will appear hereafter through other Mediums, including Mrs. Leonard.

* A fourth-dimensional view does Mr. Lodge imply, perhaps?

A.H.G.

(Next week: "A Communicator's Explanation.")

[Major Howgrave-Graham's address is: 116 Johnston St., Sunnyside, Pretoria, South Africa.]

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—C. R. Cammell in "Light."

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GOD AS LIGHT

AT a sitting on the 16th April last with Mrs. Rose Livingstone, when my dear wife took over the control, she said: "I am speaking to you." "How are you?" I asked. "Could I be anything else than happy," she replied. Then she continued: "On that Great Light which we know to be the Lord. (I am trying) to follow The Light. If you were here would you not follow The Light? I come to The Light. The Great Master is very near us to-day. I am nearing the Great Light. I am walking towards the Great Light. I am in The Light."

Just one month afterwards I read Mr. C. R. Cammell's article, "The Psychic Thread," in *LIGHT* of the 16th May, 1940. The message given to me seems to corroborate what Mr. Cammell has written. Needless to say I was quite unaware of the teachings expounded by him, nor have I read any of the authorities quoted in the article. Many years ago I studied rather carefully the séances recorded by a certain society in two volumes of a book entitled *Life and its Manifestation*. The teachings developed in these and other volumes are fully explained by the late Mr. Oswald Murray (Queastor Vitae) in *The Process of Man's Becoming*, chapters 16 and 17, deals with the Angelic Beings (originally human beings) who live in the Sun. See also chapters 26 and 27 of *The Spiritual Universe*, written by the same author. The statements in these books appear to fall into line with the teachings that "you will never see God otherwise than as Light but they maintain that a Personal God is non-existent, and thus lack that wonderful ideal which Mr. Cammell has so lucidly explained.

JOSEPH CHITTY.

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