

# LIGHT

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## TELEPATHY IN HARNESS FRENCH AUTHOR'S EXAMINATION OF VARIOUS THEORIES

By H. F. PREVOST BATTERSBY

MORE than half a century ago, the term Telepathy was coined by a distinguished member of the Society for Psychical Research, and, twenty years later, its Secretary affirmed: "It has been proved that the human intelligence can acquire knowledge otherwise than by means of the five senses. In other words, telepathy is a proved fact."

In consequence, M. René Warcollier speaks of "the acceptance of telepathy by English scholars," ignoring the indomitable band still struggling for its recognition under that "banner with a strange device," E.S.P.

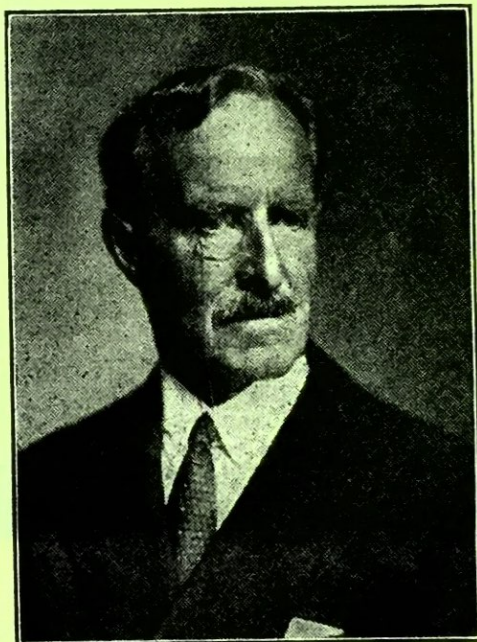
M. Warcollier is thus not concerned with marshalling masses of evidence, but with "the question of the mental processes which characterise those who 'send' and those who 'receive' impressions;" an Euclidian method which would prove production by discovering the method of it.

He admits at the outset that, though cases of spontaneous telepathy are not at all rare, attempts at voluntary telepathic transmission are generally unsuccessful, and that, though telepathy appears to be real, its laws are very obscure.

What, he asks, is transmitted? and though that may seem an obvious and easily answered query, it offers more "avenues to be explored" than might appear.

Here is an example. The agent, that is, the transmitter, drew a lyre, resembling a vase mounted on a pedestal. The percipient said: "I have got the notion of a flute—or of some musical instrument or other. I see many lines. It resembles a vase, but it is not a vase. Now it is like a harp; there are several strings—like a little gridiron." So, though the percipient sensed the musical aroma, and drew the object exactly, he did not succeed in grasping what the object was: he saw the picture, but not the agent's mind.

Mrs. Sidgwick once noted as significant in many cases the analytical character of the transmission and the incomplete synthesis effected in the emergence. As an illustration, from the study of some thirty-five unpublished records, M. Warcollier has set out certain peculiarities of reception; how in some cases one obtains correspondence in form or colour only; in others, movement, or the idea of movement; in some, again, details of form, isolated and not understood; in others, form, or part of form, with subconscious



H. F. PREVOST BATTERSBY



understanding, and consequent transmission of the idea, or part of the idea: this is the reception most frequently met.

Again there may be transmission of the idea alone, or part of the idea; or, though more rarely, complete transmission, with understanding of both form and idea.

Obviously, assuming telepathy, there is a lot it can tell us about ourselves.

Take the colour question, for instance. A red fish may be reported by one percipient as a white fish, by another as a red billiard ball.

Why does the form come through to one, the colour to another? Are "chromatic" neurones the explanation?

Henri Piéron suggested that colour vision is distinct from vision concerned with mere intensity of light, and that there might be different kinds of neurones serving these different purposes.

Again, what has happened when the idea comes through with irrelevant additions to the form—a scene, it may be, accurately rendered, but with features not visualised by the transmitter? Or when the form is rendered in scattered fragments, like a jig-saw puzzle? And so on. It seems even more difficult to explain telepathy than to believe in it.

#### THE MEMORY-IMAGE

The author makes one very helpful suggestion.

When the agent looks at an object O, or at a drawing, he sees, immediately, O<sup>1</sup> and O<sup>2</sup>, recollections and even associations which usually remain unconscious, and are all the better transmitted; for, as Usher and Burt have affirmed:

"It has not yet been proved that success is in proportion to the agent's effort at conception," and the author agrees that *conscious* associations experienced by the agent are rarely transmitted.

"We may say that the clearer the message to be sent is in mind, the less frequently it arrives."

On the other hand, very often, in a complex image, details which did not interest the agent come through, and, in conjunction with this O<sup>1</sup> and O<sup>2</sup> business, may explain the fragmentary character of the picture the percipient has to decipher. The superior effectiveness of spontaneous to contrived telepathy may be explained by the part the subconscious plays in the transmission, since messages in which emotion is involved are more likely to obtain sympathetic, or even preferential treatment. Mrs. Garrett underlined the necessity for this "energy stimulus" to ensure successful clairvoyance.

One other significant contingency may be mentioned—the arrival of repressed images. The agent, for instance, about to transmit a number, selects another one; but it may be the repressed number which comes through.

Summing up, the author says there seem to be independent transmissions of emotions, images and concepts, but properly speaking there is no "transmission of thought." But surely this cannot apply to spontaneous telepathy, though perhaps the author would distinguish between the reading and the transmission of thought?

Abramowski believes that it is the *idea* which is transmitted; Maxwell, that it is the contents of organic consciousness, the physiological traces, the cerebral imprints, serving as a substratum of thought, which are perceived. Lodge found that an idea is more easily transmitted than a drawing; but the author asks: "Can we truthfully say that when thought transmits itself it is the *idea* which is transmitted?"

#### THE PSYCHIC CHARGE

There is a further hypothesis to be considered which has made a substantial appeal to several thinkers, that of the *psychic charge*. The assumption is that looking at an object gives it a psychic charge which makes it perceptible to the percipient, the object retaining the impression that the agent has had of it.

The author tells a story of how once, arriving late from Paris at the house of a relative, he had gone

straight to bed. Roused from a short sleep when his wife joined him, he saw, at the foot of an armchair, an oblong package wrapped in yellow paper and tied with package cord, the ends of which were looped so that they were double or treble at the top, and fell back like a handle. He asked his wife what was the package. "What package?" she replied. He described it, reached out to lay hold of it, but, as he did so, realised that it had no existence.

The package had been deposited there by mistake during the evening, and was exactly as he had described it, even to the looped handle. It was removed some hours later.

He had known nothing of it, and it had been specially designed to avoid giving a clue to its contents.

"Could it," he asks, "have been telepathy from my wife, whose curiosity had been aroused by the package? Or was it a phenomenon of 'haunting' by an object provocative of a vision, of the kind called *bienvenue* (welcome)? This type of vision is supposedly produced upon the arrival of a traveller at a 'haunted' room, never before or seldom occupied by him. The latter theory is less probable than the former, and is almost incomprehensible."

Telepathy seems unlikely; but may not his dreaming self in its short sleep have viewed the events of that afternoon, while the package had been there?

But why should not a certain type of haunting be produced by a psychic charge?

Where can any explanation of psychometry be sought if one eliminates the possibility of psychic charges? though these would have to be independent of human agency. The author seems to have accepted the theory, finally, as the most tolerable explanation of his phantom package.

This hypothesis explains why a colour, looked at by one person, can, when enclosed in an envelope, and so ceasing to be a colour, be described by a clairvoyant. Why three dowzers could detect the one card of ten touched by the rod of a fourth dowser before they

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entered the room. Why Ossowiecki cannot perceive, by clairvoyance, the latent image of an undeveloped plate. It also explains collective hallucinations.

"The psychic charge," says the author, "can, of course, teach us nothing about molecular organisation or the intimate structure of matter, since it exists on the human plane. Clairvoyance can teach us nothing outside this plane."

That depends on how the human plane may be defined. A psychic charge, it is pointed out, can reflect its influence upon neighbouring objects; can act in space as well as in time, thus making it a sort of telepathic agent of the second degree.

"But," we are told, "objects could not remember things which had surrounded them if no living being had been able to perceive those things."

Is that so? How then account for the mastodon's memories of its days psychometrised from a fragment of its tooth?

The author does, indeed, distinguish this hypothesis from that of *astral patterns*; the memory of the observer being only *one particular case* of the psychic charge. It is also true that clairvoyants do not see any difference between the remembrance of an object and the object of this remembrance. "Their paranormal perception passes easily from one to the other without their noticing it."

In conclusion, the author agrees that the difficulties met in telepathic transmission are increased by the fact that we try to provoke the phenomenon artificially.

"The proof of the existence of telepathy can be secured by experiment, but we pay a large price for what we get."

Writing of paramnesia, Abramowski said: "No mental phenomenon, studied in a laboratory, is the exact reproduction of what daily life gives us. We find in it under those conditions something conventional, a certain lowering of potential."

That is a warning which should be engraved over the portals of every E.S.P. workshop.

*Emotion is the leaven of life, and you cannot reproduce even the smallest psychic loaf without it.* The ersatz imitations the laboratory supplies can never do more than stimulate one's appetite for something with real sustenance in it.

This most acceptable volume, for which one has to thank both the editor and translator, should certainly do that, and it has contrived to minimise as far as possible the boring opportunities of its subject.

*Experiments in Telepathy*, by René Warcollier. Edited and abridged by Gardner Murphy. Translated by Josephine B. Gridley. London. George Allen and Unwin, Ltd. 1939. 7s. 6d.

## EXPANSION OF CONSCIOUSNESS

MAY I express my deep gratitude to Mrs. Hewat McKenzie for her illuminating review in *LIGHT* (May 30th) of *Across the Unknown*. Those who have omitted to read it should do so. Mrs. McKenzie has the genius of simplicity, getting to the heart of her subject in a way that is most helpful; avoiding wordy, involved phrases that only obscure and confuse instead of revealing.

The path to an enlarged consciousness is made so simple, easy and attractive that one seems to have been led without effort from a hard and difficult material world into a new garden-world of light and warmth and serenity, combined with the joy of growth and development that seems so natural we feel it must be our true home and not an unknown state of abstract coldly conscious existence, where we are always struggling towards some ultimate goal, which we can never fully attain because we do not understand what it is or its end.

Instead, we are invited to awaken from a restless night of struggling with difficulties and fearful dreams and terrors into the calm atmosphere of a warm summer day, with new powers awakened into life and happy activity; we get away from our lower self and its fears by simply transferring our attention from the lower to the higher self and life, from the ground to the stars.

Spiritual awareness and understanding are not born of the study of dogmas and creeds. It is an enlarged consciousness of a higher state of life all around us, from which we can draw great power and inspiration and help at any moment we choose to get up and look through the open window at a vision of beauty and breathe in the new atmosphere of fresh life from the eternal source of all being.

Our mundane activities then take their rightful perspective and more easily controlled secondary place.

I like especially "Betty's" Guide's advice not to be over-serious in plumbing the depths of spiritual philosophy, but to take away any solemn ecclesiastical ideas from the spiritual. To relax and be natural. To use imagination deliberately and happy memories and symbols to build up and attract the right spiritual atmosphere and consciousness. To get outside and away from the body is not so mysterious and occult a performance as people think.

O. J. WENDLANDT.

## WHAT SIR A. C. DOYLE FORESAW

THE following extract from *Psychic Experiences*, by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, is of interest at the present serious juncture:

"Our information is that some great shock is coming very shortly to the human race, which will finally break down its apathy and which will be accompanied by such psychic signs that the survivors will be unable any longer to deny the truths which we preach.

"The real meaning of our movement will then be seen, for it will become apparent that we have accustomed the public mind to such ideas and provided a body of definite teaching, both scientific and religious, to which they can turn for guidance.

"As to the prophecy of disaster, I admit that we have to be on our guard. Even the Christ-circle was woefully deceived, and declared confidently that the world would not survive their own generation. Various creeds, too, have made vain predictions of the end of the world. I am keenly aware of all this, and also of the difficulty in reckoning time when seen from the Other Side. But, making every allowance for this, the information upon the point has been so detailed and has reached me from so many entirely independent sources, that I have been forced to take it seriously, and to think some great watershed of human experience may be passed within a few years—the greatest, we are told, that our long-suffering race has yet encountered.

"People who have not gone into the subject may well ask: 'But what do you get out of it? How are you the better?' We can only answer that all life has changed to us since this definite knowledge has come. No longer are we shut in by death. We are out of the valley and up on the ridge, with vast clear vistas before us."

## DESPAIR NOT

If your case be brought to the last extremity and that you are at the pit's brink, even the very margin of the grave, yet then despair not; at least put it off a little longer: and remember that whatever final accident takes away all hope from you, if you stay a little longer, and, in the meanwhile, bear it sweetly, it will also take away all despair, too.—Jeremy Taylor, 1650.



## NOTES FROM FRENCH PSYCHIC JOURNALS

From the May number of *La Revue Spirite*

## TO ALL THE COMPANY OF HEAVEN

ON Prayer Sunday (May 26th) those who listened in to the Paris wireless cannot fail to have been impressed by the passionate insistence of the appeals made by the crowded congregation at Notre Dame to "all the Company of Heaven" to come to the rescue of "La Patrie."

Perhaps the most fervent of the invocations were directed to La Pucelle—Joan of Arc, the Patron Saint of France; and last month's *Revue* contains no fewer than three different articles dealing with the beloved Maid of Orleans, the increase of whose popularity as Saint of the country is explained by one correspondent, Louis Pouzol, as follows. He says:

"Perhaps it is due to an instinctive reaction against the current which for so many years has carried us in our search for purely concrete realities towards a terrifying destiny, until now our present epoch has in its alarm turned back with increased fervour to the glorious figure of Jeanne d'Arc, that symbol of utter purity and of a spiritual valour which stands for the triumph of Spirit over Matter."

Gaston Luce says: "It is self-evident that the mission of saints and heroes is not restricted to their life on earth. History proves that when they pass to higher realms it is for them merely a change of rôle to one of greater importance; as witness the posthumous efficacy of Joan of Arc, of the Curé D'Ars, or of Thérèse of Lisieux. Devoted to the service of Christ, such souls are naturally destined to become the champions of our cause."

"Her lofty spirit," writes Andry-Bourgeois, "continues to protect France. In those terrible days of 1914 she proved it to us: she guided our armies, raised our soldiers' hearts, and inspired our great leader Foch. That was the eternal love of Jeanne for France, whose angel-guardian she will forever remain. She will continue to help us, and we shall be victorious."

## POLISH RESEARCHER MISSING

Monsieur Hubert Forestier, Managing Director of the *Revue*, writes a lament over the unknown fate of a great Polish lady, Madame Wodzinska, a friend of his and a great Spiritualist. She had conducted experiments with many famous Mediums, Franck Kluski, Gruziewski and Thadée W.; and particularly with Jean Guzik, whom she herself took to Paris for research work in collaboration with Professor Osty and Jean Meyer. "Where are you now?" cries M. Forestier, "you who were such a grand representative of our ideals in your city of Warsaw? Where are you now, you large-hearted woman of noble Polish family, you who suffered and were done to death, you great and valiant spirit?"

## CONDITIONAL IMMORTALITY

Ernesto Bozzano has contributed an article on the vexed question of "Conditional Immortality." He lays special stress on the fact that practically all the Other-Side communicators whom he quotes refuse to be dogmatic on this point, though apparently most of them are disinclined to accept the idea of complete annihilation for the hopelessly depraved.

"We do not know," says "Imperator" in *Spirit Teachings*, suggesting that possibly such depraved souls may reincarnate in some lower form (see *LIGHT*, p. 535, for 1897). In that case, thinks Father Stephano, according to his *Thought Lectures* (*LIGHT*, 1914, p. 312), the soul, after its long purgation, would no longer be recognisable as the same.

Such "souls that die," in the opinion of M. Bozzano, suffer what is known as "the Second Death," a prolonged and inexorable process of disintegration of the etheric envelope in the darkest regions of spiritual expiation. Having at length passed through this Second Death, they would once more reincarnate in the

terrestrial ambience to begin all over again the endless series of apprenticeship in the regenerative school of earth.

## HIS FATHER'S GHOST

A Swiss reader sends in the following article taken from a 1938 issue of the *Mercure de France*. It appears that some years ago a certain poet called Lomon attained a marked degree of popularity as the result of a play in verse entitled *Jean Dacier*, which was published and produced at the Comédie Française. This poet subsequently made the following confession to M. Emile Henriot:

"If I never published another line after *Jean Dacier*, the reason was that I fell out with my father's ghost. He died six years ago. One year later, I was going along the Rue Fontaine, lost in thought, when all of a sudden I felt a light touch on my shoulder; an invisible hand took hold of my arm, and I heard the voice of my dead father say to me: 'Jean, go straight home; I want you to write down what I am going to dictate.' I did as I was bidden—I went home, sat down, and the spirit of my father then, verse by verse, scene after scene, dictated to me the five acts of *Jean Dacier*. It was well received, as you are aware, and performed with amazing success."

"Then I fell out with my father's ghost—because I was an ungrateful fellow. *Jean Dacier* had been a success. I attributed this to myself, whereas the whole thing had been dictated to me. My father went off and never returned. I have no talent whatsoever, and shall never produce another single line."

## FAMILY SECRET REVEALED

LOUIS HILTON contributed to *L'Astrosophie* for April an account of his first psychic experience in Melbourne, Australia.

One evening, one member of a group of young students to which he belonged suggested that they should all go to a "spook meeting." They found a Spiritualist meeting advertised in the local paper, and went. It was in a part of the town to which Hilton had never been before, nor had he ever set eyes on the Medium. The latter, a man, went into trance, picked out Hilton and gave him some most accurate information concerning a little sister whom he described as present and who had (as he correctly said) died at the age of two owing to an accident with boiling water.

The writer continues: "He then went on to state that another sister of mine was there also. I said he was mistaken, but he insisted that this child had only lived on earth for about one hour, having been born without arms. We lads made some fun later on over the supposed armless baby. Several months later, I went back to my home in the country, and on my telling this story to my mother, she went deathly pale and exclaimed: 'How on earth could you have found out about that? For it is true, I did have a tiny baby, born without arms, who died within an hour; but the only people who ever knew about it were myself, your father, the doctor and nurse. Never have I breathed a word of it to a living soul.'"

—Translated by M.A.B.

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## WHAT OUR READERS ARE SAYING

## CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE

SIR,—Captain Craufurd, in referring to my book, *The Psychic Stream*, says (LIGHT, June 6th) he does not find himself convinced as to the mythical aspect of Jesus of Nazareth. I cannot understand him making this remark if he has read the book, as, to my mind, it is a complete vindication, by circumstantial evidence, of the fact that Jesus lived. Agnostics and Rationalists who have read the book tell me that it is the best defence so far put forward to substantiate the reality of Jesus having lived on earth. I prove conclusively, to my mind, that we could not have had Christianity without its central figures having lived on earth—namely, Jesus and Paul.

The return of Jesus as an apparition after death was, however, the cause of all the mythology which came to surround Him, and this mythology is grouped by scholars under the name of the "Christ-myth." We must learn to separate Jesus from Christ. Jesus, the man, by His apparition brought about the belief that He was the Christ, and thus there was attached to His name all the theological beliefs which, for thousands of years, had surrounded other saviour-gods who had appeared after death, each of whom was to his followers looked upon as the Christ.

It is difficult, I know, for many people to separate the two, the one from the other, but until this is done it is quite impossible to understand the Christian religion.

ARTHUR FINDLAY.

## THE OBJECTIVITY OF APPARITIONS

Sir,—Some years ago I wrote an article for LIGHT entitled "Do Ghosts Build Up?" which raised the question discussed by Mr. Abdy Collins in your issue of May 23rd.

I submit, for an apparition to be really objective, it would have to be visible to all present. In the case Mr. Collins cites of Mr. H., only two out of the four persons present were aware of the appearance. These two were probably clairvoyant, whereas the others were not. I have sometimes thought, however, that for some little time after death (especially when it occurs suddenly through accident or being killed in battle) we retain sufficient of our earthly nature to render us partially objective—enough so to be visible to psychics or maybe to the eye of the camera.

In his book, *The Great Problem*, Dr. L. Johnson relates the case of a friend who was drowned whilst attempting to cross a stream in Norway which had become flooded. He declared he distinctly saw his friend outside the window of his room almost immediately after the accident must have occurred.

In the case of an apparition of a living person I should say decidedly it was subjective and would only be seen by a sensitive.

AUBREY TURLE.

## KNOWING GOD

Sir,—Your readers may be glad to supplement Mr. Cammell's very interesting reference to the Kabbalah by a passage from Dr. Inge written before he was Dean of St. Paul's; it recognises very clearly the attitude of the Philosopher and the urgent need of the Christian believer. "Our knowledge must be of God, not of the Godhead, and the God of religion is not the Absolute, but the highest form under which the Absolute can manifest Himself to finite creatures in various degrees of imperfection. The God of religion is not the Father of lights with whom is no variableness, for life without change is a state of which we have no experience, but the Father revealed by the Son. 'No man hath seen God at any time. The only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him.' "

Beaconsfield.

(Rev.) HENRY J. TRUEMAN.

## "NEWS FROM THE NEXT WORLD"

SIR,—May I be allowed to add a few words of explanation to Mr. Battersby's excellent review (LIGHT, June 6th) of my book, *News From the Next World*.

The breaking of the piece of furniture was not the work of Stradiarius, but of another spirit (see page 187) who had great command over the physical manifestations. It was part of an amazing evidential series of happenings.

All the spirit photographs are exceedingly plain to sight, when carefully examined, and among the most evidential in existence, that of Chopin and "George Sand" together is of profound interest, as are also the spirit-photographs of Antonius Stradiarius showing the letter A on the forehead.

Chopin sometimes spoke Polish, but obviously his extemporisations, which are invariably witty and to the point, had to be in English or we could not have understood them. What is apt to be overlooked is the fact (not known by us until later) that Chopin, both as boy and man, used to amuse his friends by similar poetical extemporisations, and it is this fact, and not the poetic finish of the verses, that is the evidential point to be noted. As *extemporisations* given at a moment's notice they are excellent and are quite equal to some of those produced by Burns.

As Mr. Battersby says, "the book must be read." To this I would add, "and re-read, read again and again." It contains such a mass of irrefutable evidence and argument in its 400 pages and 70 plates that no review can give more than the barest outline of its outstanding interest.

On the subject of reincarnation we must be content to differ. I repeatedly questioned the manifesting spirits on this point. Stradiarius has been in the spirit-world 203 years, Chopin 91 years and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle 10 years; yet these spirits—old and experienced in spirit ways—say that they know nothing about reincarnation and have not come across it.

Finally, I would direct attention to those parts of the book dealing with the life of William Hope; life in the spheres; animal survival; and the return of Conan Doyle.

CHARLES L. TWEEDALE.

## ELEMENTALS AND FAIRIES

Sir,—Can any of your correspondents tell me "what are elementals?" I hear from time to time that there are such beings. Are they good or bad entities?

A friend of mine whose father was a very learned man saw them from time to time, and loathed them. He also saw fairies.

Again: "What are fairies?" A friend of mine (Scots) sees fairies—little things with an aura of light round them—but I want to know what they are—if good or bad. Have they souls? Have they power? C.J.

## SIGNPOSTS

Through the mist and the thick darkness,

God has said He will be seen,

Shall we not now seek His Guidance

Where *Earth's* Signposts once have been?

And although the Way to Heaven,

Leads us through the gates of Hell,

If His guiding arm directs us

We can know, all will be well.

Sacrifice of men and Nations,

This may be within His Plan,

To arouse the sleeping conscience,

And the stagnant soul of Man.

But if God there is, be certain,

He is watching o'er the scene,

And His Arm will guide us safely,

Where *Earth's* Signposts once have been.

M. A. ST. CLAIR STOBART.



# Light

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EDITOR - - - GEORGE H. LETHAM

## PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

SPIRITUALISM teaches the importance of personal responsibility in consequence of the truth it reveals of man's eternally progressive individuality. Our attention has been specially drawn to this idea in recent broadcasts by eminent Divines, who have advised the acceptance of the words: "It all depends on me," in our prayers and thoughts to help the cause of the Allies.

Personal responsibility in the truly spiritual sense implies humility, so beautifully expressed in a few lines signed by E. H. Visiak, which appeared in *The Times* of May 31st:

"It all depends on me, a nobody:  
If nobody I can and dare to be;  
Effaced of self, dependent on the All,  
Invulnerable though the Heavens fall."

The recognition of personal responsibility justifies our prayer to Almighty God for victory against the brutally aggressive system which educates youth in a debased philosophy and rules the State by a system retrogressive for humanity, although perfect in its place among the less evolved creatures such as the bee and the ant, where the unit's value is not recognised except as a useful contribution to the good of the whole.

The Allies fight for the Christian ideal. No one is or can be perfect in his behaviour, but he can faithfully follow the true ideal. Therefore, when we, the Allies, pray for Divine guidance and help in this terrible struggle, let us ever remember to justify our appeal by a sincere effort to put into personal practice the ideals we proclaim nationally with sincere feeling.

We must accept this as a necessary condition for the Divine help we ask.

We should also recognise our responsibility to keep cheerful and steady. By properly directed thought we can rule ourselves, influence those we meet, and make a contribution to the general standard of the whole nation. Our men in the Forces have already proved their glorious heroism. Civilians, and particularly psychically-sensitive people, should try to avoid a too vivid consciousness of danger and pain for others and themselves. It is, one believes, a merciful provision of Providence that in the moment of *surprised disaster* far less is registered as mental and bodily pain than in calm, normal moments we imagine would be the case. This fact in no way minimises courage in trouble. Such a quality of soul comes from previous thought and feeling. The nervous system, when keyed up to an unusual pitch, does not register as at ordinary times. At times of tragedy a state of unconscious exaltation is reached which mercifully obliterates the awareness of suffering.

The terror of mere anticipation needs to be avoided, likewise the repetition in remembrance after disaster. If these two forms of anxiety could be banished from our minds, as indeed they should be, the residuum of real and actual suffering would be found to be less than imagined and would be met more courageously. Also by such attempts on our part our spirit-friends and helpers are doubtless better able to assist us to calm our minds and to maintain courage and steadiness.

### "A DANGER TO ENGLAND"

An extremely interesting and thought-provoking article, written by Mr. Beverley Nichols, appeared in the June 6th issue of *The Daily Sketch*. The article

was entitled "Goebbels Gets Through the Spirit-World," and it essayed to set forth the probabilities of Mediums being used to the advantage of our unscrupulous enemy, with his aptitude for making use of subtleties of the mind in a variety of novel ways.

Some of Mr. Nichols' statements cannot be denied, but it would be a travesty of the truth to admit this without reference to other qualifying truths.

He refers to treason and foolishness among Mediums and sitters as a danger to England. With this we agree. Treason and foolishness will bring trouble to England wherever those defects of character are found. Let us see that we employ Mediums who are loyal to the cause of the Allies. If there are Fifth-Columnists among Mediums they should be interned. A pro-German spirit could not very successfully use a Medium who is loyal, unless his loyalty is of so tepid a character that he is practically indifferent to the subject of war. But here we touch upon a very big issue concerning the interaction between the world of spirit and our own under all circumstances. As for foolishness, let us hope that sitters may be wise, both in their position as bereaved sitters and in their social connections as relations of sailors, soldiers, airmen, politicians, journalists and munition workers.

We cannot, unhappily, stamp out foolishness, but Spiritualism can and does inspire wisdom, love and the will to live aright. Let morality and intelligence always guide the study and propaganda of Spiritualism.

The war prophecies that failed are referred to by Mr. Nichols, and he suggests that they may have been inspired by German propaganda. They may have been in some cases. One cannot deny the possibility in view of the depraved ingenuity of German propaganda, but there is certainly a simpler reason for the majority of failures. Sufficient explanation is to be found in the fact that Mediums and sitters were interested in the subject of war and no war, and therefore it was unwise to expect that messages could be received as intended without suffering interference by the preconceived opinions and desires of both Mediums and sitters. It should not be overlooked that some spirit-prophecies were correct, but these were not published widely: they were too unpopular!

MERCY PHILLIMORE.

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## THE PSYCHIC THREAD

## TRANSFIGURATION

IN the narrative of the coming of the Holy Grail to Camelot, cited from Malory in my article of last week, several points will immediately have struck readers of *The Psychic Thread*. The "sunbeam more clearer by seven times than ever they saw day" is the Divine or Astral Light, the Universal Force, to which all mystic investigation brings us by one path or another; the "good odours" recall the phenomenon accompanying the attainment of the *Great Work of Alchemy*. Another and very interesting episode occurred at the moment when the sunbeam entered the hall and all the fellowship "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."

This is a true case of *Transfiguration*, of *Glorification*, when the spiritual body appears to the clairvoyant eye through the envelope of the material. As Christ was transfigured before His disciples, whose eyes were opened to see his spiritual form, so did Arthur's knights at that feast of Pentecost see one another with that inner eye which pierces the denser barriers.

This phenomenon is properly called *Transfiguration*, a term that is much misused by Spiritualists. It is often employed to designate the change in a Medium's features when under unconscious control. The proper name for such phenomena is *Transformation*; the term *Transfiguration* always implies *Glorification* of the actual features and form of the transfigured, without any change of personality.

It is here to be stressed that transformation of one kind or another lies at the heart of all Creation. It is a dynamic force of Nature, and as such all esoteric and occult science and philosophy is earnestly concerned therewith. *Transmutation* is the goal of Alchemy, both material and spiritual. This truth calls to mind one of the greatest mystic allegories of all time, a masterpiece of symbolic teaching. I refer to the great transcendental poem of the Persian sage Ferid-eddin Attar (1119-1229) entitled the *Mantic Utair* or *Parliament of the Birds*. Attar, whose appellation signifies the *Perfumer* (we say currently *attar* of roses to signify the essence of that flower) is one of the loftiest figures among the Sufis, the Moslem Neo-Platonic poet-philosophers of Persia.

## ALLEGORY OF THE BIRDS

Attar's allegory of the Birds is a sublime conception, and perhaps no other work so clearly expresses the pilgrimage of the Soul to ultimate Union. The poet tells us how the nation of the Birds, dissatisfied with a republican constitution, held a Parliament and decided that they must have a King. Since no common bird could be chosen, it was agreed that the Phoenix should be asked to ascend the airy throne of the winged ones. But the Phoenix dwelt in the distant mountains of the Caucasus, and an imposing delegation was therefore despatched to request him to assume sovereignty. Through many countries the birds flew, through dark and dangerous passes, buffeted by terrible winds, assailed by strange foes. Some fell victims to these perils, others abandoned the Quest for weariness. Only thirty birds (typifying the thirty orders of Sufis and Darvishes) reached the Caucasus and the palace of the Phoenix. As they entered his presence, lo, a great wonder came upon them, for, beholding the Phoenix, each bird beheld his own countenance in that of the King, and when in astonishment they turned to one another, each saw himself in the person of each of his companions. This allegory of the Soul's quest and of its absorption in the Divinity is heightened by the circumstance that the Persian word for Phoenix is *Simorg* and *Si-morg* signifies the number thirty.

## GLASTONBURY

In perilous times it is good to think of holy things and to travel in spirit to holy places. And to one of

these blessed havens my thoughts on the Holy Grail led me last week. Truly there are some places so charged with sacred memories that the very breezes that rise and fall among the ruins of their past glories bear with them a benediction. An undefinable sense of mingled awe and peace hovers over arch and column. The barriers seem to have worn thin between the worlds of matter and spirit. A consciousness of innate power stirs within us, a realization of reserve energy concealed beneath a calm that has its roots in the secret sanctuaries of the Soul. Nowhere are such effects observed more potently than in those two hallowed shrines of Great Britain, in English Glastonbury and in Scottish Iona.

Glastonbury, long ago the orchard Isle of Avalon—Glastonbury, sacred to the Celtic Druids ere ever it was holy to the Celtic Christians, is the Mother Church of England. There Joseph of Arimathea built the first Christian Church in England: of wattle he built it, "of twisted twigs." The founding of this first English Church is recounted by a number of our earliest historians. It is abundantly confirmed by the striking fact that the precedence of the English delegates over the delegates of France and Spain was established at the great Church Councils of Pisa in 1409, of Constance in 1417, Siena in 1429, and Basle in 1434, "because St. Joseph brought the faith to England immediately after the Passion of Christ (*statim post passionem Jesu Christi*). As that prime authority on all that pertains to Glastonbury, the Rev. Lionel Smithett Lewis, has observed, the Church Councils "must have had convincing proof" of that event," even if that proof no longer exists after the destruction of Glastonbury's great library and muniment room."\*

Of the "Old Church" of Glastonbury, William of Malmesbury, who Mr. Lewis describes as "the most critical and accurate of early English historians," and who wrote his *Antiquities of Glastonbury* about 1125, tells us that this church "built first of rushes, from the very beginning breathed out and spread abroad throughout the entire country a mysterious odour of Divine sanctity, from the cult of a great devotion, rude though it may have been. Hence the confluence hither of all kinds of people along all the paths of the sea; hence the great show of rich treasures deposited here; hence the constant succession of religious and literary men."

## COLUMBA

St. Columba himself links Glastonbury to Iona. That great man and mystic, who is called in the Gaelic tongue *Collumkille* (Columba of the Church) went to Glastonbury as a pilgrim to the shrine of another of her Saints, St. Patrick, the patron of Ireland, who in his last days became first Abbot of Glastonbury and who it is almost certain died there. We have William of Malmesbury's authority for Columba's pilgrimage to Avalon. "A.D. 504 St. Columba came to Glaston. Some affirm that this Saint finished his course there, but whether he did or whether he returned to his own country, I will not asseverate." We know, however, that Columba died on June 9th, 597, not at Glaston, not in his native Ireland, where he was a prince born, but in his island sanctuary of Iona. Columba's history has come down to us in no dubious fashion. Cuminius, his successor as Abbot of Iona, wrote his life, and within a quarter of a century Abbot Adamnan composed his famous biography of the Saint. Columba signifies in Latin a *dove*, the symbol of peace, and Iona has the same meaning in Hebrew.

C. R. CAMMELL.

\* Rev. L. S. Lewis: *Glastonbury, the Mother of Saints: Her Saints*. London. A. R. Mowbray. 1927.



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

## 10—A COMMUNICATOR'S EXPLANATION

By ALAN HOWGRAVE-GRAHAM

I SHOULD not have devoted as much space as I have just done to the doctrine—shall I call it?—of etheric counterparts, had the hypothesis of the knocks being produced primarily therein remained no more than an academic speculation. But whatever value may or may not be placed on the confirmation of it subsequently obtained, it turned out that this hypothesis was destined to receive such confirmation from excarnate sources.

Before turning to this, it is essential, in view of what will follow, to state certain special features which have attached to my own personal experiences of these sounds when alone.

The chief of these is that they have usually occurred when my mind has been in a very passive condition—tranquil, negative, as nearly as possible unoccupied, inactive. In the great majority of cases they have come under the following circumstances, namely—either just when I was beginning to get drowsy the last thing before sleep at night, or soon after waking from the light sleep of the early morning hours. Much less often they have occurred when I was lazily reading some light or rather tedious book. Three or four times I have had them when copying already written matter with a typewriter. Twice or three times only they have come when I was actually originating at the moment. While I was laid up for a day or two once or twice with a trifling indisposition, they were more than usually frequent, but when, on three occasions, I have been really seriously unwell, they ceased altogether until I had fully recovered.

The inference from observation of these attendant circumstances from day to day over a period of two years, to the very day on which I write these words, is inescapable: the production of the sounds obviously requires, or is at least most favoured by, first my mental passivity, and secondly my reasonably good bodily health. The further inference that logically follows is that I must myself make some contribution to the production of these sounds; please note these points; they are quite important.

Now here we may turn for a certain implicit corroboration to pure Science, Science quite unconnected with paranormal psychic phenomena. In that interesting book called *Unsolved Problems of Science* (Haslet) occurs the following passage:

"Professor Berger found that when the eyes are shut, a regular *electrical* rhythm becomes established \* with a frequency of about ten a second. *This rhythm may, however, be disturbed by concentrated thought, for example a mathematical sum which is difficult enough to demand the subject's whole attention.*† But there is no means of telling whether the break is due to this cause, or to the contemplation of a problem in philosophy, or indeed any other problem of equal difficulty. The rhythm, which can be measured, is that characteristic of a *completely vacant mind*. The waves are in a real sense brain waves, but they are waves of inactivity, not of thought.

"... Although the rhythm can make its appearance when the eyes are open, *it does so very much more readily when the eyes are shut*. Moreover, while it can be upset by thought, *it can be very much more easily upset by the contemplation of any visual pattern*. The explanation is probably that the brain cells only beat in unison when they are idle."

Now when I remark that these phenomena mostly occur in darkness, and when I anticipate by saying that the authors of them definitely call them electrical in their nature and insist that inertness of mind is the chief favourable antecedent condition, does it not seem

as if the above passage might almost have been written on this very subject?

I have, then, now propounded, as inferential from conditions hypothetically attaching to the production of knocks and raps—

(i) That they are initiated in the "etheric counterpart" of the portion of building or article of furniture in which they seem to take place;

(ii) That they greatly depend on mental inertness;

(iii) That their incidence is interfered with by serious ill-health; and

(iv) That therefore I contribute in some way physically or psycho-physically, to their production. (N.B.—Any suggestion that they could be attributable solely to any mysterious subconscious volition of mine, due to a desire for them on my part, is wholly negatived by the facts that I am entirely unable to command them by any desire or effort of will, even did I so wish—indeed observation convinces me that any definite expectation or anticipation of them is at the moment distinctly detrimental to their occurrence—and that they have been foretold previous to, and described subsequently to, their occurrence.)

Before attempting to make any serious attempt to collect excarnate information on this phenomenon for readers of LIGHT, I more than once asked of the producer of them, through Mrs. Godfrey, how he believed he was doing it. He was not on these early occasions very definite about it, but even then these four things were insisted upon: (i) That the "power" (he always calls it that) is electrical in its nature; (ii) That it is supplied in part by himself and in part by me; (iii) That it is easiest to evoke and use it when I am very passive; (iv) That the possibility of producing the sounds is to no small extent dependent upon favourable weather and atmospheric conditions, calm weather, absence of thunderstorm conditions, and moonlight, seeming to be the most favourable.

The expression "electrical in its nature" need not and does not imply that the "power" is literally any form of electricity which is known to and has been identified by physical science; perhaps the expression "is analagous to some kind of quasi-electric force" might be a more cautious and therefore a more suitable one; remember any way that after all the youthful communicator is not the spirit of Faraday or of Sir William Crookes.

On July 20th, 1939, however, I set myself to obtain from the same source, and through the same Medium, something more definite. Let me repeat here that I fully recognise that communications of this sort can never be established as having scientifically watertight evidentiality, because they are not testable in the sense of, say, a book-test of Mrs. Leonard's. Nevertheless a two years' continuous experience of this Medium and study of her mediumship, of her personality, and of her kindly, frank, and honest character, together with uncounted unassailable test-communications received through her, many of them completely exclusive of any explanation even by Telepathy with a big T, have given me sufficient confidence to treat the communications which follow as undoubtedly emanating from the communicators themselves, and not from the mind of Mrs. Godfrey, *even had they not been largely confirmed cross-correspondently by like explanations given, in two cases by the very same communicator, through other Mediums.*

The following dialogue took place, then, on July 20th:

In answer to a question I failed to record, "The power is electrical." "Yes, I understand that. But what I want to know is how you *use* it—what it is that you actually *do* when you want to make the knock. Whether you do it by thought, or whether you use any

(Continued at foot of next column)

(\*In the brain. †All italics mine. A.H.G.).



## BARON M. de MECK'S EXPERIENCES

IN a sun-porch overlooking Mrs. St. Clair Stobart's lovely garden at Turner's Wood, Hampstead, Baron M. de Meck recounted to interested guests a series of psychic experiences which it does not often fall to the good fortune of one man to enjoy.

First, we were shown some original manuscripts of automatic writing, unusual in that they were written in Russian by a French Medium who (and it is not difficult to believe this) knew no Russian whatever. One example, it was stated, was actually written by the pen, independently of any hand, in minute writing, tailing off at the end in a line and a blot.

A very unusual form of mediumship was revealed by two rather crude "prophetic paintings." In this case the Medium does a picture in colour representing a certain event. On the back she writes a description of this event with the probable location and date. Also on the back have been affixed cuttings from newspapers giving accounts, in each case, of an event similar to that predicted, occurring some weeks after the date on which the picture was painted.

The Baron also produced a number of psychic photographs, of which the most remarkable, not psychic photography in the usual sense, was one taken after an almost complete de-materialisation of a Medium in Sweden. The print reveals the Medium's wife on a garden-seat where the two had been sitting, but by her side all that is visible is the lower part of one trousered leg, apparently crossed over another which is not visible. There is no haziness where the body should have been, but just above head level is a vague cloud which, it is claimed, represents the Medium's withdrawn and etherealised matter.

H.J.D.M.

## ON SIMPLICITY

Let simplicity be your watchword. You may think I over emphasise this point, but, my friends, I do not think you realise its importance. Looking upon your world to-day I see vanity heaped upon vanity and people overwhelmed by trifles which they have come to regard as necessary to their existence. How can they steer a straight course through such a mass of unimportant things? Look again at the life of the Master. Could anything be simpler than His teaching or the way that He lived? There is your Great Example.—(From Brother Boniface through M. Smith.)

(Continued from previous column)

instrument, or materialise anything." "I think the knock, and there is a knock." "You are sure that's how it is done?" "Yes; that's how I do it." "Now are you sure that I did not put that idea into your mind?" "You made it clear to me." "Ah! Now what do you mean by that? It sounds as if I did put it into your mind." "No. You didn't put it into my mind. That is what I do: I think of the knock and that makes the knock."

I think that the words "made it clear to me" may fairly be interpreted, in the light of what followed, as meaning either that I caused him to think out what it really is that he has to do, or that I suggested words in which to express it. In all the mediumistic communications reviewed and destructively criticised as being explicable in this way or that way, I do think that far too little attention is often paid to the *psychology of conversational speech*, the turns of expression, the phraseology, the vocabulary, the idiom, and whether they are characteristic of the control, whoever he purports to be, or characteristic of a Medium; I claim that the two expressions "I think the knock and there is a knock," and "I think of the knock and that makes the knock," are definitely characteristic of a boy of (now) thirteen, and definitely *not* so of an old lady of seventy.

(Next week: "Further Communicated Explanations.").

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No Nation mourning for the brave,  
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Let not the voice of child at play  
Be hushed on my funereal day,  
Swiftly cover the lifeless clay—  
Bury me where I fall.

The call went forth: "Defend the right!  
Ye sons of Britain, rise and fight,  
Or the world is lost to-day!"  
How fine that I was young and strong,  
Able to join the eager throng.  
So forth we went, with mirth and song,  
In Britain's casual way.

In battle din when warrior dies,  
From out this husk his soul shall rise,  
Bright as a flashing star!  
No more to toil for daily wage  
Or know the pains of creeping age.  
I shall have won my heritage  
And crossed the heavenly bar.

A. HORNGATE (Musical rights reserved).



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T. E. AUSTIN, Clairvoyance and Psychometrist. Developing class Thursday 3 p.m. Interviews by appointment. 32 Connaught Street, Marble Arch, W. 2

DRESSMAKING. Spiritualist urgently requires work. Day and Evening Gowns, Coats, Suits, Ladies' Lingerie, Children's clothes, and alterations. Clients fitted own address if preferred. Best work, with West End experience. RIVER-side 1187, or write I. GRAY, 265 King Street, Hammersmith.

ADDITORS required. State price. Box No. 358, c/o LIGHT.