

LIGHT

A JOURNAL OF SPIRITUALISM, PSYCHICAL, OCCULT
AND MYSTICAL RESEARCH

FOUNDED IN 1881

No. 3102. VOL. LX.

(Registered as

THURSDAY, JUNE 27, 1940

a Newspaper)

PRICE THREEPENCE

ON OTHER PAGES.

FEARLESSNESS

By MERCY PHILLIMORE

—page 290.

Go To It

By JOYCE WARRACK

—page 290.

Render Unto Caesar

By MAJOR J. H. WEBSTER

—page 288.

Seeking Points of Agreement

By GEORGE A. NOBLE

—page 289.

Patches of Light

By H. A. DALLAS—page 287.

World Transmutation

By C. R. CAMMELL

—page 291

Subscription Rates (including postage)—12 months, 15s. 2d.; 6 months, 7s. 7d.; or from Newsagents, 3d. weekly.

Subscriptions should NOT be sent to the Editor, but should in all cases be addressed to the Manager of Light, 16 Queensberry Place, South Kensington, London, S.W.7. Cheques and Postal Orders should be crossed and made payable to L.S.A. PUBLICATIONS, LTD.

AMERICAN and CANADIAN subscribers can remit by International Money Order, obtainable at all Post Offices, or from the foreign exchange departments of most national banks, at the current rate of exchange.

ADVERTISEMENTS.—For rates apply: The Advertisement Manager, LIGHT, 16 Queensberry Place, South Kensington, London, S.W.7. (Phone: Kensington 3292-3). Telegrams: "Survival, London."

Entered as Second Class Matter, March 12, 1929, at the Post Office, at Boston, Mass under the Act of March 9, 1879 (Sec. 327 P.L. and R.)

SCIENCE CALLS IN A CONJUROR

TO DENY POSSIBILITY OF TELEPATHY

By H. F. PREVOST BATTERSBY

AS the guardian of Psychical Research, the American Society has devoted the whole of its May *Journal* to the consideration of an article by Professor Sumner Boyer Ely on Telepathy in *The Scientific Monthly*.

The Scientific Monthly is an official publication of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and, as the accepted organ for the purpose which it professes, must bear the responsibility of making certain that its contents are representative of the standard of scientific work and ethical principles for which the Association as a body and the great majority of its members stand.

This article by Mr. Ely, entitled "Telepathy—A Survey," "falls so far short," says John J. O'Neill, "of the high standards adhered to by scientists as a group, and their organisations, that it borders dangerously close to the line which divides the ethical from the unethical. It clearly falls within the realm of a propaganda too undignified to be admitted to the pages of a periodical published by what is probably the largest scientific society in the world."

That is a very serious indictment, but Mr. O'Neill does not shrink from its implications. The propaganda nature of this article is so obvious, he says, that its appearance cannot be attributed to inadvertence or oversight. "The contents of the article harmonise with an attitude taken by a group of psychologists, who are unable to assimilate the newest scientific developments in their field, and who are therefore less competent to pass judgment on the rapid advances presented."

Members of this group are unfortunately in strategic positions in societies and editorial boards of scientific publications, and their influence has already had an unfortunate effect on workers in the fields of research embracing telepathy and clairvoyance.

It might be supposed that the editors of a great scientific journal would have entrusted the writing of such an article to a scientist with professional competence for the task, or would at least have submitted what he had written to the judgment of some of the scores of psychologists included in the membership of the Association, any one of whom, Mr. O'Neill suggests, would have administered a stinging rebuke for having their time wasted on such a travesty.

Professor Ely is described as a Mechanical Engineer, and his attachments have been to Tinsplate, Power Plants, and Bituminous Coal, none of which can be described as of direct assistance to psychology.

Indeed, his only claim to be considered a serious investigator is, in his own words, that he "has amused himself for many years with sleight-of-hand and legerdemain and has even perpetrated some amateur seances on his friends;" though the connection of card tricks and telepathy is not instantly apparent.

There is, however, this to be remembered. Whenever anyone, approaching psychical research, proclaims his skill as a conjuror, he confesses at the outset an expectancy of fraud—he is, he would have you know, up to all the tricks of the trade.

It is almost inconceivable that such distinguished scientists as the editors of *The Scientific Monthly* should have entrusted the survey of a complex and highly contentious subject to a man whose boasted qualification is that he has learnt how to deceive.

Really the employment of such an unqualified writer is so grotesque that Mr. O'Neill seems justified in asserting that the only reason for the publication

of such an article "is a very apparent unscholarly desire to discredit a whole field of research; an effort to discredit by ridicule that which cannot be successfully contradicted by fact."

On the other hand it seems strange that the editors have not considered that unprejudiced readers of the *Monthly* will resent, as an affront to American scientists, the presentation of such hokum among the other scholarly and representative papers published in its February issue.

AN INCREDIBLE PERFORMANCE

Almost half of Professor Ely's *Survey* is devoted to stage demonstrations of "telepathy," magicians' use of trick systems of communication, and fraudulent Mediums, and only some eight per cent. of the whole to the experiments at Duke University and other universities and colleges.

No mention is made of *The Journal of Parapsychology* now published at Columbia University, nor of Professor J. B. Rhine's two books, *Extra Sensory Perception*, and *New Frontiers of the Mind*. So distinctive a volume as René Warcollier's *Experimental Telepathy* is likewise ignored, as is also Upton Sinclair's *Mental Radio*.

Not a reference is made to the vast amount of material in the *Proceedings* of the British S.P.R., and in the *Journal* of the American Society, nor to the store of information in the library and archives of the latter society.

However, omissions scarcely represent a loss with such a writer, since, as a paper by Dr. Nandor Fodor in the same number makes clear, Professor Ely could not be relied on to reproduce with any approach to accuracy the authorities from whom he quotes.

One cannot even ascribe to carelessness his conjuring with figures, since they are always altered, often brazenly, to suit his own view. He changes 1684 into 1300, and 80 to 30; a manipulation by no means creditable to a Professor of Commercial Engineering.

Referring to Sir Oliver Lodge as a Spiritualist and

author of *The Survival of Man*, he adds: "He had lost a son in the World War, and this affected him profoundly; it may in part account for his beliefs."

He can hardly have been unaware that the book was published six years before Sir Oliver's son was killed, and that in it he had written: "The hypothesis of surviving intelligence and personality—not only surviving but anxious and able with difficulty to communicate—is the simplest and most straightforward and only one that fits all the facts;" a conclusion at which he had arrived from sittings with Mrs. Piper in 1889, twenty-six years before he lost his son.

But that is only one of many such insidious lapses revealed by Dr. Fodor, more suggestive of prestidigitation than of scientific enquiry. As the Doctor comments: "The remarkable thing about human progress is that it takes place despite the desperate opposition of vested scientific interest. When we speak of the indomitable courage of pioneers it is well to remember the indomitable cowardice of their fellow scientists."

Well also to remember that Newton, in despair of being able to persuade his world to accept the theory of gravitation, declared: "I see that a man must either resolve to put out nothing new or become a slave to defend it."

The avoidance of anything new would seem, as far as telepathy is concerned, to be the principle of *The Scientific Monthly*, and one can express one's gratitude to Professor Ely for setting out in nude exuberance its unscientific arbitrament.

"The final conclusion regarding telepathy is clear," he says. "It can be very positively and definitely stated that there never has been any evidence produced which would warrant belief that there is such a thing as telepathy. The most careful and reliable tests show no indication whatever of it. While of course this is negative proof, yet after all it is a proof that no such thing as telepathy exists. We can positively say that no mind has ever yet communicated with another mind other than through ordinary sensory channels."

Isn't it wonderful!

**The Journal for the American Society for Psychical Research*. May, 1940. New York. The American Society for Psychical Research, Inc. 50 cents.

A DEATH-BED VISION

ON the 3rd of April, 1940, the death occurred, at Norfolk Island, of Mrs. George Nobbs, nee Amelia Evans. Having heard common talk of the deceased lady having seen a vision prior to her passing, I called on the family. Mrs. Ellis Quintal, a daughter, gave me the following details, which were confirmed by others who were present.

Her mother's mind, said Mrs. Quintal, was quite clear and lucid and she was conversing with her, her sisters and her uncle (Mr. Charles Evans), when suddenly she exclaimed: "The room is full of people. How beautiful, how beautiful!" Asked by Mr. Evans whether she could recognise anyone, the dying woman replied, pointing: "There is Aunt Lily. How beautiful she looks." Aunt Lily was the late Mrs. Young, mother of Miss Olive Young.

Asked again by Mr. Evans whether she identified any other, the reply came: "There is a lady dressed in black who has just come into the room. Oh, it is Aunt Maude." Aunt Maude was the late Mrs. Fisher Christian. Mr. George Nobbs informs me that the dress was not black, but a very dark purple and his gift to the late Mrs. Christian.

Mrs. Nobbs then fell into a coma and did not regain consciousness. Such death-bed visions have, in the past, not been uncommon among the people of Norfolk Island.

Norfolk Island.
April 20th, 1940.

H. L. WILLIAMS
(Indian Police, Retired).

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE LTD.

16 QUEENSBERRY PLACE, LONDON, S.W.7

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July 2nd—Mr. T. E. AUSTIN

7.30 p.m.—Coffee

7.45 p.m.—Informal Discussion and Questions Answered,
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TO-DAY, THURSDAY, June 27th, 5.30 p.m., LECTURE
Miss Charlotte Woods
"Present Day Developments of the Ancient Doctrine of Survival"

FRIDAYS, at 6.30 p.m. GROUP SEANCES

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July 5th—Mr. ROY MORGAN

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NATURAL MEDIUMSHIP

ONE of the most interesting stories I ever heard of a strange psychic faculty was told me by Alie F. She was a young and very beautiful Dutch woman, who was born and brought up in Java. She was educated in Holland and England, was well read and intelligent. She attended the Episcopal Church and during the three years that she was my neighbour I formed a high opinion of her character and integrity.

The story was about her brother-in-law, Jan Van Awick, I'll call him. He was sent out from the Home Office in Amsterdam to study the Eastern export trade under Alie's father. The day he arrived in Java he was taken to Alie's home, where he was to stay till suitable lodgings were arranged for. He was a stranger to the family, and they knew nothing about him except that he was a promising young man in the firm.

During dinner, however, he amazed the family by his drait conduct. He seemed unable to concentrate on the conversation, but looked beyond those speaking to him, and even looked under the table once or twice. They began to wonder if the heat had already affected him.

Suddenly he electrified them by describing a man whom the father recognised as his father; then a young man whom the mother recognised as a suitor in her youth. In fact, the room was tenanted not only by those in the flesh, but by many of their dead relatives and friends. Sitting under the table was a dark little boy playing with a dog, who was recognised as the dead son of the native cook.

Jan was a very unhappy looking young man and evidently not in the best of health. He confided to the family that his life was one long misery because he was never alone, never at rest. He lived two lives in one, and it was wearing him out. Everywhere he went he saw the dead living what seemed to be a normal life; they laughed and chatted, they played games, they flocked to the churches, the theatres, the restaurants. They liked music, and hung round where it was being played. The stage was crowded with them when a great singer sang, and they hung on the edges of the pulpit when a great speaker preached.

The family tested him by inviting strangers to the house and getting him to describe those invisible ones who tagged along. But they made no effort to make practical use of his faculty. It never entered their minds that the young man was in duty bound to become a public Medium. He could have convinced the most sceptical by describing their dead to them. But this young man shrank away from his gift, looking on it as a curse. These dead did not look vapoury. They looked as substantial as the living; there was, however, a difference, but Alie did not understand what it was, although Jan tried to put it into words.

Jan married one of Alie's sisters, but he was always consulting doctors about his health, believing that if he could find something the matter with him and cure it, he would become normal, seeing only what others saw. It is hard to believe that he did not make his gift public, and so attract some reliable investigator. His gift was surely a valuable one to be shared with the world at large, but, no, all he wanted was rest from the plague of seeing two worlds at once.

In Church he saw angels at the altar and moving among the congregation, whispering to some of the worshippers. He saw a steady stream rising upward of what looked like thinned-out lightning or some similar force, which he believed to be the force generated by combined prayer.

Christ said that when two or three were gathered together in His name, their prayers would be answered. At this terrible time the people of the Empire should be in the churches at all times using this force to help along to triumph.

Pelham, New York.

DOROTHEA J. SNYDER.

PATCHES OF LIGHT

AT a time like this when we are all bearing one another's burdens more completely perhaps than ever before, I wish to share with readers of *LIGHT* the comfort and stimulus which I have derived from some of my correspondents. With her permission I quote a letter from the mother of a fine youth who passed from this stage during his air service in Norway. This friend wrote to me:

"Do not grieve for me. All is well. I knew my lovely son had to go. He was lovely in his life—inside and out. He went full of joy and happiness. He will be no stranger on the Other Side. Nothing can hurt him any more; I need never worry for him. He and we know there is no separation. I rejoice for him and with him, and picture him radiant. I would not have him back if I could. We are sustained in such a way that I almost feel ashamed of the sympathy of my friends. I am glad he has played his part and can go on to higher service, and oh! how grateful I am for all I have and have had from him and his Master."

In a later letter, this mother writes: "I have received such confirmation of what I knew." She received by post through Mrs. Grace Cooke a message "so exactly as he would speak." In this message he said:

"I am so happy I cannot explain it. I shall carry on with my work on this side and I know that we can never be parted. I have been saved from great suffering and unhappiness on earth. Anyhow, I am jolly happy where I am. I feel so light and free to go anywhere without hindrance. Oh! Mum, its good to be alive. So glad you know that I am alive and not dead."

With this message came a vision of the sender looking radiant, bathed in sunlight.

LOVE CAME TO MEET HIM

Many go over who are not as prepared for advancement as this fine soul; but those who are friendless on this earth are not unloved in the larger life, as the following incident from another letter shows. I received a letter a few months ago from a friend who wrote:

"An elderly man we know of had, about a year ago, to be removed to a nursing home for mental inebriates. He had been a great trial to his wife (a much younger second wife), he had had one stroke and was altogether, looked at from our human standpoint, unlovely in his life and a useless burden. He became very ill and eventually died. But at the moment of passing, the nurse in charge saw at the foot of his bed a woman's white misty figure, which suddenly held out both arms. The nurse looked quickly at her patient and said the most lovely smile lit up his face. Evidently he saw and knew—just dropped his head and was gone.

"It is so pathetic to me! This poor old man, his life so wasted till nobody wanted him any more; such an unlikely subject for a beautiful deathbed. Yet at the end, Love came to meet him."

One more quotation from another friend's letter:

"A cousin told me she had been very afraid of death until a man she knew very little and was saying goodbye to before he went as a soldier, said: "'I look upon death as a great adventure which I have been looking for all my life.'"

The brave men who see death so will "greet the Unseen with a cheer."

Across the dark clouds of hatred and suffering, there shine bright patches of light. A young soldier from Dunkirk showed me one of these, a few days ago. He told me of a German who rescued two Britons from a burning hold. When they asked him why he did it, he replied simply, "You would do the same for me."

"Who so is wise will ponder these things and they shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord."

"The Light Everlasting unto the blind is not, but is born of the eye that has Vision."—*Longfellow*.

HELEN ALEX. DALLAS.

RENDER UNTO CAESAR . . .

By MAJOR J. H. WEBSTER

(Author of *Through Clouds of Doubt*)

CANON ANSON says Spiritualism is not a religion (LIGHT, 4th April). Mr. C. K. Shaw says it is a religion (debate at the Wigmore Hall on 27th March). Mr. Horace Leaf doesn't agree; and he strikes another note by saying that religions are nearly always systems, such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Christianity. Mr. Harry Price says Spiritualism is a "racket."

As Mr. Leaf very wisely puts it: "A word that has every meaning might well be said to have no meaning." Perhaps it would be better for all concerned if the word "Religion," and its equivalent in all other languages, could be put on the spot and bumped off.

Mr. Leaf's "systems" are also suffering from a loss of meaning, but the bumping-off process is not so easily applied as in the case of a mere word. Even Christianity in its checkered adventures down the centuries has undergone many changes of meaning, until at the present time it is represented by a bag of "I believes," whose elaborate labels give it the appearance of a globe-trotter's suitcase, the destination of which is thereby rendered vague. It is viewed with either disdain or amusement by the practical wayfarer, who prefers a clearer, a more straightforward indication of purpose in life's journey.

The propounders of theological hocus-pocus and the dispensers of ecclesiastical "all sorts" have so confused the issue that one cannot wonder at the hope stirred in the hearts of thinking men and women who now give heed to the ideologies of keen and commonsense minds, untrammelled by folk-lore theologies, and applying themselves to the problem of life without the aid of religion at all.

Christianity's Founder used no labels. It wasn't necessary. He sponsored no religion. He was a revolutionary, and the institutional religionists of those days schemed to destroy Him.

This is no quibble over a mere word. Religion, its systems, its dogmas and its priestcraft have come between God and man; they have split life into two departments, sacred and secular, and the gulf between them has gradually widened until mankind has become almost incapable of realising that LIFE in its entirety must be either pro-God or anti-God. If it is pro-God in Church and anti-God in the office, the factory, the playground, it is, in effect, worse—far worse—than anti-God altogether.

When the religionists tried to incriminate Jesus by setting a trap He said: "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's and to God the things that are God's." That answer bore a deeper meaning, surely, than the common interpretation. There was a touch of cynicism in it, which the Scribes and Pharisees in their self-sufficiency could not see; and even to-day the point is very often missed. Could anything be Cæsar's that was not God's? If the tribute demanded by Cæsar was just, needed for the welfare of the community and, therefore, in accordance with God's will, by being rendered unto Cæsar it was also being rendered unto God. How truly that applies to-day! The Houses of Parliament should be the nation's cathedral, and M.P.'s should signify something higher, nobler than "Mere Partisanship" or "Man's Policy."

How does Christianity to-day figure in the "Tribute-to-Cæsar" question? Surely the Church should be in the forefront of all efforts to establish conditions among the human family approximating to the ideals enunciated in the Sermon on the Mount. It has done much to alleviate the sufferings of the poor, but it is in the direction of preventing the suffering that it has failed; and prevention is always better than cure. Jesus preached a way of life, not a religion, and emphasised more than anything else the human brotherhood. The "System" that claims His leadership has followed the lead in part, but has always managed to evade its

main issues when faced with the real problems of life. It has compromised to suit materialism's convenience so much that the wholesome and commonsense application of Christ's way of life has gradually receded into a wordy sentiment devoid of action—a tree of spectacular appearance, full of blossom, but yielding little fruit; like the Christmas tree, it has been laden with artificialities, the simple greatness and great simplicity of Christ's teaching being hidden under a display of liturgical observances so profound and bewildering that the essence of the original teaching has lost most of its true significance.

Despite Christianity's avowed belief in its Founder and His teaching, no Christian king or government has made any determined attempt to govern on lines based on that teaching. For one thing, His teaching left not the slightest room for doubt that He despised ritual and ceremony. Church and State have thrived on both of them. He preached true co-operation, international brotherhood, humanitarianism. Church and State have opposed these things because, they say, they are impossible in society as at present constituted. In other words, to alter the constitution of society on Christian lines would be inconvenient; it would cut across the self-interests of those at the moment in authority. So orthodox Christianity has failed, and our civilisation is in the condition that Church and State has made it; one in which poverty, misery and inequality are suffered by the many for the arrogance, luxury and ostentation of the few.

We have often heard it said: "You can't mix religion with politics." Then isn't it high time that we found something that *would* mix with politics? Unless contact with spiritual power can become a commonplace matter of ordinary life, instead of being kept in a watertight compartment, tribute to Cæsar can never become tribute to God also. If spiritual power and politics will not mix, and as both are concerned with life and human welfare, either or both of them must be defective. Remove the defects, and the resulting mixture would become a philosophy—a conduct of life. The suffering world might then attain a new understanding; an intelligent co-operation with Nature's law, with God's law; not sacred in one aspect of things and secular in another, but in all the events of daily life.

When man realises a way of life in partnership with God he will be well on the road to acquiring all those things for which he yearns, but which are now barred to him by an unsatisfying materialism, social and national disunity, and a complexity of dogmas and creeds which obscure his vision; he will measure life, not so much by quantities as by quality and intensity—yet he will "have life more abundantly."

What a revolution could be effected in human society if men and women the world over did but grasp the hand held out to them by a God of love, wisdom and understanding, ready to guide them out of darkness into light and true happiness! Hateful passions, wars and rivalries would then vanish from the earth. Christians, Moslems, Jews, Buddhists—what matter the creed? All come under the same Spiritual Power. Indeed, are we not all Spiritualists? And *Spiritualism is not a religion.*

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LECTURE

by

Miss CHARLOTTE WOODS

on Present Day Developments of the Ancient Doctrine of Survival

TO-DAY, THURSDAY, JUNE 27th, at 5.30 p.m.

Members free, Members' Guests 1/-, Non-Members 2/-

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LIGHT

289

WHAT OUR READERS ARE SAYING

SEEKING POINTS OF AGREEMENT

SIR,—One of the most hopeful signs in the present state of world chaos and disintegration is the action of the Church Assembly in accepting membership of the World Council of Churches now in formation.

Spiritualists can be under no illusion that the spiritual regeneration of mankind is the only hope of salvation of the world, "for we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

Already fifty-nine Churches of different nationality, sect and creed have intimated their adherence to the World Council, and in the words of Dr. Bell, Bishop of Chichester, "the Churches must set aside prejudice, as the situation is too serious to allow the present distribution of Christian forces to continue." The Pope's insistence upon the necessity for collaboration between all who believe in the divinity of Christ affords the hope that every shade of religious thought and activity may be drawn together with united purpose.

To Spiritualists the way seems clear, since Spiritualism is the basis of all religions, as so often emphasised by Mrs. St. Clair Stobart, while as to her particular child, the Confraternity, its sole justification rests on the confirmation of religious faith founded on the knowledge and proof of survival afforded by Spiritualism.

So, "like leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, 'till the whole was leavened," every denomination must be prepared to sacrifice its individuality by uniting in common service to combat the forces of evil, to set aside distinctive labels, seeking points of agreement rather than points of difference, so that mankind may be drawn through every channel of religious belief to the broad outlook and fundamental recognition of the spiritual destiny of the human race, and universal acceptance of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of Man.

GEORGE A. NOBLE.

GIVE OUT POWER!

Sir,—I hesitate to trouble you with correspondence, but it is impressed upon me from the Other Side that now is a time to *give out* in every sense of the word: no prayers for *getting*, but those who know and understand the psychic power within them must give it out, for those working for good on the spirit-plane, it is a force they use, especially useful on this earth-plane as it is a force given out by us on this plane. It was shewn me as a conscious breathing out of a soft, warm, regular breath, similar to that we should use to warm our hands when very cold. This is crudely and haltingly put, but those of experience will understand.

As in materialisations, the power given out by the sitters is used to build up the spirit-form that it may be visible, so the same power, used by higher intelligences, is used by them to materialise help for those fighting for the right.

OLIVE MEADS.

"ROSALIE"

Sir,—I wish everyone, believers and non-believers, could read Harry Price's chapter "Rosalie" in his recently published *Fifty Years of Psychological Research*, as every circumstance supports its validity. Here is an obscure and sorrowing mother alone with her grief, to whom, in the course of years, her dead child makes manifest its survival, through a gradually perfected technique, until at last she could make her identity known through touch, sight and sound to all present. On the other hand we have Harry Price, the cautious, sceptical researcher, with many years of practical experience in detecting fraud, who is given free hand and takes every possible precaution that experience can suggest, yet expresses incredulous amazement that this Presence, this little girl, with whom he conversed and examined minutely by sight and touch, had come and gone through locked doors, leaving no trace upon the net work of entanglements spread for her ensnaring.

What wonder that the mother is jealous of laboratory gadgets and arbitrary restrictions and fearful that this delicate and mysterious rapport will be disrupted by their use.

A case like this, untainted by commercialism or exploitation, will carry conviction to those who sense our limitations in a universe of unlimited potentialities, much more forcibly than fine-spun theories of what can be, should be or is originating in that sorely handicapped organ, the human brain.

WALLACE KNOWLES BUTLER.

Woods Hole, Massachusetts.

ANSWER TO PRAYER

Sir,—A vital point about prayer may be simply explained. As responsible beings we are given a (limited) free-will, which may not be infringed by the Invisibles, and indeed could not be without depriving us of our own responsibility. But when in prayer we *ask* for help, the asking constitutes their right and title to intervene in our affairs.

H. ERNEST HUNT.

TOLSTOI'S PREDICTION

Sir,—I once read a prediction of Tolstoi's that Europe would lie under the heel of one man for a period, and after that would come a new Teacher and an era of Peace. I wonder if any of your readers could give the full version of this prophecy?

Meavy, S. Devon.

E. HOLLAND.

SPIRITUALISM OR PSYCHOMANCY?

Sir,—I have been surprised that in searching for a new name not one of your communicants has thought of reverting to the old name: "Psychomancy," which is defined as: Consultation with the souls of the dead. Why not adopt it, and let us all become Psychomancers? Or is it too much like Necromancy?

JOS. J. HENDERSON.

Caldwell, N.J., U.S.A.

"TRULY MARVELLOUS"

MR. Frederick Charles Johnson, of West Looe, Cornwall, has forwarded to Miss Phillimore a detailed report of a sitting he had at the London Spiritualist Alliance on 15th May with Mrs. Pamela Nash. As to the report he writes: "It is not a question of trying to find something of evidential value" in his notes, "it is more a question of trying to find something which is not of evidential value. The whole thing is truly marvellous."

Mr. Johnson explains that this was his first sitting with a Medium. His wife, Elsie, who died on May 8th, 1940, had some knowledge of Spiritualism, although she never attended any Spiritualist meetings.

When Mrs. Nash went into trance, Topsy, her control, asked: "Who is Fred?" When Mr. Johnson said that was his name, Topsy told him there was a lady present and wrote her name, "Elsie." Then she gave details about Mrs. Johnson's fatal illness and added correctly that there was a girl "like a daughter to Elsie" whose name was Dora. Also that Elsie had a doggie and a pussy with her and that "pussy was always like a child to her," which was quite true.

Mr. Johnson had been twice married—his first wife having been Elsie's sister. Topsy said: "That other sister is here, she helped Elsie to come over;" also that Elsie's "Pa" had helped her (the word "Pa" being the one always used by Elsie for her father.)

Topsy said that "the other sister, Lily" wanted Fred to marry Elsie; also that "Dora was the daughter of Fred and Lily," which was true.

Other names given correctly were those of Elsie's mother, Jane, and her sisters Ethel, Gladys and "Harrison."

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EDITOR - - GEORGE H. LETHEM

FEARLESSNESS

A LETTER from Mrs. Emmeline Pethwick-Lawrence on the subject of "Fearlessness" appeared in *The Times* of June 21st, in which reference was made to the difference she finds existing between the attitude of the people who are poor in a worldly sense, although not in a spiritual one, and the tone of the "voices in the air." These latter, she says, appeal primarily to the instinct of safety and not of sacrifice. Mrs. Pethwick-Lawrence says that fear is the worst enemy and "a people prepared as individuals to conquer fear in themselves would be unconquerable. Hitler asks nothing from his people but sacrifice, and offers them nothing but danger. They respond with enthusiasm . . . Why do our spiritual leaders tell us to pray to God in his heaven instead of evoking the god within who alone can win the victory?"

Of the broadcast addresses one has listened to, this criticism is hardly just. Therefore, it is necessary to enquire the reason for Mrs. Pethwick-Lawrence's opinion. A clarifying answer can be supplied by the Spiritualist way of thought.

An inconsistency is found in Mrs. Pethwick-Lawrence's remarks about the Hitler method, in comparison with her advice to the Allies. Is she not advocating for us the very method found in Nazism? Mrs. Pethwick-Lawrence says: "A people prepared as individuals to conquer fear in themselves would be unconquerable." That is just precisely what Hitler has done, and nothing more, with the youth of Germany. In his process of mental and physical training, he has exhausted all the potential C.3 population, leaving only the A.1, physically fit. A very severe drilling of all children has helped to accomplish this. At last year's winter sports in Switzerland, as reported in our Press, the German competitors showed such marked improvement in their form and physical endurance that they were beginning to be no mean competitors with the Swiss themselves; and this was said to be the result of the Nazi system of hard physical culture.

The essence of Nazism is an appeal to "the god within" to the exclusion of "the God in his heaven." If we follow only the impulse of "the god within," which Mrs. Pethwick-Lawrence's words actually advocate, how can we hope to win this war, since the Nazis have had many years start of ourselves? Mrs. Pethwick-Lawrence would doubtless reply that her words are misinterpreted. The spiritual leaders who broadcast would also complain of misrepresentation and claim that "the god within" is united to "God in His heaven."

Each side speaks its mind clearly for its own understanding, but others are apt to misunderstand. The limited meaning of the egoist and the expansive words of the divine need to be more fully explained in order that people may better realise the two sides of Truth.

Spiritualism offers an explanation in revealing the perfect balance and mutual dependence of substance and spirit. A harmonious relationship exists between these two sides of the dual Truth. Spiritualism teaches that substance and spirit are inseparable; that they never can be divided; that they are co-equal in evolution in successive stages of refinement on earth and in the life hereafter. True progress is effected by the equal development of our outer experiences of life in material things and the interior of spiritual growth of the soul.

Discord reigns when the balance of development in these two sides is unequal.

The two opposite expressions of unbalance can be instanced. One is typified by German material skill and aggression, which excludes spiritual values; the other by Pacifism in time of war which rejects material methods for protection against material attack. The first is a positive evil affecting all; the other is a negative good which is dependent upon the enlightened toleration of those whose own development is more harmoniously balanced for life to be lived in our present earthly environment.

The Spiritualist, as such, arrives at faith in God, and knowledge of His progressive plan for mankind by the exercise of reason in the examination of facts and principles of Nature. The naturally devout people arrive at belief in the light of intuition. Mankind in the mass is so little evolved spiritually that the light of intuition is not yet shining very brightly for the average man. The materialist-egoist believes first, foremost and entirely in the human ego and a logical development of this way of thought is the evil which the Allies now find themselves called upon to meet and defeat.

Man is a reasonable being. When his reason is satisfied, he acts with increased power. He acts with greatest power when his spirit is illumined. To supplement imperfect illumination, reason is the only way. The facts and philosophy of Spiritualism offer a way to a satisfactory understanding of life and its purpose and to the worship of God, and thus to the strength of physical fearlessness is added the greater strength of faith of the Spirit.

MERCY PHILLIMORE.

GO TO IT!

THERE'S no doubt about it, we have many disadvantages! Whenever awareness of the possibility of contact with the intangible happens, a Psychic's whole tendency and training is towards the development of sensitiveness. He aims to become a super-charged wireless receiving set on the inner plane. In a war, the like of which has never been known in historical memory, the atmosphere is heavy with fear, agony and foreboding, and we get it all! The tide rises higher as outwardly the news grows worse and the waves of the sea of trouble threaten to overwhelm even our faith.

Now, more than ever then, is the time to take stock of our spiritual armaments, and one of the first and hardest lessons is to combine the dual role of instrument and man-in-command. Ours is the choice of what we shall contact. Those who give way to dismay are being used by spirits of fear just as surely as the deep trance Medium is used by his control. "They shall not pass" is the only order for every day, combined with a cry to God that Spirits of Hope, Strength and Confidence may lighten the path we tread as His servants. The Gift is ours and the Choice. It is possible that we may have volunteered for the special work needed at this time. Our first War Aim must be "Let your Light Shine!" Only thus can we enable our brethren to walk through the valley of the shadow of death and *fear no evil*. In showing the way to self-mastery we hold out the golden key of the Kingdom to a humanity stumbling through the chaos of shelved responsibilities.

Victory is a state of mind and one that we need never surrender. Crucifixion is a gateway to the glorious Resurrection, and in the darkest hour God's children are witnesses and harbingers of Light. The search for happiness lies deep within the hearts of all men, however strange and mistaken a road they choose for its quest. We are the sign-posts on that journey telling of the joy that has no dependence on material standards, proclaiming the readiness to let go of all things save those of the Spirit. With our hearts fixed on treasures in Heaven we can be deep, calm reservoirs of strength to our fellow pilgrims, and that we are desperately needed no one can doubt. Outwardly and Inwardly let us "Go To It."

JOYCE WARRACK.

JUNE 27, 1940

LIGHT

THE PSYCHIC THREAD

291

WORLD TRANSMUTATION

I HAVE expressed my belief that the world is in the throes of a new birth; it is suffering the vast pains, it is in the stupendous travail of a New Age. A gigantic work of transformation, of *transmutation*, is in process. The *Great Work of Alchemy* is actually being performed on a colossal scale. That process which "in the beginning" gave birth to the Universe is being performed again in the political, intellectual, and ultimately spiritual, spheres of human development.

In what consist the alchemic phenomena of the *Great Work*? The spirit of metals, the living *Elixir*, sinks into corruption; the golden "wine of the philosophers" gradually corrupts to blackness. This is "the sign of the Crow", as allegorically expressed by the ancient alchemists. From this "sign," this blackness, this corruption, this "mortification," as Paracelsus terms it, arises a living growth, as it were a tree of purest metal. "It is possible also (writes Paracelsus) that gold, through industry, and skill of an expert Alchemist, may be so far exalted, that it may grow in a glass like a tree, with many wonderful boughs and leaves, which indeed is pleasant to behold and most wonderful" (*De Rerum Naturae*). Nor is this marvel a fantasy of the philosopher's mind; it is a veritable and truly wonderful fact which can be solemnly attested; a visible microcosm, as it were, of the Tree of Life.

This phenomenon, the penultimate achievement of the *Great Work*, is the true image of Rebirth. From life issues death and mortification; from mortification issues rebirth, growth, new life. The analogy between the alchemic phenomenon and all other natural phenomena must be noted and can be pursued to remote ramifications. On a huge scale the phenomenon repeats itself in this destined age. The old order of things has sunk into the mortification that inevitably precedes rebirth. Without it there can be no regeneration, without suffering no birth. The darkness is blackest before Dawn.

ELEMENTARY SPIRITS

In a letter to the Editor, published in *LIGHT*, 13th June, C.J. asks "Can any of your correspondents tell me what are elementals?" As Lewis Spence, in a learned article on this subject,* pointed out: "The very name 'Elemental' is a misnomer, and an illiterate one, employing as it does an adjective for a nominal purpose. The proper appellation of the class of non-human beings with which we are dealing is 'Elementary Spirits,' that is, they are creatures inhabiting the four elements of earth, air, fire and water, and classed by the later Kabbalists as *gnomes*, *sylphs*, *salamanders*, and *undines*." Mr. Spence has remarked the variety of names by which these *nature spirits* have been designated by philosophers and schools of occult thought. For Paracelsus they are *pigmaci* (earth), *nenufarenii* (air), *acthnicii* (fire), and *melosinae* (water); while in other lands and schools they are, in the same order, *brownies*, or *goblins*; *peris* or *elves*; *will-o'-wisps*; *naiads* or *rusalkas*. Elementary spirits of the forests are called *Dryads* and *Hamadryads*. There is, moreover, considerable confusion in the appellations; for instance, *A Chymicall Dictionary* of 1650 defines *Sylphes* as "Pigmies," which again are called *Gnomi* and *homunciones*, "corporeal spirits living under the earth." *Undae* or *Undenae* are there "airy and earthly spirits;" but *Salamandri* conserve their usual character of "spirits dwelling in the fire, or fiery men." In Kabbalistic writings there are "the princes of the elements, and each has dominion over many legions." They are named Ariel (of earth), Cherub (of air), Seraph (of fire), Tharsis (of water). Whatever we choose to call them, these beings must be admitted to have played a role of remarkable significance in the age-old history of Spiritualism. "But

(asks Lewis Spence) do sylphs, gnomes, undines, and salamanders actually exist in their several spheres?" He answers the question: "Let it be said at once, and officially, that they do."

NATURE OF ELEMENTARY SPIRITS

Spence adopts the Kabbalist and Rosicrucian view of Elementary Spirits. "These (he says) may be summarised in the statement that elementary spirits are by no means immortal in their nature, that their material forms consist in or partake of the element in which they dwell, that frequently their mentalities are of the most rudimentary kind, and do not always possess separate individuality, acting, as it were collectively. It is possible for them to 'condense' their bodies so that they may appear to mankind, and by virtue of their protean powers to assume such likenesses as they choose."

It is not improbable that it is to this class of spirit that Apollonius of Tyana alludes when he offers to instruct the Ethiopian Gymnosophists how they may "convict ghosts when they deceitfully assume human shape," and St. Augustine when he declares that sorcerers "are entangled in the deceitful rites of demons who may masquerade under the names of angels." Also Michael Scot may well refer to them when he speaks of "the raising of the dead to give responses, in which the nigromancer is deceived by demons."

BULWER'S TESTIMONY

Bulwer Lytton evidently refers to these spirits where, writing to his son,* he says: "They profess to be spirits of the dead, but I much doubt, supposing they are spirits at all, whether they are not rather brownies or fairies. They are never to be relied upon for accurate answers, though sometimes they were wonderfully so, just like clairvoyants." Again, writing to Lady Combermere in 1854, he says: "But if these mysterious guidencies of hand and thought did come from external agents, spirits, or beings of material though invisible form—such as animalcules with whom Creation abounds—I should not come at once to the notion that they were the bad and perilous demons hostile to the human soul which the old monks too rashly derived from passages in Scripture, ignorantly interpreted. There may be intermediate beings of mixed nature, not deliberately evil nor steadily benevolent, capricious, uncertain, and only able to get at crude and imperfect *rapport* with humanity. They may amuse themselves with taking feigned names and sporting with mortal credulity, and be delusive and erring prompters or advisers without any settled motive."†

The problem here raised is one of great importance to Spiritualists. No enquirer into psychic phenomena but must have frequently been baffled by what would appear to be deliberately misleading communications, often frivolous or fantastic and sometimes indubitably mischievous. Many of these communications cannot be attributed to any defect in Medium or Sensitive. I submit that a very careful and discriminating study of such phenomena should be undertaken, with a view to establishing whether or not such communications derive from the type of spirit to which the famous scholars whom I have cited refer. This would aid us to distinguish clearly the true messages. C. R. CAMMELL.

*Robert, 1st Earl of Lytton, Viceroy of India ("Owen Meredith," the poet).

†These letters are cited from *The Life of Edward Bulwer, First Lord Lytton*, by his Grandson, the Earl of Lytton. 2 vols., 1913. Vol. I.

[NOTE.—Study has been given to this problem and the view generally accepted by Spiritualists is that frivolous or misleading communications may come either from beings who in this life were frivolous or deceptive and who have not got rid of these characteristics in the new phase of life on which they have entered, or from defects of mediumship.—EDITOR.]

Under the pseudonym "Albufaragus": *The Atlantis Quarterly*, Sept., 1932.

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

12—LIKE PRESSING THE BUTTON

By ALAN HOWGRAVE-GRAHAM

IN consequence of the interesting disquisition on my subject received from "J.B.," I wrote to him and asked him to put, at his next sitting with Mrs. Leonard, certain definite questions to his son, "Michael." In due course, I received the following from him:

Séance with Mrs. Leonard, on September 14th, 1939.

Sitters: J.B. and E.Y.B. Control: Fedra.

Communicator: Michael, son of sitters.

A.H.G. had asked me to address following questions to M. I give them and his answers.

J.B.: "About your raps and 'creaks'; would you agree with 'I think the knock, and there is a knock?' (This, the reader will recollect, was the rather graphic way in which my young communicator described what he does. Personally, the sounds I hear could never be described as "creaks," nor could they be mistaken for such.—A.H.G.) Michael: "We project it mentally."

J.B.: "Do you affect the etheric counterpart of the 'creaking' material?" M.: "Both the etheric, and the thing itself. The mental projection of power and force affects the etheric duplicate first, because it has originated in our etheric bodies. Therefore it is attuned to the etheric body of the thing at which it is directed. It permeates the etheric duplicate and produces its effect on the physical." (This is precisely, exactly, the theory which I put forward long ago to T. A. R. Purchas, before I had engaged on definite investigation of the subject.—A.H.G.)

J.B.: "Is the power used electrical in its nature?" (It had been described as being such to me.—A.H.G.) M.: "It is. You can liken it to what you call electricity, or preferably I call it electrical power. Father, have you noticed that faint feeling of electricity emanated by some people?" J.B.: "Many people I know have said: 'I feel a touch like a faint charge of electricity.'" (T. A. R. Purchas said in his account of "knocks" that with certain of them "there came a sense of tingling if one's hand were resting on the table," and of others, "they, again, were distinctly 'electrical,' as they conveyed mild 'shocks.'"—A.H.G.) M.: "It is a more subtle form. There are many more subtle forms still which you have not tapped, and many in-between grades which you have not tapped. You know how you have discovered other rays, so in the ether there are many, many more forces to be tapped and harnessed."

J.B.: "Is the power supplied partly by yourself and partly by me?" M.: "Yes, by both."

This ended my questions, but about a page-and-a-half of close-spaced quarto typing followed containing a number of evidential references to me (Michael had, in fact, indisputably communicated with me here), to the producer of my knocks, and even to the other child, the boy of the picture-book incident, with quite a good attempt at his most unusual name. Some of these were *re* matters known to J.B., such as my residence far away in a hot climate, and that I have to do with "foreign" (South African Dutch) people, and with a "native people" (Kaffirs). Others, including an anniversary just at the time of the Leonard sitting connected with one of the boys, and the name, were totally unknown to him.

My next attempt to get a cross-correspondence was with Frau von Strahl on the occasion of the occurrence of those elfic tappings at the séance with her. I need not quote the whole verbatim, the more as Mrs. von Strahl is not a trance Medium, but the following points were again insisted on by the young communicator as requisite conditions for the production of knocks! That my mind must be in a very "passive condition." That "I must not concentrate on them" (the knocks).

One passage, however, was not only confirmatory of previous statements as to the source of the "power,"

but was strikingly novel in the manner of its presentation, and introduced a new detail as to the exact source of the "power." "He says that your auras have to mix. He shows me himself as if taking *his light* in one hand, and *your light* in the other hand, and then he brings the two hands together. This, he says, gives him the power." Several questions I put on mechanical details were not successful, and the interrogatory terminated thus: "He says, 'I can't explain it, ik kan het niet duidelik maken,* through this Medium. Perhaps I shall be able to do it through some one else.'" Which, as will be seen later, duly eventuated.

THE FINAL STAGE

The final stage in this investigation was the arranging of a special séance for the purposes of this article with Mrs. Lloyd, a very fine trance Medium in Johannesburg with whom I have had previous sittings. For reasons indicated earlier, I thought it best to raise the question of knocks *de novo*, as if I had heard nothing on the subject elsewhere. As already mentioned, the communicator asked whether I had heard him knock the night before—"I knocked so *hard*!" The following dialogue then ensued:

"How do you do it? Can you tell me?" "We've got to wait for the chance to do it. We get the power to . . . to materialise a sort of rod of materialised power; sometimes it is like a sort of hand." "Do you mean that a blow is struck?" "No, no! We get a power to make a sound." "What kind of power? Do you mean anything of an electrical kind?" "Well, it seems as if it was drawn from the . . . the ether, so perhaps it would be like electrical power." "And how do you use it?" "You have to *think*. First, I *think* it." (Through Mrs. Godfrey he said: "I *think* the knock and there is a knock." How is that for cross-correspondence?)

Continuing: "It is like ectoplasm in a more (?) solid form." "And how do you use it to make the actual sound?" "We use it with thought. When you listen to it—when you get the sound, it is not like a material sound, is it?" "Oh yes. It sounds quite like that; only it seems to sound inside the material." "Do you mean inside, in your brain?" "No, no," I said; "I mean inside the material of the door or wall or wardrobe in which it sounds. If any one else were there he could hear it, too; if he did not interfere with the conditions and prevent it altogether, that is." "When the ectoplasm is strong, the power, the sound is stronger." "Supposing," I asked, "some one told me: 'I combine my aura with your aura to get the power,' what would you say to that?" "Yes, it is like that; the power is thrown out like a vapour. When I am in close touch with you, in . . . *attunement*, when I am very close, I have more power and the sound is clearer. You see, sometimes I can not get close enough to your aura; I cannot get enough into attunement."

At this point I raised the question of the difficulty of getting a repetition through one Medium of something said through another. I meant this generally; it was taken specifically. The reply was: "The Medium's mind sometimes gets mixed up in what I say. Now, when I can talk through a trance Medium, I can say *what* I like *how* I like." In the same connection, he said, at a previous séance: "She is too *conscious*."

This ended control by this communicator, and the Medium's habitual "Guide" resumed control of her Medium. So I again broached the subject: "Have you anything to say about how these knocks are produced? He has been explaining, but some points are not altogether clear." "He is only a little chap,

* "I can not make it clear" (Afrikaans: "Ek kan dit nie duidelik maak nie").

after all, but we do it pretty much as he says. Through the *mind* comes the *sound*. So the sound comes from accumulated force. Suppose I want to knock: I can not do it unless there is harmony, *attunement* with you. I have to draw the *physical* power from you, and collect it and store it till I can get enough to use it." "But what do you actually do to use it?" "We use it to make the sound." "You still don't get me. Suppose I have an electric battery or accumulator; that stores up energy for use. But to use it I have to press a button or turn a switch. What is it that you do that's like pressing a button?" "Well" (laughing) "what you call 'pressing the button,' that is the Mind—that is *Thought*; you have to *concentrate*." "It would seem, then, that it takes quite a lot of trouble to produce these sounds, that it may not be nearly as easy as we here might suppose?" "Yes. The atmosphere may be against it. You yourself may not just be in harmony at the moment. You may be in poor health and so you can not supply enough power from your side." "Yes, quite. But I mean that at any time it seems to demand some preparation and effort?" "Yes. He has to wait his chance. Sometimes, when you are very quiet, when your mind is quite at rest, perhaps even when you are half asleep, he gets into your environment, and you wake from hearing that knock." "It seems," I said, "as if in a sense I have to act as his Medium, then?" "Exactly! It is from you that he has to draw the *physical* power." "What does he do to make the sound come in some particular spot?" "He has not particular reasons for choosing any one spot. If it was always on wood, you might think, 'It is the fault of the table, or the wardrobe!' "But what does he do to make it sound in this spot or that? Does he concentrate on that spot?" "Yes. He decides where he will make it. He chooses anything that will make it convincing to you. If it was always the wardrobe, you might say the wardrobe was creaking or springing on its own" (almost word for word, even to the very slang idiom, what Michael said.—A.H.G.). "There is nothing particular about this material or that. Once you get the power, it does not matter where you use it. He would even knock on your collar if you wore a stiff collar; I have known knocks made on a man's stiff collar." "Then the distance away of the thing in which the knocks come makes no difference?" "No. No difference at all." "Would you say that it is any sort of blow delivered by anything?" "Oh, no! Not a blow. It is more like a mild explosion—not any sort of blow." "I have been given to understand—he purported to tell me through another Medium—that the force used, the energy, is electrical in its nature?" "Yes. That's why atmospheric conditions may make it difficult. Then, again, your health conditions may affect it; you may not be in good health and so he cannot get the power. Or your environment may not be favourable; you may just be a little out of gear. And now I must say goodbye."

This ended the relevant part of the séance. The student of psychical phenomena who is really interested should carefully compare all these various conversations, and he will see that they *teem* with cross-correspondences.

(Next week: "Some Interim Conclusions.")

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Wednesday, July 3rd—Miss CHARLOTTE WOODS

Clairvoyance: Mr. W. H. Redmond

DAILY ACTIVITIES

At 24 Gloucester Place, Portman Square, W.1.

Friday, June 28th, 7 p.m. Psychometry, Miss Lilian Austin

Monday, July 1st, 7 p.m. Clairvoyance, Mrs. Helen Spiers

Monday, July 1st, 7 p.m. Lecture Discussion, Mr. H. Ernest

Hunt, "The Opportunity of Spiritualism"

Tuesday, July 2nd, 2.30 p.m. Group, Mr. F. Jordan Gill

Wednesday, July 3rd, 2.30 p.m. Group, Mr. W. H. Redmond

Wednesday, July 3rd, 6.30 p.m. Group, Miss Helen Spiers

Thursday, July 4th, 6.30 p.m. Group, Mr. Roy Morgan

Wednesday, July 3rd, 2.45 p.m. Lecture, Mr. H. ERNEST HUNT

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