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CAN PREDICTION BE EXPLAINED? INTERESTING EXAMPLES OF VERIDICAL PROPHECY AND WHAT THEY SUGGEST

By W. HARRISON

THE problem of prediction, which has occupied the attention of several writers in recent issues of LIGHT, is of perennial interest, and the more it is examined the more baffling it is found to be. All theories so far advanced have failed to unmask the sphinx-like inscrutability which envelops the subject. The problem is nibbled at here and there, but cases can readily be brought forward which shatter all speculations and leave the investigator utterly confounded.

As Professor J. H. Hyslop remarked in his *Enigmas of Psychical Research* (1906): "There are no phenomena that can so effectively excite scepticism and philosophic confusion as alleged premonitions. The difficulty that any complicated premonition presents is in the sense of fatality that it suggests in the order of the world, and we have been so long accustomed to the idea of freedom and responsibility that we naturally revolt at the claim."

There is such a plethora of material available from which to draw illustrative cases that it is impossible to do other than touch the fringe of the subject in a short article. As in the case of dreams, there are several distinct classes of predictions, which present different problems, only some of which are capable of tentative explanations.

In an article in LIGHT of November 30th, 1939, I referred briefly to the problem of long-range predictions, which are the most inexplicable of all types, but some short-range predictions also present quite insoluble problems.

Some good instances of the latter are to be found in the book, *Glimpses into Infinity*, by Frank Hives and G. Lumley (1931). This work contains an extremely interesting and able foreword by the late Mrs. Philip Champion de Crespigny, in which she remarks: "Nor has there yet been any convincing argument put forward to reconcile prophecy with the exercise of free-will. A variety of attempts have been made, *Experiments with Time*, and other theories; some say the authors of these predictions are working on the probable psychological results of certain characteristics, or on the logical out-

come of events. But in that case the prophecies are due merely to the exercise of judgment in a wider field than is at our disposal."

In chapter iii. of the book, *Glimpses into Infinity*, the author describes a sitting which he had in a South Devon village with the illiterate wife of a fisherman who was known locally as the "Witch of B—." At the end of the sitting, in which she displayed very remarkable powers of clairvoyance and prediction, the author says: "She stopped as I was about to leave the room. 'It's about that gentleman who was in here before you,' she said in rather an agitated voice. 'I did not tell him, but will you warn him to be very careful. I saw that dreadful things were going to happen to his head, especially to his eyes and ears.' I promised to convey the warning to our friend, but I forget whether I did or not. Anyway, six months later he went temporarily mad, and in his frenzy attempted to gouge out his eyes, and actually tore off his ears."

RESULT OF A HORSE RACE FORETOLD

The most remarkable case of prediction in the book, however, is to be found in chapter vii. In this the author relates that, as the result of a deliberate experiment in the exercise of his gift of prevision, he was shown, in a trance-like state at night in bed, not only the names of the first three horses in the Cesarewitch Race (which was to be run in a few days time) but also the starting price betting odds on each horse on the day of the race (33-1, 6-1, and 25-1), and also the numbers of the places in which the horses were drawn at the starting post (8, 14 and 16). The narrator states definitely that he had not previously seen the names of these horses, as he took very little interest in racing. The result of the race, the betting odds, and the places drawn for the start, turned out precisely as foreseen.

The whole experience was extremely curious and fearsome. The narrator felt himself in the presence and control of an evil entity, whose voice and will he was compelled to obey. At first, only the names of the three winning horses were shewn, in large black letters on a white background. The voice then spoke again, saying: "If that does not satisfy you, I will show you more," and in a flash the figures of the betting odds appeared at the end of each name.

Again the voice spoke: "You still doubt? Then I will show you still more." And immediately there appeared the numbers 8, 14, and 16. The voice then said: "I have shown you that which you wished to know; now return," and the narrator states that there seemed to be something of a menace in it.

The next chapter in this strange story is entitled: "My Punishment" and recounts how the narrator was punished for yielding to the temptation to make money for himself and friends by means of his peculiar power of seeing into the future.

In the face of a case of this kind, all attempts to construct a theory that will explain the faculty of prediction,

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and harmonise it with free-will, fall to the ground. To forecast correctly the first three places in a horse-race is a sufficiently remarkable feat; but to cap this by giving, several days ahead, the betting odds at the start of the race passes all human comprehension, as these fluctuate daily, and even hourly, according to the amount of money laid on the respective horses by their very numerous fanciers, all of whose bets are apparently the result of the exercise of free-will, based on personal judgment and fancy. The additional prediction of the numbers of the places at the starting-post in which the horses were drawn by lot merely adds marvel to marvel. The whole affair seems to lend colour to the conviction that the future is predetermined and can be seen in a flash (or with photographic vision as a recent correspondent in *LIGHT* expressed it) by those permitted for a moment to draw aside the veil.

I agree with Miss H. A. Dallas, in her statement in *LIGHT* of 31st October, that some predictions are made by spirit-beings who have deliberately planned a series of actions and events which will result in their fulfilment, but I am convinced that, in these cases, the prediction and plans may be upset by an act of free-will on the part of one or more of the subjects involved.

I base my conclusion on cases which have come within my personal knowledge. In one such case, one of the subjects was concerned at the apparently unfavourable trend of events and was advised by her spirit-guide, through automatic writing, to wait, and to this counsel was added: "We will try to influence him."

These are not true cases of certain prediction, in which the result of the exercise of free-will is definitely foreseen.

The case of Sir Oliver Lodge and his Wiltshire home (detailed in my former article) may possibly fall into the class to which Miss Dallas refers; and Sir Oliver Lodge himself stated: "I can only vaguely surmise some kind of planning on the Other Side to bring these things about."

According to this view, the actions of the several agents in the case were influenced by impressions from spirit-friends; but it is conceivable that this

influence might not have been powerful enough to turn the scales in its favour in its possible clash with other ideas and influences affecting the minds of the agents.

It should be noted, however, that the prediction was not given by the spirit-helpers (Raymond and others), but by a professional clairvoyant, who may or may not have been impressed by them. It is possible, and I think probable, that the clairvoyant got an actual picture of the future, quite independently of the spirit-agents who helped to bring it about, and that these spirit-helpers, at that date, could not themselves have seen the ultimate result of all the combined influences which eventually came into play.

INTERPLAY OF SPIRIT-AGENCIES

A very interesting book by Ann Montfort Symns, *Dreams that Come True* (L. N. Fowler & Co., 1935; and Fortunys, New York, 1940) lays great stress on this interplay of spirit-agencies on human minds as the explanation of many cases of dreams and prevision, and gives a number of very striking personal experiences. In one of these, Lord Kitchener appeared to her on the night on which H.M.S. Hampshire was blown up; and, after clasping both her hands within his own, spoke this message: "Do not worry; it will be three years," a true prediction of the duration of the Great War from the date of his death in 1916. In this connection, I would mention that the famous seer "Cheiro" foretold to Kitchener, at a meeting in July, 1894, his death by water in 1916.

A curious feature of the problem of prediction is that spirit-entities often confess their inability to foresee the future, or that they can see it only to a very limited extent; and a study of all the evidence seems to show that this rare faculty may be possessed by a Seer still in the flesh in a degree far exceeding that manifested by spirit-beings who are ordinarily contacted by humans. The distribution of the faculty is indeed as remarkable as its rarity. It is found in the most unlikely places and in the possession of the most unlikely people—even the illiterate and obscure.

The case of Mother Shipton illustrates this, as also does that of the Brahan Seer (Kenneth Odhar).

William Lilly, the Court Astrologer, published in 1645 *A Collection of Ancient and Moderne Prophecies*, in which he included a considerable number of Mother Shipton's predictions and stated that the principal ones were "never questioned either for their verity or antiquity."

H. J. Forman in *The Story of Prophecy* (1936) states: "One romantic feature about those long-range prophecies of the Scottish Seer is that they took so many centuries to work out that generations could watch the signs and tick them off, virtually to our own times. A prophecy of the Brahan Seer, made in Charles II's time, kept bubbling and simmering through the centuries, so that, as Lockhart tells us, Sir Walter Scott was able to watch its completion, the final "dreeing of the weird," and even to write a melancholy poem on the Seaforth's.

In his article in *LIGHT* (26th September), "Sinim" questions the evidence for "very distant prophecies," none of which, he states, can be regarded as proved. If he will study Forman's very comprehensive work he will, however, find a great deal of wonderful evidence in support of their genuineness and accuracy, collected from the main European countries, including the famous prophecies of Nostradamus—prophecies concerning the Popes, and notable French and German predictions, and, in modern times, those of the celebrated "Cheiro" and others.

My personal opinion is that the faculty of true prediction is one which is entirely beyond human understanding and that it will ever remain so. Our attempts to fathom it only serve to demonstrate the limited power and range of the human mind, when confronted by the operation of Laws and Intelligence so infinitely transcending anything within its own capacity of performance or comprehension.

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Devotional Groups for Absent Healing, Mr. W. H. EVANS

A CHRISTMAS MEDITATION

By W. H. EVANS

ONCE again the season of peace and goodwill is with us—with the world in such a state of turmoil and unrest that to speak of "peace and goodwill" seems a mockery. Yet it need not be; for we need inward peace and goodwill more than ever before.

If the *spirit* of Christmas could possess the hearts of men, how quickly our problems would be solved!

It is well to pause in the midst of the world's unrest and ask to what end it is tending. We have our ideals and wishes for a new world, and many regard the present sufferings as the birth-pangs of a new order. I hope we are not deceiving ourselves in so thinking. If it be right, the birth-pangs of a new order will not be a matter of hours, but of years. And there is no valid reason why the birth of a new order should be so painful, except that human selfishness and blindness make pain inevitable. We make pain an awakener, because we are spiritually blind. By and by, when we have our vision cleared, great changes will come as naturally as the unfolding of a flower. But that time is not yet.

Let us turn to the old story and, for a while, gather about the crib and view with eyes of faith the Christ Child. He comes at the turn of the year, when the magnetic forces of the earth begin to rise, giving promise of good to come. The angels sing again their song, and we may let it echo in our hearts until the peace they sing of becomes a part of us, so that we may grow into "peacemakers" and become "children of God."

So, in the dim light of the stable, with the cattle and the uncouth shadows; with the shepherds grouped about the manger, the love-light beaming in the eyes of Mary, and the kindly thoughtful face of Joseph bent upon the Child, we may, in imagination, behold something of the glory that lingers around the Child, the after-glow of those "trailing clouds of glory" with which He came.

Here, in the dim shadowy stable, with the cold stars shining outside, is warmth and fellowship. For a Child unites us; we feel a common love, and a wish that the Child's future may be bright, and His footsteps followed by merriment. For a time, we close the door upon the harsh and unkind things of the world; shut out the roar of guns and the drone of 'planes, and dwell in the shadowy light of the lantern, with the straw and the cattle, and the Child who is the focus of our hearts. Let us rest there and let the invisible glory enfold us; maybe we shall hear the rustle of wings, and catch a gleam of light of other realms. For to-night there is joy in heaven; the stable houses a King, the King of Glory. No pomp and splendour, only the purity of love and the sincere homage of the workers from the hills. But it marks a period in history; a sharp dividing line between matter and spirit.

As we stand within the stable before the Christ-Child, we feel we are called upon to make a decision. "You cannot serve God and Mammon;" and in our souls echoes once again the old cry: "Who is on the Lord's side?" We are asked to take up our cross and follow Him.

And why not? Does not the Babe symbolise the love of God to man? Every babe does, if we had the heart to know it. And here, as we pause in the shadows whilst the flickering light plays upon the features of the Babe, we may behold the chequered light of after years. With our adult minds, we may look ahead and see how rough will be the path that has to be trodden by the Babe now nestling in his mother's arms. May not some gleam of light fall upon our soul and reveal the travail of humanity the Babe will one day know and feel with an intensity almost beyond our understanding? And, perhaps, there may come with it a knowledge that *our* hands hold the hammer that drive home the nails into those healing hands and feet tireless in service. The tragedy of Calvary (which is the apotheosis of this divine birth) is that it is an

hourly experience, and not something that happened once long ago.

Oh, God! that man should be so blind and so prone to grub in the muck-heap of the world while the angel stands waiting with the crown—waiting for the upward glance that comes so rarely and from so few! Perhaps our meditation will tell us this; and, while we make our humble offerings, pray for surer guidance and a spirit readier to accept it when given.

A new birth! Who that has passed through the experience Nicodemus found so hard to understand—who that has passed through this sees the world as before? Is it not a new world? Does he not realise the meaning of the words: "Behold, I make all things new"? The spirit of God in him recreates the world, tingeing it with His own priceless glory. Who, having seen that, can be the same? Does he not know that every babe is a possible Christ? So tiny, weak, helpless, depending upon love at every step of the way, yet holding such infinite possibilities.

Think of the supposedly great and strong men of to-day; once they were babies, weak, frail, helpless, dependent upon love. Maybe they were not given understandingly. Maybe their spirits were warped before life really began. Let us be kind and charitable, for all have to render account and the book-keeping of heaven is not in our hands. One can hear the soft voice vibrant with power: "Judge not," "a new commandment give I unto you that ye love one another."

That is all; so simple yet so difficult. Love one another. Leave vengeance to God. He understands, and His judgments will be just.

So we go out of the stable into the night. The stars shine and from afar comes a voice saying: "He went all the way for you; will you not go *all* the way for Him?"

THE POWER OF THOUGHT

Let those who, knowing little of the power of thought,
Are sending thoughts of anger, hatred, and revenge
Abroad, reflect that thought is like a boomerang,
Returning always to the one who sent it out;
For thoughts of evil wing their way to targets far,
And pick up others much more evil than themselves,
And then recoil upon the one who gave them birth.
Alas! Man's inhumanity to brother man
Has nailed him on a cross of bitter agony.
"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!"
Here is a prayer that all can pray; no rancour here,
But only pity for abysmal ignorance.

How gloomy now are those materialists
Who look for help from earthly powers alone—
Brute force, and filthy lucre, strategy,
And all the weapons scientists invent
For killing and destroying men and things.
Ignored is one great force—the Power of Thought
As emanating from "Fool's Paradise"!
And yet it is the strongest kind of force,
Which can be used for either good or ill.
Still some there are—the idealists—who know
That help comes only from the inner worlds,
Where all the powers of Love Omnipotent
Are waiting eagerly to be called forth
And used for good by those who know their strength.
The bridge o'er which the powers of Good can come
Is Thought; no deed can function without that;
When linked with joy and faith and confidence
It stems the blackest flood of evil deeds,
And shows the world that Good, not evil, leads.
The darkness passes, soon shall end the Night,
And then shall dawn the Day for which we fight.
Aquarius—Christ Man—a torch shall bear,
Whose beams shall flood the nations everywhere.

DOROTHY KENRICK.

Light

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EDITOR - - GEORGE H. LETHAM

AS WE SEE IT

A CLOUDED CHRISTMAS

To our Readers, Contributors, Well-wishers, and to all Men and Women of Good-Will :

May Christmas bring the Prospect and the Hope of a Just and Lasting Peace.

May the Year 1941 bring the realisation of this Hope and the Beginning of a New and Better Era for them and all Mankind.

WE are accustomed to associate Christmas with merriment—with family reunions and singing and children's happy games. There will, no doubt, still be merriment during the coming Christmastide, but it will be overshadowed by the clouds of war and the misery which war inevitably brings in its train. Especially will this be the case for tens of thousands of innocent children—some of them orphaned by the war, some maimed and nerve-shattered, many homeless or trying to find new homes with strangers because their own homes have been blasted by bombs.

All this is foreign to the ideas of Good-Will and Happiness that have grown up round Christmas in our land. Yet, it is strangely reminiscent of the events that followed the first Christmas in Palestine, about which we think and speak and sing—when the ruthless Herod caused his followers to slay "all the male children that were in Bethlehem and in all the borders thereof, from two years old and under," in an effort to rid himself of what he regarded as a threat to his authority in the person of the Babe who had been described to him by the Wise Men as "He that is born King of the Jews." Then, even as now, there was tragedy and lamentation :

*A voice was heard in Ramah,
Weeping and great mourning,
Rachel weeping for her children,
And she would not be comforted, because they are not.*

Truly, "there is no new thing under the sun," but "that which has been is that which is and shall be ; and that which hath been done is that which is being done and shall be done." So (with only the words in italic added) wrote the "Preacher" (Ecclesiastes, 1, 10) two thousand years ago ; so we write sorrowfully to-day. God grant that the weary round of tragedy may be ended soon, and that in the Christmasses yet to come the sound of Rachel weeping for her slaughtered children may no more be heard. We can hope it may be so ; we can work to make it so.

We have previously expressed doubt as to whether even universal acceptance of the evidence for Human Survival after physical Death would lead directly to the abolition of war ; yet we are convinced that such acceptance is an essential preliminary to the change of outlook and action needed in order that the happy time foretold by the Prophet Isaiah may come when "nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more," but when, war being abolished, they shall "beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks."

The Prophet did not foresee the bombing aeroplanes and the giant guns which spread terror and destruction to-day ; but some good uses may be found even for them in a time when the desire to kill and destroy and to terrorise will have been removed from the minds of men and when, instead, there has grown up the desire to help and to heal and to live so as to become worthy of the high destiny which even now beckons every man and woman as potential sons and daughters of God.

OBITUARY

MR. F. W. THURSTAN, M.A.

WE have to record the passing on November 29th, at the age of 87, of Mr. Frederick W. Thurstan, M.A., the oldest member of the Council of the London Spiritualist Alliance, who has served continuously for nearly fifty years. Mr. Thurstan was a scholar of distinction and devoted many years to the writing of a book yet in manuscript on the life and prophecies of Nostradamus. This work may yet be published posthumously, for its value is known to scholars.

Mr. Thurstan was an ardent Spiritualist, having sat in his early days with Miss Florence Cook and all the Mediums of note of those times. His rich mind was entirely dominated by the highest ideals of philosophy and poetry to the exclusion of worldly values. His sister, writing of his passing in a letter, dated December 7th, said : "I am very thankful that my brother is safe home with our loved ones. His letters have shown lately his whole-hearted trust in God." These words express in simplicity the truth. Frederick Thurstan was in soul entirely mellow and gracious and ready for the great Adventure. The following is copied from an old issue of "The Biographer," date unknown :

"Frederick William Thurstan was born May 23rd, 1853, near Colombo, Ceylon, being the son of the Rev. Joseph Thurstan (one time Canon of Colombo Cathedral) and Laura Constantia, daughter of the Rev. William Hoblyn of Nanswydden and Fir Hill, St. Colomb, Cornwall, and Frances Paget of Cranmore Hall, Shepton Mallet, Somerset.

"Our subject was educated privately at Clifton and Bath, and afterwards at Elizabeth College, Guernsey. In 1872 he entered Christ's College, Cambridge, where he gained an open scholarship and the Chancellor's gold medal for English verse. He graduated in classic honours in 1876 and became Master of Arts in 1878.

"From 1876 until 1880 Mr. Thurstan acted as private tutor ; and during 1880 and 1881 he founded and became manager of the Arts and Literature Dilettante Society and Club in Argyll Street, Oxford Circus. He was then for four years headmaster (modern side) of Kingsley College, Westward Ho ; and, in 1887, was appointed lecturer and master of the Oxford Military College and Aldershot Army College. In 1888 he was appointed master at La Martiniere College, Lucknow, India, and captain of the Oudh Rifle Volunteers, which positions he held until 1894 ; and from 1895 to the present time he has been private tutor and guardian to the sons of a Deccan nobleman studying at Eton.

"In recent years Mr. Thurstan has taken a prominent part in the work of psychical research and culture, having organised and conducted at Buckingham Gate a society called the Delphic Lyceum of London, as a School of Psychic Exercise, in connection with which he has given a series of lectures before the London Spiritualist Alliance in St. James's Hall.

"In 1878 he published a poetical version of Grillparzer's Medea, in collaboration with Mr. Sidney Whitman ; and he has this year, through Messrs. Ward, Lock and Co., published a collection of poems under the pseudonym of 'Count Ernest.'

As recently as May 12th, 1938, Mr. Thurstan gave an address before the members and friends of the London Spiritualist Alliance entitled "The Tao-Ti Quietism of Lao-Tze as a most expedient method for personal psychic development," in which he conveyed the beauty of much Chinese philosophy. This address was greatly appreciated for the fine thought expressed in elegant and inspiring language. It was a triumph for a man of Mr. Thurstan's years, for age had failed to dim either clarity of intellect or enthusiasm for ideals. A report appeared in LIGHT in the issues of May 26th and June 2nd, 1938.

M.P.

Every soul in its sphere has charge of a lighthouse for which there is more or less need.—Maeterlinck.

GLEANINGS FROM SOURCES OLD AND NEW.

STILL APPLICABLE

TRUTH is always true, regardless of dates and years. How applicable to these days are these passages from *Letters from Julia*:

"The whole difference between this side and your side consists in this—that we live in love, which is God, and you too often live in the misery which is the natural, necessary result of the absence of God, who is love.

"There is much love on earth. Were it not so, it would be hell. There is the love of the mother for her children, of brother and sister, of friends. All these forms of love are rays of heaven on earth. They are none of them complete. They are the sparkling light from the diamond facets, the totality of which is God. The meanest man or woman who loves is, so far as they love, inspired by the Divine.

"What the age needs is time to think, time to meditate, time to pray, time, in short, for the Divine and Eternal. Heaven differs chiefly from earth and from hell in that in Heaven all love up to the full measure of their being, and all growth in grace is growth in love. This is the first word and the last, world without end. It is the word which the world needs; it is the word which became flesh and dwelt among us."

EVIL SPIRITS

Writing to the *North American Review* on the question of Bishop Butler's speculations, towards the close of last century, Mr. Gladstone was very emphatic in asserting his own firm belief in evil spirits. He wrote:

"I presume that most Christians who watch with any care their own mental and inward experience, are but too well convinced that they have to do with 'Principalities and Powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world'; that they are beset by a great personal scheme of evil agency, under which method and vigilance, employing whatever bad means, or even good, will serve their purpose, are raised in their work of seduction and ruin to what seems a terrible perfection." Words that seem very applicable to the moment.

A FORETASTE

In the volume of *Borderland*, in which Mr. Gladstone's words are quoted, W. T. Stead published a letter written to the Medium, Mrs. Underwood, by Lilian Whiting, whose booklets will be familiar to frequenters of the L.S.A. Library. In this letter Miss Whiting related how a few nights previously she had been suddenly awakened by a sensation of swift and rapid upward movement.

"First there was a sense of fright and bewilderment; then a struggle to recall my identity: I repeated my name to myself, and minutely recalled events of the day before. There was the fear that I should be let drop, but that quickly vanished. Then came like a flash: 'I wonder if I am dead? But what can I have died of?' And I began to wonder if I should meet my father and mother. Finally, the motion stopped. I became aware of several persons, and thought exultantly: 'Surely I have died! Can I go and tell X. how little a matter it is to die?' Then lips were pressed on my forehead, as my father kissed me in childhood; there were tender touches, my hands were clasped and arms were about me. The sensation was as if your form were suspended horizontally in air and several of your most loving friends were around you, caressing you. I felt a thrill, a feeling of exaltation which I can no more describe than I could tell you of a colour if you were blind. It was the most exquisite feeling in the world. Presently I heard my Father's voice say: 'Well, I suppose now the Little Girl (always his name for me) must go back,' and I lay quite still, sure then that I had died. After a while I opened my eyes, got up, looked at the clock and meditated on this wonderful experience, a foretaste and initiatory glimpse into the secret of the transition into higher and more harmonious conditions."

TRIALS—EXTRACT FROM A LETTER

"MAY I answer your problem by means of an analogy drawn from your own profession as a school-teacher? Take the familiar picture of yourself in your school-room: One of the small children points with a tearful expression to where he has miscut the design he was busy on, and you say: 'That was careless, wasn't it? Well, now we shall have to make it smaller. I will show you how.'

"A little girl snarled her wool, and has broken it off in her efforts to untangle it: would you not say: 'What a pity! but come here and I will teach you how to splice it. It will help you another time.'

"A boy has been rough and sent a stream of ink over his just completed page of figures: again, I picture you looking regretfully at the spoilt work, but saying something like: 'No, No! don't tear out the page. I will show you how to cut it neatly out so as not to damage the other pages. But you will have to stay on, I am afraid, and copy the sums out on to a fresh page.'

"Should you—even if you were omnipotent—wish to make some magic pass and make the false cut as though it had never been, join up the torn wool by a touch, or turn the inked page white? I don't think so; nor was it you who caused the damage any time. But you endeavour to make a lesson for the children out of each mishap or piece of carelessness (or worse)—to 'bend' each error into a means of advancement for your charges. Is not that some faint indication of how the Heavenly Father deals with the sins, the waywardnesses, the selfwill of His larger children or group of children?"

THE FUTURE

In an essay in *The Fortnightly Review* on *The Future*, we read:

"It is perhaps quite incomprehensible that we should not know the future. Probably a mere nothing, the displacement of a cerebral lobe, the resetting of Broca's convolution in a different manner, the addition of a slender network of nerves to those which form our consciousness—any one of these would be enough to make the future unfold itself before us with the same clearness, the same majestic amplitude as that with which the past is displayed on the horizon, not only in our individual life, but also of the life of the species to which we belong."

HEART-BEATS

After fourteen years of research and the making of six hundred tracings by means of the sphymograph, Dr. Purdon stated many years ago in the *Metaphysical Magazine* that he had convinced himself that: "There was a constant tendency on the part of pulses of two persons who were brought in contact to assimilate their pulse-waves." Dr. Montgomery, to whom he submitted his findings, wrote as follows:

"So far as I can judge, your photographs show that the tracings of persons at first quite different prove alike when they are in what is called 'rapport.' Counting merely the sundry sources of enervation, cardiac and arterial, quite a number of factors co-operate here to form the primary pulse-waving and its secondary modifications. Synchronous concordance has then to be established by the combination of all the co-operating conditions. This indicates that a central influence dominates the process. Such an influence in this instance could proceed from no other source than the emotive sphere of the subliminal consciousness."

Does some explanation lie here of the strange way in which we feel completely at our ease in the presence of some people, and always under a certain strain in the presence of others whom we perhaps esteem and even love considerably more?

M.A.B.

TO RISE AS JESUS ROSE

By ROLLIN C. OGBURN

IT is not difficult to believe in the resurrection of Jesus when we know that our own people survive. But have we thought through the problem to a clear conclusion? Let us first define our terms. Death is release from the material body; Resurrection is life regained; Survival is remaining as before, escape; Continuity is uninterrupted procedure; Immortality is immunity to death (*Rom. 6, 7*).

Our best definitions are still inadequate. We find ourselves defining words with other words which must be defined. Death must have a new definition, for it is not what we thought it was. Resurrection, survival, continuity, are words connected to a single idea—the idea that death is not the end. But the three words, separately or together, do not indicate everlasting life—immortality does.

Here is the conception which must be well defined. If we rise from the grave as Lazarus did, only to die again, we gain but little. If we survive and later succumb, what have we done? If the body dies in this world and the soul dies in the next, where is victory?

But we are not to rise from the dead as Lazarus did, not at all; we are to rise as Jesus did. So Death has its new picture—the shining golden gate which opens to life.

Jesus made the distinction clear and clean-cut when he said, "I am the resurrection (survival) and the life" (immortality). He had the insight into cosmic law (*Rev. 1, 1*) necessary to show us where and how "there shall be no more death" (*Rev. 21, 4*). This was his mission which was "finished" as he died on the cross, for life is born of death (*1 Cor. 15, 36*). And the sign of the cross is God's symbol to open the conscious eye of man so that he may grasp the picture of immortality and dying, rise—not to die again, but to live forever.

This is the gospel of gladness which was to be told to all the world. That great commission was issued (we speak with reverence) at a seance. The Medium was this Seer of Galilee, and there were eleven in the circle; twelve all told, not thirteen as before (*Matt. 28, 16-20*; *Mark 16, 14-20*).

There were two seances; one on either side of the cross; one before, one after. The first occurred at or just before the "last supper" in the "upper room" on the eve of his last day, and was attested by an independent voice. At this time Jesus predicted a number of future events and penetrated the secret of one of the twelve. He, also, through clairvoyant prevision described something that Peter would do later on, which Peter thought absolutely impossible. A Medium seldom describes his own death, but Jesus did just that, and it brought a deep depression to the circle. He also told them that they would all desert him, but none of them could believe it. To this group of saddened and bewildered men he brought an incredible message, "I will arise from the dead." This was beyond their greatest reach of credulity, so he gave them a *test*. (*Matt. 26, 31-32*). It was as if he were saying, "What I shall do this night will shake your faith and break your hearts, but you will rejoice on the third day because I will return alive, and to prove it I will meet you on a mountain in Galilee."

So they went out into the night singing. Then came Gethsemane and that black Friday with its eventful sequence, ending at sunset as the stone rolled into its groove, and closed the grave in which his lifeless body reposed.

Concerning the behaviour of the "eleven" in this crisis, the Scripture is eloquently silent. But the "women" were there, and to them was given a demonstration of spirit-return and materialisation almost beyond belief. Peter and John came a little later and saw nothing.

While it was yet dark and just as the women came to

the sepulchre, there was a blinding flash of lightning (they thought) and an earthquake. The stone was dislodged and the lightning settled upon it, and when their eyes could bear the light they saw a spirit materialise and sitting there on the stone. By the light of his aura they looked into the tomb and saw clearly that the body of Jesus was *not there*. Then they noticed the forms of the Roman soldiers sprawled upon the ground, apparently dead, and after that they heard the independent voice (used by the spirit) speaking to them, "Go quickly! Tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead and will keep his appointment with them in Galilee. They will see him there" (*Matt. 28, 5-7*).

The second seance occurred exactly as predicted, but an unimaginable, new condition appeared. At the first seance Jesus was attired in a body of flesh and blood; this time his body was quite different. And because that new body stimulated no sensation whatever through their ordinary senses, some of them (Thomas for instance) doubted. Not having seen with the physical eye they could not be sure they had seen at all.

In the first seance the mediumship was in Jesus; in the second it was in them. In the first seance Jesus was in the flesh; in the second he had the etheric-spiritual body which they had to see with the psychic eye. In the first seance he said, "We are eating and drinking together" (*Matt. 26, 29*). The next time we do so I will be in spirit and your eyes will be open so that you can see me in my Father's realm."

This two-part test was to establish, confirm and dedicate the mediumship of the disciples and to preface the Great Commission, "Go ye into all the world."

We know that it served its purpose, for Thomas exclaimed, "My Lord and my God."

Mary looked into the grave and her natural eyes saw no body, but to her psychic vision the risen Master appeared.

And may the Great Spirit of Life open our spiritual eye to see that darkness illuminated by the glory of the resurrection.

"DISTRESSED SOULS ON THE OTHER SIDE"

PPROMPTED by Mrs. Hewat McKenzie's article on "Distressed Souls on the Other Side," Mr. C. V. Longland, of 6 Eversley Crescent, Winchmore Hill, London, N.21, sends a description of the work done by a "rescue circle" of which he is a member. Many of the "distressed souls" brought to the circle by the spirit-helpers cannot believe that they are "dead," and are helped to a realisation of their condition by suggestions from those present.

One soldier who was "brought through" in this way could not understand the spirit-helpers when they said he was "dead," for, as he told the circle, he was just the same as he had always been—he had a body and he felt just the same as he had always felt. When told about his etheric body, he was not convinced. When he was asked if he had ever "lost" anyone he loved by death, he said he had—his little son, but the child was dead whilst he (the soldier) was alive, so how could he see him, as someone in the circle suggested? Again those in the circle explained, and said he could at least try. Let him think about his little son and desire to see him and see what would happen. The soldier said he desired very much to see his little son, but it was impossible, for the child was dead. However, he was prevailed upon to make the experiment and, with the aid of the spirit-helpers, the boy was made visible to his father, to his astonishment and delight.

Mr. Longland adds that although the case of a soldier had been described, the circle had many different types "brought through"; and, because of the experience gained by the members, they were often able to give effective help.

WHAT OUR READERS ARE SAYING

HINTS FOR MR. MABY

SIR.—What a pity that want of balance and of clear thought should damage the effect of a well-intentioned article. Mr. J. Cecil Maby, in his "Clarion Call," in LIGHT of November 14th, is out to prove that "it is worse than useless for Man to possess supreme control over physical and mechanical forces if he cannot first regulate his own mind and passions," and that "wisdom . . . is vastly more important than a surfeit of wits and ingenuity." What could be truer? And how does Mr. Maby present Wisdom? In his opening sentence he says: "For modern war, there can be little doubt that scientific progress, and, still more, scientists themselves, are much to blame" since they "have put dangerous weapons into the hands of unscrupulous men."

War is no new invention. It is only the *form* of modern warfare for which scientists particularly are responsible. Is it more painful to be killed by modern scientific means than it was to be clubbed, or pierced by an arrow or run through by a sword or bayonet?

Later, Mr. Maby writes of the "public and private degradation" of the present day. Has he read no history, no memoirs? Are not all memoirs amusingly full of pessimistic references to the degeneracy of their day as compared with a mythical golden age preceding? Has he read no political history, no social accounts, say, of the early 18th century (when the immoralities were certainly more discreetly veiled than now), and can he speak of our present degradation "and decline of religious and ethical values"? And, for his jibes at the "fancies" of young women regarding their "rights" to personal careers, has he ever considered the proportion of women to men in England? Only by reverting to a system of polygamy can his suggestions be logically met, and perhaps he would not think that

that system would conduce to the model ideal home, the lack of which he deplures.

As to his remarks on the unhappy results of the increased education of the working man, presumably he can only mean he wishes it to be wiser and better, but there is no indication in the context to suggest this.

It was a relief to find Mr. Maby (in possibly lighter vein) wisely advising his superior "few of sufficient common-sense and insight" to join (though for exalted reasons) with the prudent many "and withdraw as far as they can from the turmoil and accept a simpler and more rural existence." Was a reference to Lot's wife necessary to induce them to refrain from "the folly" of looking back regretfully to the gilded glories of the raided towns?

I can well believe that Mr. Maby is convinced that those who think we shall "soon have the mastery of the Dictators" are deluding themselves with wishful thinking. For he says that the Dictators are not responsible beings, but simply "blind products of their own age and tools of Destiny," like earthquakes and tornadoes; and yet that "we have no alternative but to continue to administer a materialistic medicine until they are convinced of the tragic absurdity of their doctrines." As it is manifestly impossible to convince an earthquake or tornado of the folly of its ways, the only reasonable course (flight being impossible) is to fold our hands and wait until the earthquake engulfs or the tornado overwhelms us.

No, I think I shall not write to Stoughton and Co. and immerse myself in *Stygian Waters*, but sit down and once more read that excellent book, *Man the Unknown*, by Dr. Alexis Carrel, on the subject which Mr. Maby, in common with so many more of us, has so much at heart.

(Mrs.) T. RYDER.

"A CLAIRVOYANT ON CLAIRVOYANCE"

Sir,—Mr. Owen Redington Washburn, in your issue of November 28th, outlines his opinions about Clairvoyance in a way that few of us who are mediumistic can cavil at. In so far, however, as this contribution qualifies what I have written (LIGHT, September 12th, "Clairvoyance: Why you may not see and the Clairvoyant can see") perhaps I may make this rejoinder.

O.R.W. states that Clairvoyance has nothing at all to do with the eye and that his *seeing of pictures* have been matters of apprehending something apparently located deep in his head. Again, he states it to be a well-known fact that a man may sit on a park bench and see a hundred persons go by without feeling any harmony with any of them yet feel at once in harmony with the next stranger who passes by. With these remarks he appears to eliminate my article completely.

To illustrate how he uses the technique of understatement to make his points, may I resort to similes? Flotsam (or Jetsam) is a famous British broadcaster who sometimes produces from the depths a basso profundo which astonishes. If he were asked "how do you produce this note?" he might indicate a point on his abdomen and say "it comes from here." He might so dispose of the questioner but he would not have answered the question.

Again, we may ask O.R.W. if rapport would be established if the one hundred and first pedestrian had looked the other way?

Obviously we cannot stop half way like this, and I must submit that if the diaphragm, the larynx, mouth, nose and tongue, *plus* breathing control, go towards enabling a singer, after much training and practice, to produce his notes as if the result were just a matter of placing the source of that note (not in any way involving the accessories mentioned), then we can understand why the "apprehending of something deep in the head"

involves the eyes, the optic nerves, the sensory centres, *plus* mediumship and spirit-help, without these accessories appearing to be involved.

O.R.W. has contributed some interesting remarks as to why spirits have difficulty in transmitting proper names. I have reported some hundreds of demonstrations of clairvoyance and psychometry and I have analysed them impartially, whether the Mediums were amateur or professional, and I have formed the opinion that the Medium is the villain of the piece. I can name a dozen British Mediums who transmit full names and addresses with the ease of shelling peas—one or two will insist until they get the correct name and refuse to be helped by the sitter; surely the others if they possessed the same powers or had attained the same degree of development should be able to do the same.

But this does not detract from what O.W.R. has to say or from the weight of his Guides' opinions. We cannot hope to arrive at the truth by mutually agreeing upon everything, so contrary opinions are perhaps the best weapons we can use.

R. R. YATES.

MAKING IT CLEAR

Sir,—In LIGHT of November 21st, Mrs. E. G. Wills makes the suggestion that the use of the little word *the* before *light* in St. Paul's epistle to Timothy (II. Tim. 1, 10) would express more clearly that Paul meant Jesus Christ came, not "to bring immortality," but to bring it "to the light." May I point out that Ferrar Fenton in his *The Bible In Modern English* (1906) makes this quite clear.

The passage reads thus: ". . . through the manifestation of Our Saviour, Jesus Christ, who destroyed death, and throws light upon life and incorruptibility through the Gospel."

(Rev.) E. ELLIOTT.

Reading.

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