

LIGHT

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ANOTHER BLOW TO MATERIALISM OXFORD PROFESSOR ON TELEPATHY AND CLAIRVOYANCE

By B. ABDY COLLINS, C.I.E.

"PHILOSOPHY" (the journal of the British Institute of Philosophy) for October, 1940, contained an important article by Prof. H. H. Price, Wykeham Professor of Logic at Oxford, and at present President of the Society for Psychical Research. It is a reprint of a paper read to the Jowett Society a few months previously. In some ways it marks an epoch in the history of Psychical Research.

The address was delivered to the principal Philosophic Society at Oxford by one of the leading philosophers of the University. It is entitled "Some Philosophical Questions about Telepathy and Clairvoyance." Prof. Price assumes their existence because "the evidence for them is so good and abundant." His object is to convince philosophers that they should take an interest in Psychical Research and that if they do not, they are not doing their job."

Prof. Price takes Telepathy first and describes the conditions (which we all know) under which it occurs spontaneously and some of the most famous experiments—particularly the work of Dr. Rhine and others with the Zener cards. He points out that the emotional linkage which is almost always present in spontaneous cases is wanting in experimental work, and thinks this may account for the fact that in these card experiments, for instance, there is no conscious perception or *cognition* of the cards, but only a sort of *motor* activity. The subject just utters words; and, in a proportion of cases, too high to be explained by chance, he is right.

How then are we to account for Telepathy? By the usual arguments he shows that the radiation hypothesis cannot be sustained. He rejects also the idea that it is a form of direct acquaintance, in which one mind has immediate knowledge of another mind, parallel to the way in which we know our own minds, because mistakes are so often made and wrong impressions obtained or *partly wrong impressions*. Yet the experience of the "percipient" is the same whether he is right, wrong or only partly wrong.

Prof. Price comes to the conclusion that we have to do with a process of *reproduction* or *representation*,

rather than with knowledge in any strict sense. Telepathy seems to be not a form of knowing, but rather an experience of a purely mental sort which is caused by, and more or less closely corresponds with, an experience of someone else. He suggests that it might be explained by a sort of linkage of unconscious minds. There might even be a "collective unconscious" common to all human minds. While he does not definitely put forward such an hypothesis, he suggests that the existence of Telepathy may mean that some hypothesis on these lines may be nearer the truth than the classic hypothesis of separate minds which we owe to Descartes.

Before leaving Telepathy, Prof. Price makes two interesting suggestions. One is that, instead of asking: "Why does Telepathy occur sometimes?" we should say: "Why doesn't it occur all the time?" If we approach the matter in this way, we are struck by the fact that too much Telepathy would be distracting and paralysing to action. Therefore, any organism which has survived must have developed some "repressive" mechanism (in the Freudian sense) whereby the majority of telepathic "impacts" are prevented from reaching consciousness. The good Sensitive would then be the one who could suspend this mechanism. This would also account for the spontaneous cases, which almost always occur during a state of reverie or relaxed attention.

In the alternative, it may be that there is no such mechanism, but all the countless impacts coming in merely cancel each other out, so that none penetrate into consciousness. The Sensitive would then be one with greater *selective* powers than the ordinary: and so on.

With Prof. Price, I prefer the first of these two "queer hypotheses," and, in fact, I believe that it may contain a real germ of truth. It certainly corresponds closely with the process which Rev. Dr. Thomas' father describes, whereby the thoughts of distant persons always arrive within the aura of the person to whom they refer but usually fail to penetrate into his conscious mind. (*Life Beyond Death*, pages 96 and 100).

Prof. Price next turns to Clairvoyance, which he also discusses at some length. He points out that in many ways it resembles Telepathy—e.g., in experimental work, when in guessing a card which no one else has seen, the experimenter utters the words "five of spades," or whatever it may be, without any sensation or idea of seeing that card and yet is too often right to be speaking simply by chance. In all cases, too, the number of wrong or partly wrong experiences rules out the hypothesis of direct knowledge.

But, unlike Telepathy, it seems impossible to explain Clairvoyance or to suggest what its inner processes are. Prof. Price himself can put forward no theory and it would be difficult to reproduce briefly the rather abstruse discussions which follow. All we can say is that the

ON OTHER PAGES

Living Man's Double
—page 42

Foretelling the Future: Some Puzzling
Examples

By J. H. SYMONS—page 43

What Admission of Telepathy Involves
By THE EDITOR—page 44

A Visit to Sri Ramana Maharishi
By FREDERICK KNOWLES—page 45.

facts of Clairvoyance, taken with those of Telepathy, seem to make the idea of a "world soul" or an omniscient consciousness less improbable.

At any rate one fact emerges, however extraordinary it might seem: "namely, that sense-experience, or something not wholly unlike it, is not necessarily connected with an organism or nervous systems. There can be sense-experiences, or something like them, from places *not* at the moment occupied by sense-organs and brains."

This conclusion from the mere fact of the existence of Telepathy and Clairvoyance is startling, and is curiously reminiscent of the arguments of Frank Podmore. One thing is certain—and that is that once the Philosophers have accepted these conclusions, the era of Materialism will draw to its close and civilised and intelligent man will once more believe in the possibility of a Future Life. This is why, at the beginning, I said that Prof. Price's paper in some ways marks an epoch.

LOVE TRIUMPHS

Proud Hatred cannot triumph over Love
For love is humble and goes everywhere.
Proud Hatred rideth in a chariot
Which cannot pass through strait and narrow ways,
But Love is humble and goes everywhere.
Love finds a way among the feet of men
Along the crowded thoroughfares of life,
As well as on the mountain-peaks and hills,
And farms and hedgerows and hot dusty roads,
On garden paths and in the village cots;
And nothing is too small for Love to see,
For Love is humble and goes everywhere.
Hate rideth roughshod over all his foes,
And kills and maims and leaves a trail of blood,
But Love's compassion is shed everywhere.
He heals and binds the brokenhearted ones,
He has no foes, for all men are his sons;
He gives his all that all may have a share,
For Love is worldwide and is everywhere.

DOROTHY KENRICK.

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LIVING MAN'S DOUBLE

As bearing on the question of whether "thought forms" can "only be projected by a departed spirit" (as suggested by G. Vivian in LIGHT of January 2nd) Capt. E. P. Dampier draws our attention to the following description of "A Living Man's Double," which appeared in LIGHT of February 2nd, 1934. It was contributed by Dr. Fodor.

ON January 11th, 1934, I received a letter from Capt. E. P. Dampier (member of the Council of the L.S.A.) stating:

"Whilst in town yesterday, I called at the W. T. Stead Bureau and was surprised, interested and amused to be told that a week last Monday (I was in Colchester) I had been seen in their studio, and definitely recognised by two or more persons who also witnessed me 'fade out' or something to that effect."

As he was unable to come to town immediately, Capt. Dampier asked me to obtain first-hand particulars of the incident. He jocularly remarked: "If the incident is true, and can be explained, it may save time and money hitherto spent on railway journeys."

I paid a visit to the Stead Library and interviewed Mrs. Graham, the secretary. She said:

"The phantom was seen on January 1st by Mr. and Mrs. Kean in a room upstairs where they were giving treatment to a patient. They saw the phantom enter and both at once exclaimed: "Capt. Dampier!"

"They came down and told me about it. Capt. Dampier is on our committee. When he called, I asked him jokingly if he came to spy on us. He asked who the patient was. Was he not a Mr. W.? because he recommended the Keans to him. We looked up the entry book and found that it was Mr. W. But Capt. Dampier had no idea that the man had an appointment or of the date.

"We were afraid, as a matter of fact, that an accident or something had happened to Capt. Dampier.

I spoke to Mrs. Kean next. She stated:

"I was sitting at the door with my back to it. Mr. Kean sat facing it—he had just come out of trance. I heard the handle of the door turning and spun round to see what was happening, for we always lock the door. I saw Capt. Dampier standing there. My husband saw him too. We exclaimed together: 'Capt. Dampier!'

"I believe he was dressed in a brown suit, but I am not quite sure. There was no particular expression on his face. He stood there for a minute or two, then he became foggy and slowly vanished. The door was shut behind him. Whether it really opened to admit the phantom or whether he came in through a phantom-of-a-door, I cannot tell.

"I turned to the patient," Mrs. Kean continued, and asked: 'Has Capt. Dampier anything to do with you?' He answered: 'I know of him.' He did not mention whether he saw him."

I submitted these particulars to Capt. Dampier and asked him if he could remember what he was doing at the time. He answered:

"I was alone during the afternoon of that day and had a sort of half-doze—might even have slept in an armchair for about half-an-hour prior to the maid bringing in tea, which would be 4.30 p.m. I only met Mr. W. casually. He did not say whether he would go to the Keans or not, so I was totally ignorant if, or when, he intended to pay a visit. And I understand Mr. W. did not refer to me when he made his booking."

THE BORLEY PHENOMENA

We learn that there has been an interesting development in regard to the study of the Borley Rectory phenomena described in Mr. Harry Price's book, *The Most Haunted House in England*. A dignitary of the Church of England (a North-Country Canon), who has studied the book, has written an analysis of the evidence and puts forward a suggestion as to its causation which supports the Spiritualistic theory and opens up a new line of inquiry which it is proposed to carry through in the coming spring at Borley. Meanwhile, the Canon's analysis, some 3,000 words, is to be included in a new edition of the book which has been called for.

FORETELLING THE FUTURE

SOME PUZZLING EXAMPLES

By J. H. SYMONS

IN regard to Mrs. Howell-Smith's dream and Mr. Cecil Maby's reply (LIGHT, November 14th and December 5th, 1940), I agree that no *straightforward* explanation of this and similar events offers itself other than a genuine precognition of the future. However *unthinkable* such an explanation may be, it seems to me to be the only one, for I have experienced many concrete examples myself, which appear to bear no other interpretation. I will give three of them, every one certified by reliable witnesses.

(1) In June, 1920, I received a message reputed to have come from an Uncle in the Beyond to this effect: "Your Mother soon joins me." My mother (this Uncle's favourite sister) was in good health at the time, so the message very much disturbed me. However, I enquired when this was to happen. The answer was: "In three months time." I never mentioned this to my Mother and she never knew of it. She passed on *exactly* three months after the prediction.

(2) In April, 1928, I had just finished writing my fifth book, the typescript of which I had sent to my Publishers. At the end of May, I had received no communication from them and I began to have doubts of the book's acceptance, the theme being an unusual one. On May 28th, a very gifted Clairvoyante was visiting my house, so I decided to ask her what was going to happen to my MS. After tea, therefore, I "threw" her the question by thought-projection (in her case there is no need to speak) and she replied: "It will be accepted." To this I answered: "Will you tell me when." After a long pause, she replied: "You will receive a letter by the *first post* (there were four posts daily where I was then living) on the morning of Wednesday, June 20th, containing the details. The Clairvoyante knew nothing of the questions—she was the Medium by which they were transmitted—but everything happened according to the answers I received. On June 22nd, I went to see my Publisher and asked him when the decision to accept the book was made. "Oh," he replied, "it was made on Tuesday (June 19th). We were very doubtful, because the book is off the beaten track . . ." Here is a prediction with details of post, date and day, made nearly a month *before* the action was decided upon by the participants!

(3) I own a house which I let furnished. It fell empty in June last and I put it in the hands of a house-agent. Having had no reply by the beginning of September, I determined to store the furniture and so avoid the paying of the rates, as the times were very difficult. Before doing so, however, I determined to "consult the oracle," which I did on Tuesday, September 10th last. I received this message: "Hold your house *with furniture* for the tenant who will take it on Friday in next week." Acting on this advice, I cancelled the arrangements I had made for storing the furniture and waited events. Nothing happened until the Thursday in the following week, when a young lady called and said that her father was outside in a car and would I go up with them and show them the house. I did so. It was just what they wanted, and they decided to take it as from the next day, *Friday*. It seems that their London house had been bombed on the previous night and they were obliged to find somewhere to go at once. Here is an exact prediction of time and place. Coincidence is ruled out, for until his house was bombed, my tenant has informed me since, he had not intended to move from London (the house was bombed on the previous night).

The above are only a few of the remarkable prophecies of which I have been the recipient, and they appear to me to be such as to rule out all ideas of preconception by the subconscious, or of telepathic communication. I thoroughly agree with Mr. Maby when he says we cannot expect a simple solution of these enigmas and I do not think we shall ever solve them while in the earth-body. They transcend our present senses and therefore

it is impossible for us—at this stage of our evolution—to understand them.

In regard to such propositions as "Time-travelling," "Fourth - dimensional vistas," "Multi-dimensional time," "Serialism," and what not, these imaginative backgrounds have a surface appeal; indeed, such abstractions are dealt with so successfully by mathematical physicists that the "philosophical" public are beginning to accept them as absolute facts.

If one makes a determined and unbiassed study of all the popular scientific-philosophers—such as Einstein, Eddington, Russell, Ouspensky, Dunne, Hinton and others—one finds no real authority for regarding Time as a fourth dimension. It is a romantic idea, which at first appeals immensely; hence its popularity; but popularity requires the support of numbers, which implies the adherence of the half-educated. In this respect, it is well to note that its propagandists are all of the "popular" type of scientist philosopher, whose career depends upon his *popularity*. He must bring forward something of a semi-sensational character which will appeal to the minds of the superficial many, or his books and lectures would not be "popular."

Eliminating these Time-dimension theories, together with that of "astral projection" during sleep (for which there is only the most crude empirical evidence), it would seem that such examples of "foretelling" as I have illustrated above do involve a belief in predestination, however unthinkable this may appear to us in the present limited state of our minds. It is, however, probable that as we pass on through the "etheric worlds" and arrive at a certain stage of our evolution, the solution of this problem will become clear to us.

TRUST FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

YOUR readers may be interested to hear that a Trust for Psychical Research was recently created by Mrs. Silvia Blennerhassett, the daughter of F. W. H. Myers, who has placed at the disposal of the Council of the S.P.R. a fund consisting of Defence Bonds, for the purposes of:

"Investigation and public or private explanation of the results thereof on any of the subjects dealt with in F. W. H. Myer's *Human Personality* or any other subject which is, in the opinion of the majority of the Council for the time being of the Society closely related thereto, such investigation or explanation being conducted 'without prejudice or prepossession of any kind in the spirit of exact and unimpassioned enquiry' (to quote the original statement of the objects of the S.P.R., of which F. W. H. Myers was a founder), but not necessarily on orthodox academic lines. It is especially desired by the Settlor (without imposing any Trust) that novel lines of enquiry should be opened up and that the conclusion of Prof. H. H. Price's Presidential Address for 1939-1940 should be borne in mind: 'We may safely predict that it will be the timidity of our hypotheses and not their extravagance which will provoke the derision of posterity.' The right to pay the fees and expenses of a lecturer or to subsidise the publication of a book on any of these subjects is intended to be covered by this expression of the purposes of the Settlor."

In the contingency (remote, let us hope) of the Society ceasing to exist, the fund will be transferred to New College, Oxford, for the promotion of Psychical Research. The acceptance by New College of the Trust, coming so soon after the institution of the Perrott Studentship at Trinity College, Cambridge, is welcome as further evidence of the growing recognition in academic circles of the importance of Psychical Research.

On learning of the acceptance of the Trust by New College, the family of Sir Oliver Lodge presented to the College Library his complete set of S.P.R. *Proceedings* and *Journal*.

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W. H. SALTER,
Hon. Secretary, S.P.R.

Light

"GOD IS LOVE"

By J. ARTHUR HILL

(Author of *Experiences With Mediums, Towards Cheerfulness and other works*)

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EDITOR - - - GEORGE H. LETHEM

AS WE SEE IT

WHAT ADMISSION OF TELEPATHY INVOLVES

UNDER the heading "Another Blow to Materialism," we publish to-day an article in which Mr. Abdy Collins draws attention to a pronouncement by Prof. H. H. Price, of Oxford, by whom Telepathy and Clairvoyance are accepted as facts. Mr. Collins says that "in some ways this marks an epoch in the history of Psychical Research." That may seem to give an exaggerated importance to the pronouncement; but if it could be taken as an indication that Extra-Sensory Perception is about to be recognised at Oxford and other Universities, its importance would be very great.

That would, indeed, be a decisive blow at Materialism; for it should always be kept in mind that admission of the reality of Telepathy and Clairvoyance means the end of Materialism. Materialists say so. In a book entitled *Telepathy and Clairvoyance* (English translation, 1925) Dr. Rudolf Tischner quotes a number of his German fellow scientists as declaring that "Telepathy is impossible." "Jodl, the Philosopher," he says, "speaks of the *fabulous and sentimental idea* that there should be such a thing as Telepathy," and further declares that "such a direct transmission of ideas from one mind to another, without any physical method of communication, would indicate a crack in the very foundations of all our views on Nature; and if, because the proofs were so conclusive, we had to recognise its existence, it would lead us to a complete revision of fundamental principles."

That is the position as laid down by Materialists: if Materialism be true, Telepathy is impossible. But Telepathy has been proved over and over again to be a fact—therefore Materialism is untrue, and only ignorance or prejudice can account for any man being a Materialist. The remarkable thing is not that Prof. Price pronounces in favour of Telepathy, but that any such pronouncement should still be necessary.

As Caesar De Vesme has shown in his great work, *Experimental Spiritualism* (vols. 1 and 2), Telepathy and Clairvoyance have been practised amongst all the peoples of the world of whom any record is preserved; and many of the examples he quotes should have been sufficient to convince all the Jodls of our own and other countries, even without the new evidence continually coming to hand.

Dr. Tischner, who accepts Telepathy and Clairvoyance as proven facts, is careful to explain that this does not mean that he is a Spiritualist; and probably Prof. Price would make a similar reservation. If, however, they would read Ernest Bozzano's clearly-reasoned work, *Animism and Spiritism* (translated by Stanley De Brath), they would find that Extra-Sensory Perception points directly to the possession by man of interior organs of consciousness which can function independently of his physical sense organs and, therefore, to the existence of an etheric or spiritual organism presumably capable of surviving the death of the physical body. Thus, as Prof. Bozzano shows conclusively, "Animism" provides a scientific basis for Spiritualism.

Acceptance of the reality of Telepathy and Clairvoyance means recognition of the facts which make the hypothesis of human Survival rational and credible and—especially for scientists and philosophers—it should make the evidence for Survival of immediate and pressing importance.

I CONFESS that this idea of God being Love has always rather stuck in my throat, so to speak, when I have tried to face the facts honestly, as we ought to do. This is especially so at times of great national suffering, like the present, for there is not only suffering, but also what seems to us Evil, rampant in the world. It might seem, as it seemed to John Stuart Mill, that either God is not loving or is not omnipotent—or he would prevent this evil and suffering. But there is, I think, a more rational explanation than that.

The thought-world of to-day is different from any that has preceded it. A few thousand years ago this planet was thought to be the centre of the universe, and it did not need a very great God to run it. Suffering was explained by Reincarnation and Karma, in some religions, and Christ himself accepted it, for he regarded as sensible the remark about the blind man: "Who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" How could the man be regarded as having been born blind as a punishment for his sins, unless he had been incarnated before? And Evil was explained by supposing that there was a wicked spirit in existence, who continually tried to thwart God's purposes. This is the theology of *Paradise Lost* and of most theologians for the past two thousand years. But when the small universe of Dante and Milton began to give way to a universe of immeasurable extent, things began to look different. We now know that there are millions of stars in our universe, perhaps with attendant planets circling round them with living beings on their surfaces; and that there are millions of other universes of stars, some of them—called the spiral nebulae—which are so distant that light takes 140 million years to reach us from them, travelling at 186,000 miles a second. We know that life has existed on the earth for a few million years, and man for the last million or so. Does it not require a greater God than formerly, to run this gigantic creation? And what can we say about him? His ways are not as our ways, nor his thoughts our thoughts. But there must be some similarity, or the world of nature would not be comprehensible to us. But is he good? Is he a person? Well, personality—our own—exists, so he includes personality. What about goodness, in view of all the suffering of to-day?

I think that no satisfactory answer to this can be given without belief in a spiritual world.

And this is given us by the phenomena of Spiritualism. Facts exist which constitute evidence that human personality continues. It is not necessary to refer to any of these facts in detail. Readers of LIGHT know about them well enough. But perhaps we do not always realise sufficiently what implications follow. The facts prove existence after death—the survival of the full personality, with memory and other faculties. And there is good reason to believe that this personality goes on developing, though this is more difficult to prove than the bare fact of survival. It goes on developing. We are on our way to a goal unthinkably remote, as Myers said, and it is an upward way.

For me, this is enough. Some minds require a fuller scheme, with many planes through which we rise, and so on, but for me the fact of survival and progress is enough—progress in knowledge of this tremendous universe and of our own mysterious selves, and progress in character towards our ideal and beyond it, for with progress our ideals will enlarge and rise. And if this is so, it appears that the universe is friendly to human souls.

Sir James Jeans says that the universe seems to him more like a thought than like a machine. The Thinker, then, is friendly to us. In other words, God is Love, though we oft doubt "What the unsearchable dispose Of highest wisdom brings about, And ever best found in the close," as Milton says.

A VISIT TO SRI RAMANA MAHARISHI

By FREDERICK KNOWLES

WHILE staying at Madras, I made enquiries as to the whereabouts of the Maharishi mentioned by Paul Brunton in his book, *A Search in Secret India*. This sage is regarded with profoundest esteem by Mr. Brunton, who has travelled a great deal and met many yogis, magicians and mystics, and has accepted him as his own guru (spiritual teacher).

I found that the address of "Arunachala" given by Mr. Brunton is a "blind," and that the Maharishi actually resides in an Asram near Tiruvannemalai, South India. Reaching this village in an old-fashioned two-wheeled ox-cart one rainy evening as darkness was falling, I decided to spend the night in the village itself before proceeding to the nearby Asram.

A pious Hindu will often build a kind of verandah or shelter in front of his house, and allow poor travellers and pilgrims to spend the night there. An old man with a lantern came to welcome me as I entered such a refuge, on the floor of which several people were already resting. He very kindly offered me a refreshing glass of water, and a straw mat to sleep on, knowing, no doubt, that Europeans hardly ever acquire the native ability to sleep comfortably on a concrete floor. When awakened by the first signs of approaching dawn, I found myself alone in the refuge. People rise early in the East.

After a wash in the pool of a temple, I had breakfast at a homely wayside hotel, whose little dining room was beautifully adorned with pictures of Sri Shankaracharya, Sri Krishnamorari and other religious personalities. I was more impressed by these than by the foolish advertisements with which we decorate such places in the West.

I reached the enclosure of the Asram about sunrise, and was welcomed by friendly disciples who were eager to tell me all about it, and showed me some books by Paul Brunton which were on sale there, as well as some appreciations written by visitors to the Asram. Of special interest was a newspaper article written by the Bhikkhu Prajnanda (Mr. Fletcher), the English Buddhist monk who lived in Tibet and Burma for many years. He described the Maharishi as the living equivalent of Gautama Buddha. This is remarkable because the Maharishi contradicts the fundamental Buddhist doctrine of anatta, and teaches the doctrine of the atman as the real self. No doubt the Bhikkhu was greatly impressed by the atmosphere of nirvanic peace which surrounds the sage's presence, as the best evidence of advancement on the way of liberation. A blissful atmosphere pervades the whole Asram, and I sensed it most powerfully when I entered the small meditation hall and sat down among the disciples and pilgrims.

After some time, the Maharishi appeared and seated himself in his almost motionless posture. Before long, he fixed his gentle piercing gaze—which is most steady and unflinching for very long periods—on me. I did not have the impression that he desired to produce an hypnotic effect by this means, but that he thereby concentrates uplifting and blessing thoughts on his visitors. He answered a few questions on matters of philosophy which I put, and expressed the idealism which is typical of the great Hindu philosophers. His power, I felt, lies not in words, but in silence, and his disciples meditate in his presence for long hours and derive more benefit than from much questioning or argument.

During the day, pilgrims arrived from all parts of the land—many having journeyed on foot for months—to prostrate themselves before the feet of the Maharishi in the time-honoured Eastern fashion, and thereafter to join his disciples in meditation, and to receive for a time the friendly hospitality of the Asram.

Though deeply impressed by the Maharishi, I suppose Mr. Brunton's description had led me to expect perfection, and in this I was disappointed. For we are told that the great Rishis are conquerors of all disease and

(Continued at foot of next column)

POLICY OF THE S.P.R.

A STATEMENT BY THE LATE SIR OLIVER LODGE

Mr. F. H. Benison, of The Haven, Rottingdean, Brighton, writes as follows:

I THINK the Rev. C. L. Tweedale's criticism of the Society for Psychical Research is answered by the late Sir Oliver Lodge, who, in a letter dated 25th April, 1922, to Mr. J. Arthur Hill, wrote as follows in reference to a letter from a Mrs. X.

"Her complaint that the English S.P.R. does not formulate its conclusions and publish them is essentially absurd. No scientific Society does a thing like that. Fellows of the Royal Society, for instance, are investigating the structure of atoms, and for a century they have examined the credentials of the Atomic Theory of Matter in one form or another, but never has the Society, in its corporate capacity, laid down the law about atoms or anything else. The only corporate action that I know of is that they have decided no longer to accept papers on Perpetual Motion devices, or on things which have been proved impossible, such as squaring the circle . . .

"It is not the business of Science to draw up a creed. Theologians have attempted this, without very marked success; for the phrases have constantly to be re-interpreted and explained in accordance with growing knowledge, and this interpretation has never been done even by them in a corporate manner, but is left to individuals . . .

"The position of the Society for Psychical Research is that it has no corporate belief, and I see no reason why it should have, since Science is a growing thing and ought to remain fluid. To attempt from time to time to cast it into moulds and solidify it would only necessitate the bursting of the moulds at some future time. We don't want a scheme of orthodoxy.

"All that membership of the Society means is 'interest in the subject and a desire that it should be investigated scientifically.' The formulation of results must be left to individuals, and it is then an easy matter for posterity to discover flaws in their conclusions and discredit them, or else to find them gradually more and more substantiated, and so for all practical purposes to adopt them." (See *Letters From Sir Oliver Lodge* compiled by J. Arthur Hill, pages 171-2).

(Mr. Benison adds: "I think the Rev. C. L. Tweedale will acknowledge that the late Sir Oliver Lodge was an authority on these matters, and that he (Mr. Tweedale) must now agree that his ideas regarding the work and functions of the S.P.R. are erroneous.")

(Continued from previous column)

weakness by their potent will-power, and I am afraid that the Ramana Maharishi has not quite attained this. It is true that he conforms to certain external signs of adeptship which are widely believed in in India, such as the motionless posture, the tiger-skin seat and the unflinching gaze, but perhaps these very things have turned strangely against him. For he is a sufferer from a nervous affliction which causes perpetual shaking of his head, and I cannot help thinking that this may be the result of his too sedentary, motionless life. Also, he needs glasses for reading, and I feel inclined to conclude that his inability to focus his eyes without them may be the result of the continuous unflinching gaze, which must be harmful from the physiological standpoint. In any case, whatever the cause of these troubles, a Rishi should be able to cure himself if we are to credit the Hindu teachings, which say that true yoga cures all disease.

For the above reasons, Ramana may not be a Maharishi in the traditional sense of the word, though he is certainly a great mystic, and a benignant one. He is kindly, serene, and has risen above all caste-barriers which mar Hinduism. He welcomes and helps all in his own way to the peace of the soul.

A CONTACT WITH SENECA

By FREDERIC H. WOOD

I AM not a novice in psychic matters, and I hope I am as chary as most researchers about accepting great names. In fact, it is only fair to say that this communicator whom Nona brought to the Rosemary circle on January 11th did not give his name. I supplied it afterwards, from Rosemary's clairvoyant description of him, which I compared carefully with historical records. Moreover, incredible as it may seem, I knew Seneca in my Roman incarnation, of which my Guides have told me a great deal. He was old when I, young Marcus Flavius, listened to his philosophy and biting wit.

All that is another story, but the notion that this ancient Roman may still be "alive" on another plane, and watching the antics of modern Romans with some concern, is not so absurd as it seems. I have already proved to readers of *LIGHT* that the more ancient Egyptians are actively interested in the way Britain is now overthrowing the would-be invaders of their former land. Rosemary described him as "a man of ordinary height, very bald, and a beard—which was unusual among the clean-shaven Romans: prominent eyes, face pouched, and a famous teacher renowned in philosophy and debate. Nero knew him well, and stood for him. He often spoke his opinions freely, and told Nero just the truth."

Nona introduced him in her now familiar speech of ancient Egypt: "Ya shéem! Bee lêta, gâda zéef, fá-ee n óos!" ("Indeed a wise man! A wonderful man to follow opportunity, and carry through to the end!"). The stranger then took control in trance-speech.

"These weaklings who have never had the instruction of the great, and their offending hordes, shall be driven back. Long ago in Rome there were those who, like them, rose against their betters; mean, underhand creatures who sowed poison in dark corners, and who were always destroyed, ultimately, by their own poison."

"It is almost pitiable to see the horrified surprise of these Dictators of your own day, and their agony of frustration. They built up for themselves a dream-world of would-be conquest which is fast becoming a nightmare to them. They have overcome nothing! There is no glorious end for this! For a time the fury of their little, diseased minds will continue to burn. The earth will be scarred a little longer by their scratches and bites. There will be more confusion and lives lost in their vain running down little passages to find a way out: in their efforts to scale the walls of such a civilisation as Britain has built up. Gradually, however, the waves of your power will cover this evil thing, until none of it is left. The tide of your attack will wash over this sickly continental plant until nothing remains."

"Your age is in the throes of a tremendous revolution which should have come gradually and by peaceful means; but which has come upon you suddenly because of your unwillingness to help each other as nations and individuals. The past is being brutally cut away. Many have lost freedom, home, and the very structure of their lives has gone. Nothing seems to suggest a rebirth. What will be left?"

"Following this revolution will come the reformation, the re-forming. It will require courage, imagination, and brotherly kindness. Will this present bloodshed open the spiritual eyes of people? Or will the opportunity be frustrated again; turned sideways instead of upwards?"

"Yet, there is a spirit abroad to-day which is as noble in purpose as ever existed on Earth: a strength of mind which has never risen to the top before. Surely, those who have stood side by side in disaster can also stand together to rebuild! What is needed is equal justice for all, and an equal redistribution of the good things of the earth. Are your people big enough to do this, and say, 'We will rebuild not only our cities, but our lives too'?"

The speaker went on to outline the part which I, as

(Continued at foot of next column)

GOD'S TEACHERS

Mr. A. Kenyon Rogers, of Letchworth, writes as follows:

IN his article in *LIGHT* of December 26th, Mr. M'Indoe must have been quoting his Lowell from memory, for the lines from "Rhoecus" are not quite as he gives them. As the whole poem is one that should be of great interest to all Spiritualists, I am venturing to send it, not only to correct Mr. M'Indoe's quotation, but also to give readers some impression of the spiritualistic outlook of the author.

"Rhoecus," while in a wood, hears a spirit-voice, saw or thought he saw a woman's shape, "yet all too fair to be a woman." He neglects to do what he is asked and eventually, when he awakes to the importance of its bequest, the spirit chides him, saying:

"We spirits only show to gentle eyes,
'Tis thou art blind,' the voice returned . . .
And from that eve he was alone on earth."

It is a delightful parable written in Lowell's best manner, as follows:

God sends His teachers unto every age,
To every clime and every race of men,
With revelations fitted to their growth
And shape of mind, nor gives the realm of Truth
Into the selfish rule of one sole race:
Therefore, each form of worship that hath swayed
The life of man and given it to grasp
The master-key of knowledge, reverence,
Enfolds some germ of goodness and of right;
Else never had the eager soul, which loaths
The slothful down of pampered ignorance,
Found in it even a moment's fitful rest.

There is an instinct in the human heart
Which makes that all the fables it hath coined,
To justify the reign of its belief
And strengthen it by beauty's right divine,
Veil in their inner cells a mystic gift,
Which, like the hazel twig, in faithful hands,
Points surely to the hidden springs of truth.
For, as in nature nought is made in vain,
But all things have within their hull of use
A wisdom and a meaning which may speak
Of spiritual secrets to the ear
Of spirit; so, in whatsoe'er the heart
Hath fashioned for a solace to itself,
To make its inspirations suit its creed,
And from the niggard hands of falsehood wring
Its needful food of truth.

(Continued from previous column)

a propagandist of psychic truth, would be asked to play in the coming reconstruction. He added: "I knew you long ago in Rome, and you knew me well. I used to tell you that such application of power as Rome had could not last. But you thought Rome invincible, as the German youth of to-day think Germany invincible. There comes a time when all these past experiences become part of one's present courage. No man who had not proved these things with his very life could have done what you have done, and will yet do."

This closing remark of Seneca's would apply probably to "old souls" who are alive to spiritual realities, and for that very reason. The Nazis are very "young" in earth-experience. If decadent Germany has learned nothing from ancient Rome, it is probably because her leaders have "never had the instruction of the great," to quote our communicator's phrase. They preferred to "sow poison in dark corners." Still less has modern Rome profited by the wisdom of its past philosophers. The very little man who made the mob call him "Il Duce" poisoned the air even of the Holy Land with his lying propaganda some years ago; propaganda of such inherent evil that it will now destroy him as the "mean creatures" of Seneca's day were destroyed. Even if the world itself appears to have deteriorated, the scales of justice are as unimpaired as they were in the great days of Egypt and of ancient Rome.

WHAT OUR READERS ARE SAYING

TWO CURIOUS "DREAMS"

SIR,—The night before Sir Oliver Lodge passed over, being completely unaware that he was ill, I experienced a curious "waking dream."

I was in an open space with a peculiar soft light shining over it all; looking to my right I saw a very large mound or hill and on it were several white crosses, resembling those placed on Fields of Remembrance, only much larger. Right in front, as if leading the way, was a very large white cross as big again as all the others and very prominent. I thought to myself, "I wonder whose cross that is, it must be some one important," and then the dream faded. The next day I heard that Sir Oliver Lodge had died.

The second "dream" was on the night of the big air raid on Birmingham. I dreamed that my daughter, who lives in Birmingham, was in deadly peril and was calling and calling to me, "Mother, save me," and I saw her and her husband looking very white and frightened, in fact, I was actually with them.

My daughter said "It is the wave after wave of bombers coming over that I can't stand." I tried to comfort and steady her. Then I woke up, feeling utterly miserable. It was still night, yet I *knew* that my daughter was going through an awful raid, and when hearing, next morning, on the wireless, that Birmingham had had a terrible raid, I was not the least surprised, as I seemed to have been through it all myself with my daughter, although I am living in Bude, Cornwall.

My daughter was not hurt, although her house and windows were damaged, and three land mines exploded quite near. In the first letter I received from her after the raid she says, "It was plane after plane, and bomb after bomb that was so terrible."

I should be interested to know the explanation of these "dreams."

MAUDE MARTIN.

PREVISION AND FREEWILL—A THEORY

Sir,—So much has already been written on the subject of prevision and free-will, that I feel diffident about asking the following question:

Should it not be reasonable to suppose that, if a Guide is able to foresee that certain circumstances will arise, that Guide will be able to foresee the reactions of that person (or those persons) on whose free-will the ultimate result will depend? Although the person or persons would not be consciously aware of the coming circumstances, they should be subconsciously aware of them, and their reactions to such circumstances should therefore be able to be foreseen; because their conscious reactions, when the circumstances arose, should be the same as their sub-conscious reactions to their subconscious pre-knowledge of the circumstances.

I realise that the point I raise is a highly controversial one, and I should welcome any views on the theory I have put forward.

H. N. SANCTUARY.

"A GREAT DIFFERENCE"

Sir,—In your issue of January 16th a Church of England clergyman rejoices that he and his are not like us and ours, for they stick to their posts while we desert ours in the "Blitz." But he fails to see the great difference in the circumstances.

The Vicar has a whole-time job (with a net income of £600 a year), so that he cannot desert his post; he is also independent of the collections and fees obtained at the various services. But we have no State-guaranteed endowments . . . Probably a portion of the Vicar's parishioners have evacuated, but to him it matters little: he has no rent to pay for his church. But if a Spiritualist congregation dwindles, rent and other expenses have to be paid personally by the guarantors.

The Vicar has nothing to occupy his time except his church. Our Churches are run in the spare time of our officers, who almost invariably have their own business affairs to attend to. How great a sacrifice

of leisure, and often money, this means, every spiritual-church officer knows.

The Vicar has a nice vicarage close to his church. Our speakers travel, in much discomfort these days, long distances in order to keep their appointments; and their fees do little more than cover railway fares.

And if an orthodox church should shut down, or be blown up, there will be plenty of others near, three parts empty. But the closing of a Spiritualist church is a calamity, for at no other place can life after death be demonstrated and proved. That is why so many of us are keeping on under difficulties which the Vicar doesn't understand.

H. M. THOMPSON.

Thundersley, Essex.

(Several other letters in similar terms have been received).

SATANIC FORCES

Sir,—When they read Mr. Prevost Battersby's favourable review (LIGHT, January 16th) and many quotations from the book, *The Occult Causes of the Present War*, ordinary Spiritualists might turn to Luke, vi. 22-38, as an antidote for such very un-Christian sentiments.

In *Westward Ho!* Charles Kingsley refers to this subject in a classic scene. He treats of the great days of Queen Elizabeth, when the Spaniard was the "enemy." The following is an extract, the conversation taking place between a Spanish colonel, a sea-captain and a bishop.

"That fiend incarnate, Drake—" began the Captain.

"Ah!" said his holiness; "spare my ears! Do not mention that man; his name is tartarean . . . Draco—a dragon, a serpent—the emblem of Diabolus himself . . ."

"What familiar had we," exclaimed the colonel, "to tell us that these villains would come along the sea-beach, and not by the high road like Christian men?"

"Ah!" said the bishop, "it was by intuition diabolic . . . Satanus must need help those who serve him . . . I believe those men to have been possessed by all fiends whatsoever."

"Well, your holiness," said the colonel, "there may have been devilry in it; how else would men have dared to run right into the mouths of our cannon and tumble harmless over those huge butts . . ."

"Doubtless by force of the fiends which raged within them," interposed the bishop . . .

Undoubtedly "history repeats itself." It is therefore highly necessary for Spiritualists of all people to keep their sense of balance in these very abnormal times. They should endeavour to look at present-day events with more "aloofness" than does the ordinary mortal.

J. H. SYMONS.

(Other letters are unavoidably held over).

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